



The Senate of
The State of Texas
Austin 1871

KENT A. CAPERTON
State Senator
District 5
P.O. Box 12068
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Committees:
FINANCE
Chairman
STATE AFFAIRS
ADMINISTRATION
JURISPRUDENCE

August 23, 1989

Hector P. Garcia, M.D.
Founder
The American G.I. Forum
1315 Bright Street
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405

Dear Dr. Garcia:

Thank you for contacting me during the recently completed legislative session concerning legislation relating to the efforts to improve higher education in the South Texas region. I apologize for the delay in responding to your letter.

As you know, the bills authorizing the merger between Pan American University, Pan American University at Brownsville and the University of Texas System, as well as those between Corpus Christi State University, Texas A&I University, Laredo State University and the Texas A&M University System were passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. I believe that these mergers in conjunction with the increased levels of funding for higher education, including \$11.1 million in special item funding for institutions in South Texas, represent a significant step forward in the effort to ensure that the citizens of South Texas have access to quality higher education.

Be assured that I have been and continue to be supportive of the efforts to improve the quality and diversity of higher education programming in that region. The one issue which remains unresolved at this time is the establishment of a law school at Texas A&I University in Kingsville. Although I understand and appreciate the arguments in support of establishing a professional school in that area, I am not yet convinced that the necessary foundations are in place to support such a school at this time. However, I believe that the steps taken by the 71st Legislature will undoubtedly help in strengthening this foundation in preparation for such programs.

In my estimation, the costs of creating a new law school at a time when resources are already strained and existing

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programs are struggling to retain the portion they have would not be sound fiscal policy. I believe that we should focus our efforts on strengthening existing programs and establishing new programs at the undergraduate level before establishing a costly professional school. Be assured that once these foundations are solidly in place, I will certainly be supportive of efforts to establish professional and post-graduate programs in South Texas.

Again, thank you for sharing with me your views on this important issue. I have been and continue to be a strong advocate for quality education in Texas and appreciate the support that people like you have given to this effort.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kent A. Caperton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kent A. Caperton

KAC/RSM:pac



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