

**Testimony of Allen Kaplan, Trustee,
Austin Community College District**
Before the
Senate Finance Higher Education Subcommittee

August 20, 2008

I am Allen Kaplan, a Trustee at the Austin Community College District. I have served as a Trustee for fourteen years first having been elected in 1994. I also currently serve as the Texas State Coordinator for the Trustee's national association, the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT).

Thank you for allowing us to appear this morning before the Subcommittee.

The Community College Association of Texas Trustees (CCATT) germinated from a series of meetings with Texas Trustees at ACCT meetings in Orlando, San Diego and Washington DC during 2006, 2007 and 2008. The Association has since been created and is currently finalizing its legal status, by-laws, etc.

Though almost all large States have exclusive Community College Trustee organizations, this is the first association exclusively for community college trustees to be officially formed in Texas. As part of our mission statement, the Association has pledged to cooperate with the Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC), the Presidents/CEO group. Our mission also includes Trustee legislative advocacy and professional development. The Board of Directors of CCATT consists of one member of each College district where a Trustee or Trustees have committed to membership in the Association. Currently, that number is 17 and includes:

- Alamo CCD
- Austin CCD
- College of the Mainland
- Collin County CCD
- Dallas County CCD
- Del Mar CC
- El Paso CC
- Galveston CC
- Houston CCD

- Laredo CC
- Lone Star CCD
- Northeast Texas CC
- San Jacinto CCD
- South Texas CC
- Temple CC
- Texarkana CC
- Tyler JC

At our April, 2008 meeting, the Directors elected the following officers: Chair: Roberto Zarate, Trustee of the Alamo Community College District, Vice Chair: Kitty Boyle, Trustee of the Dallas County Community College District, Secretary: Chris Adler, Chair of the Del Mar College Board of Regents and Treasurer: Allen Kaplan, Trustee of the Austin Community College District. The Directors and other interested Trustees held a meeting on June 25 in Austin to discuss by-laws, a legislative agenda for the 81st regular legislative session and administrative matters. The Directors of CCATT also held a meeting later that day with TACC's Chair and members of its Executive Committee.

The mission of CCATT is to unite and mobilize community college trustees to work with the Texas Association of Community Colleges in advocating for and further advancing education, education related legislation and increased recognition of the impact of community colleges on the economy of Texas

During the 2007 legislative session, four of the founding Trustees of the Community College Association of Texas Trustees (CCATT) decided to launch a Community College Caucus in the Texas State Legislature. The intent in forming the Caucus is to form closer relationships with our legislators so there is a greater understanding of the importance of community colleges to the economy of our State and the enrichment of its citizens.

At the end of the 80th Regular Session in May 2007, some 70 State Representatives and 12 Senators had joined the Caucus. The Caucuses are chaired by Representatives Linda Harper-Brown-R and Patrick Rose-D in the House and Senator Florence Shapiro-R in the Senate.

As of today, the Texas Legislative Community College Caucus has a membership of 112 State Representatives and 26 State Senators. Also, the Governor appointed CCATT Chair Roberto Zarate to the Higher Education Incentive Task Force to make recommendations for incentive funding to the

Governor and the Texas Legislature. This, we believe, is the first time that a Community College Trustee has been appointed to a statewide committee or task force dealing with higher education funding.

Finally, CCATT looks forward to a productive relationship with the Texas Legislature during the upcoming session and all future legislative sessions.

Thank you.