



HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

HATTIE MAE WHITE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT CENTER
4400 WEST 18th STREET • HOUSTON, TEXAS 77092-8501

February 5, 2007

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Education:

For the past 30 years, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) has received national recognition by the Government Finance Officers Association and has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. HISD has received this award more times than any other district, signifying that we are efficient stewards of our taxpayers' money; therefore, we felt compelled to offer comments regarding Senate Bill 234.

Over the years, HISD has worked hard to market to other districts the expertise and products it has developed. This has generated non-tax revenue, offsetting development and operating costs, which benefits our taxpayers. Our actions have saved money for other districts as well because they can optimize the skill and resources that has already been invested in various products and services. We are proud of the many quality services that we have shared over the years with other districts, and we are happy to make information about these cooperative efforts available to the public.

However, we must register our concerns with the very prescriptive reporting requirements in SB 234, particularly with no state funds to cover them. In its efforts to have information reported in such great detail the state may create the unintended consequence of discouraging district collaborations that would save taxpayers money. Furthermore, the funds needed to meet this requirement of generating reports, and formatting and updating Web sites, etc. are non-instructional costs and will not help us get closer to allocating 65 percent of our funds to instructional purposes, which is required by law.

We believe that the proposed substitute for SB 234 addresses many of these issues, and we thank the committee for being receptive to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Flores
Director, Government Relations

cc: Dr. Abelardo Saavedra
Board of Trustees
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