

September 22-24, 2004

ITEM 124-103-R0904

Date:

Mr. Mario Sanchez
c/o Student Government Office
100-C West Dean Keaton Street
Suite 4.206
Austin, TX 78712

Dear Mr. Sanchez,

As members of the Board of Regents for the Montana University System, we are pleased to support your initiative to have a student appointed to The University of Texas System Board of Regents.

Montana has had a student member on its university system governing board for over 30 years. During that long history, each student regent has brought his/her own unique interests and perspective to the Board's deliberation. But perhaps most importantly, those students have validated the decision to designate one of the Board's seats for a student because of their preparation, their thoughtfulness and their constant advocacy of the student perspective. The Montana Board of Regents would be significantly diminished without a representative of the most important constituency in the university system.

Perhaps as a result of the student regent, student government organizations throughout the Montana University System play an active role in the deliberations of the Board of Regents. A representative of student government sits at the table during Regent meetings, the Board devotes a portion of each meeting to a luncheon with students, and campus leaders present oral reports on the activities of their governmental organizations. The student regent serves as the "unofficial" Board liaison with those student leaders, and can always be counted on to include their official proposals and initiatives in the Board's agenda. Because of these important practices, the student regent is not expected to serve as the sole voice for all students in the Montana University System.

Even though service on the Montana Board of Regents requires a significant time commitment, our student regents have always found a way to be valuable, contributing members without sacrificing their educational plans. Many student regents in Montana

have graduated with honors, and several were attending law school at the time of their service. Our student regents are asked to deal with new and difficult ideas every day, as part of their educational experience, so their understanding and resolution of complex University System issues has been remarkable. Their contribution is as valuable and constructive as every other member of the Montana Board of Regents.

We wouldn't be the Montana Board of Regents without a student member, and it is difficult for us to imagine a board without a student representative. Therefore, we have no hesitation in supporting your efforts, and wish you the best as you take this important step in Texas.

Sincerely,

John A. Mercer
Chairman

Mike Foster
Vice Chair

Kala French
Student Regent

Lynn Hamilton
Regent

Richard Roehm
Regent

Mark Semmens
Regent

Lila Taylor
Regent