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October 13, 2006

Senate Education Committee
Texas State Senate
P.O. Box 12068
Austin, Texas 78711-2068

Dear Committee Members:

The Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony on Interim Charge #6 related to the impact of successful school choice programs on students, parents, and teachers.

A cornerstone of TASA's legislative program is to support any effort that improves the public education system and to oppose any effort that diverts state monies from public schools to subsidize private schools. The membership of TASA believes that a quality public education system is the foundation to ensuring all schoolchildren are prepared to participate and contribute positively to society.

Texas has been recognized nationally for its achievements in increased accountability and high standards for all students. The performance of Texas students continues to rise despite increased rigor and expectations. The passage of HB 1 earlier this year further increased accountability standards and graduation requirements, created additional education reforms, and provided additional transparency for local taxpayers.

We ask the committee to remember the proven track record of Texas public schools and their continued ability to meet increased academic and financial accountability standards set forth by the state. Public schools must comply with many statutory requirements and educate all students who enter our classrooms regardless of their abilities or learning needs. We accept and welcome this challenge with the realization that adequate funding is critical if we are to succeed. Diverting funds from public schools to other entities that do not share the same rigorous financial and academic accountability standards would only serve to undermine the success and achievements of Texas public schools.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to provide input to the committee. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Amy T. Beneski
Associate Executive Director

