

By: Dutton

H.C.R. No. 95

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The citizens of Texas understand the importance of a  
2 quality education system to the future well-being of our state;  
3 even so, a number of fundamental performance measures indicate  
4 troubling and persistent deficiencies within the state's public  
5 education system; and

6 WHEREAS, The number of low-performing students and students  
7 who drop out, for example, is alarmingly high in Texas and has been  
8 for some time; moreover, the connection between low-performing  
9 students and students who drop out is such that many low-performing  
10 students find themselves so far behind, with an almost impossible  
11 academic gap to overcome, that they simply give up and leave school  
12 completely; and

13 WHEREAS, As an obvious consequence, low-performing students  
14 and dropouts are generally not prepared for college or advanced  
15 careers, resulting in lowered income potential, higher  
16 incarceration rates, and more likely dependence on public health  
17 care and social services; and

18 WHEREAS, To solve these issues, some experts suggest that  
19 improvements are needed to the state's accountability system with  
20 regard to closing and measuring student achievement gaps, advising  
21 that without higher minimum performance standards the current  
22 system creates a disservice to the education of many students; and

23 WHEREAS, There is also cause for concern that the state's  
24 responsibility to monitor and promote student performance in

1 Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs has been rendered  
2 inconsequential by schools that take exception to reporting data or  
3 compliance violations; and

4 WHEREAS, Current research indicates that these problems are  
5 also present among the state's charter schools, some of which were  
6 specifically designed to serve at-risk students; regrettably,  
7 state policy permits variances in the mission, operation, and  
8 performance of charter schools in Texas due to their freedom from  
9 the normal restrictions placed on traditional public schools,  
10 resulting in the uneven education of charter school students; and

11 WHEREAS, In fact, it has been suggested that there is a lack  
12 of uniformity with regard to student discipline and the code of  
13 student behavior, and that drastic improvements are needed in  
14 parental involvement in the disciplinary appeals process and the  
15 timeliness of parental notification of student discipline; and

16 WHEREAS, The future welfare and economic competitiveness of  
17 Texas and its graduates depend on providing the best educational  
18 opportunities to its students; with every measurable indicator  
19 signaling a need for systemic change, the state should carefully  
20 examine the current organization of the public education system;  
21 and

22 WHEREAS, The University of Texas at Austin is ideally  
23 qualified to lead such a study on the role of the state with regard  
24 to low-performing students, student dropouts, the state's  
25 accountability system, charter school students, and student  
26 behavior and discipline; now, therefore, be it

27 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas

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1 hereby request The University of Texas at Austin to perform a study  
2 on the effectiveness of the Texas Education Agency's role in  
3 establishing a public education system that fully captures and  
4 promotes an acceptable level of student achievement, prevents  
5 student dropouts, improves the state accountability system for  
6 school districts and charter schools, and contributes to a fair,  
7 balanced, and uniform approach to student discipline.