



Texas Coalition *for* Excellence *in* Higher Education

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Five Years Strong, The Texas Coalition for Excellence in Higher Education Sees Ongoing Need to Fight for Quality, Excellence and Investment at Texas Institutions

AUSTIN—The Texas Coalition for Excellence in Higher Education (“The Coalition”) was formed on June 16, 2011 to actively advance excellence at our state’s public higher education institutions and support a thoughtful, transparent discussion of ways to strengthen and improve them. In response to an organized campaign against quality public higher education, The Coalition formed to support the institutions and speak out when outside influences and political interference threatened their ability to fulfill their missions. On this fifth anniversary, The Coalition sees a continuing need for advocacy and issued the following statement:

“Texas public research institutions, like our flagships Texas A&M University and The University of Texas at Austin, and the emerging public research institutions in the state, are vital economic drivers, attracting students, faculty and R&D dollars that fuel innovation and job growth in Texas. These institutions, with the equally important dual missions of teaching and research, create unique learning laboratories in which students of all backgrounds and interests find opportunities to learn, grow, succeed and lead. We will continue to support the institutions and their leaders and to defend them when they are attacked.

“In the past five years, the story of Texas higher education has not been without controversy. Witch hunts, indictments, impeachment proceedings, lawsuits, criminal investigations, calls for resignations and censures have dominated headlines. Even as our institutions have continued to climb in rankings, attracting international acclaim and more talented students and faculty than ever, they have been criticized, undermined and attacked.

“Texas can only continue to be an economic powerhouse if it produces a skilled, educated workforce and fosters an entrepreneurial environment that attracts business and innovation. Texas needs a robust education ecosystem that includes excellence across the spectrum of higher education institutions including research institutions, four year colleges, online universities and community colleges. Each plays an important role in preparing our diverse citizens for the future. We must ensure continued excellence through proper investment and visionary leadership, as our institutions maintain a culture of continual innovation and improvement. On this, our fifth anniversary, we commit to persistent advocacy on behalf of quality, well-funded research institutions, and call for state leaders and all citizens to fully support excellence in all of our state’s institutions of public higher education.”

The Coalition continues to be made up of a broad cross-section of leading citizens committed to driving excellence in higher education for all Texans. The nonpartisan group is comprised of more than 400 founding members including business leaders, philanthropists and long-time advocates for higher education in Texas. The list includes prominent Texans who served as gubernatorially-appointed members of the boards of regents for The University of Texas, Texas A&M University and The University of Houston, as well as former university chancellors, presidents and chairs of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.



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The Coalition has maintained a [timeline](#) of key moments in higher education in Texas in recent years. The Leadership of The Coalition is noted below and a full list of founding members is listed on our [website](#).

Operating Committee

Gordon Appleman, H. Scott Caven Jr., Gerry Griffin, Kenneth M. Jastrow II, Arno W. Krebs, Charles W. Matthews, C. Patrick Oles Jr., Shannon H. Ratliff, Bobby Stilwell, Hon. Pamela Willeford

Advisory Committee

Gordon Appleman, Fort Worth; Steve Ballantyne, San Antonio; Jim Boon, Austin; Dr. Ray Bowen, College Station; Natalie Butler, Palo Alto; H. Scott Caven Jr., Houston; Leslie Cedar, Austin; Ernest H. Cockrell, Houston; Hector De Leon, Austin; Ben A. Donnell, Corpus Christi; Chuck Ellison, College Station; Dr. Peter Flawn, Austin; Joe Foster, Houston; Machree Gibson, Austin; Julius Glickman, Houston; Sanford Gottesman, Austin; Gerry Griffin, Hunt; Jon L. Hagler, Dover, Mass.; Adm. Bob R. Inman, Austin; Kenneth M. Jastrow II, Round Mountain; Arno W. Krebs, College Station; Richard L. Leshin, Corpus Christi; Wales H. Madden Jr., Amarillo; Charles W. Matthews, Dallas; Annie Holand Miller, McAllen; Wolfgang Niedert, Austin; C. Patrick Oles Jr., Austin; Shannon H. Ratliff, Austin; Beth Robertson, Houston; Bobby Stilwell, Houston; Charles W. Tate, Houston; Larry Temple, Austin; Hon. Pamela Willeford, Austin; Darrell Windham, Austin

About The Coalition

The Texas Coalition for Excellence in Higher Education is a bipartisan group of concerned Texans who organized to publicly support and promote excellence in public higher education, and oppose policies and recommendations that are destructive to its quality and long-term sustainability. Our group includes former university presidents, chancellors and regents, as well as numerous business leaders, philanthropists and more than 400 prominent and engaged Texans. Formed in 2011, in response to a growing concern over recommendations being floated that could have long-term damaging effects on our institutions of higher learning, The Coalition continues to work to advance a thoughtful, constructive and transparent dialogue around higher education in Texas, seeking to improve the quality educational opportunities for all Texans.

For more information on the Coalition and information on higher education in Texas, please visit:
www.TexasEducationExcellence.org