



SENATOR CHARLES SCHWERTNER, MD
SENATE DISTRICT 5

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sen. Schwertner Announces Plan to Freeze Tuition and Fees at Texas Public Universities

Proposal to make higher education more affordable includes capping tuition and fees at current levels and introducing a sales tax holiday for college textbooks.

AUSTIN, TX -- Today, Senator Charles Schwertner (R-Georgetown) filed legislation to make higher education more affordable by addressing the dramatic cost growth at Texas' public colleges and universities. Schwertner's SB 233 would cap tuition and fees at their current levels and limit any future increases to no more than the rate of inflation.

"The pursuit of a higher education in Texas has never been more daunting, and as tuition and fees at our public universities continue to climb, the dream of attaining a college degree is becoming a nightmare for more and more Texas students," said Senator Schwertner. "I think the legislature has a responsibility to consider whether the deregulation policies enacted over a decade ago still make sense for Texas students."

Since the legislature's decision to deregulate tuition in 2003, tuition and fees at Texas public universities have more than doubled and designated tuition (the portion of tuition set directly by the universities) has increased an astounding 222%. These dramatic increases in tuition and fees have far outpaced the 27% growth in inflation over the same timeframe.

"Are we really expected to believe that the value of an undergraduate degree is worth twice what it was only a decade ago?" asked Schwertner. "It's time to demand that our public universities live within their considerable means and work to provide affordable and attainable higher education for Texas students."

In another step make higher education more affordable, Senator Schwertner filed SB 232 to exempt the purchase of college textbooks from the state sales tax during defined periods at the beginning of each semester.

Last month, Dr. Charles Schwertner was overwhelmingly reelected to serve the citizens of Senate District 5, a ten-county region of central and east Texas. Following the 83rd Legislative Session, Senator Schwertner was named a "Courageous Conservative" by the Texas Conservative Coalition, a "Lone Star Conservative Leader" by the Texas Conservative Roundtable, and "Senate Freshman of the Year" by Texas Monthly magazine.

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