

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 180

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Raymund A. Paredes is concluding an outstanding 15-year tenure as Texas commissioner of higher education on August 31, 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes is an alumnus of The University of Texas at Austin, where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in English and a doctoral degree in American Civilization, and the University of Southern California, where he earned a master's degree in American Studies; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes joined the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as commissioner of higher education in July 2004; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes has a long and broad range of experience in public higher education; he served for 30 years as a professor of English at the University of California, Los Angeles, and he also served as department chair, dean, vice chancellor, and special assistant to the president of the University of California system; and

**WHEREAS**, As commissioner of higher education, Dr. Paredes serves as the chief executive officer for the coordinating board and manages staff and resources to achieve the goals for Texas higher education as established by the board, the governor, and the Texas legislature, and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes tirelessly advocates for the importance of higher education in maintaining economic competitiveness and quality of life in Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes has had national influence on higher education by effectively serving on the boards of various national organizations, such as the American Association of Colleges and Universities, The College Board, and the Education Commission of the States, and he is the longest-serving current member of the State Higher Education Executive Officers, the national association of the chief executives of statewide governing, policy, and coordinating boards of postsecondary education; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes has worked effectively with institutions of higher education, the legislature, the governor's office, the business community, and primary school and secondary school educational leaders to develop and implement higher education policies that have improved student access and success, raised educational excellence, and promoted efficient use of state resources; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes focused on the importance of both increasing access to postsecondary education and helping students complete their certificates and degrees, and this has led to Texas dramatically exceeding the student completion goal of the state's previous higher education plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes has served as the primary advocate for *60x30TX*, the state's current higher education plan, and he has consistently sought to expand public support for the plan and identified and implemented strategies and practices to achieve its goals; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes adheres to the highest standards of integrity and ethical behavior and is an educational leader of passion and vision who is fully committed to expanding educational opportunity and success to Texans of all backgrounds; and

**WHEREAS**, His many accomplishments as commissioner of higher education include the reinvention of developmental education and the implementation of an outcomes-based funding model for two-year colleges that focuses on student success; he also worked to establish the tri-agency partnership under Governor Greg Abbott that includes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Workforce Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes came from a poor family where the number-one priority was always education, and due to his upbringing, he has been passionate his entire adult life about extending educational opportunity to children from all backgrounds; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes has advocated tirelessly for increased funding for, and efficiencies in, the TEXAS Grant program, the state's largest need-plus-merit grant program, which has grown by 142 percent since 2004; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes has also promoted other models for financial aid, such as expanded work-study and paid internships, to help the state achieve the marketable skills and student debt goals of 60x30TX; and

**WHEREAS**, Dr. Paredes has spearheaded the growth of the Texas Affordable Baccalaureate to make college more affordable to students by securing private grants to support the start-up of these programs; as a result of his efforts, Texas now has 10 institutions participating in this program; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 86th Legislature, hereby commend Dr. Raymund A. Paredes for his exceptional career as commissioner of higher education and extend to him sincere best wishes for continued success as he embarks on the next chapter of his life; and, be it further

**RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared for Dr. Paredes as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

Watson

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President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on February 11, 2019.

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Secretary of the Senate

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Member, Texas Senate