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**Senator Lucio calls on Governor Perry to add  
tuition revenue bonds to second called session call**

**AUSTIN** - Today (Tuesday), Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) sent the following letter to Texas Governor Rick Perry, which asks the Governor to add to the 82nd Legislature Second Called Session call legislation authorizing the issuance of tuition revenue bonds to fund capital projects at Texas colleges and universities:

Dear Governor Perry:

I write to you today to congratulate you on having a successful 83rd Regular Legislative Session and to respectfully touch upon some unfinished business that is of great concern to the constituents that we both represent in South Texas.

Without a doubt, your leadership was instrumental in advancing the state's commitment that was first codified when Governor George W. Bush signed into law Senate Bill 606 that established the Regional Academic Health Center in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in 1997. Your leadership in establishing the Valley's Medical School was the necessary catalyst that the Legislature needed in order to further the cause that many of us have been fighting to make a reality over the last 16 years. The constituents that you and I represent thank you for your strong commitment to strengthen medical education in the South Texas region.

Additionally, your foresight in working to make Texas a premier location for private space exploration cannot go unrecognized. It was a pleasure to work with your Deputy Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor, Mike Morrissey, in finding the necessary funding and in helping develop key provisions that would make \$15 million available to SpaceX to strengthen their presence in Texas and make our state the home of their next space launching site. I commend your assistance in helping our office and the budget writing conferees in meeting our shared goals.

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Lastly, as the Senator that represents the service region of both the University of Texas - Brownsville (UTB) and the University of Texas - Pan American (UTPA) I want to personally thank you for directing the Legislature "to pass, by a two-thirds vote, a bill necessary to give South Texas access to the Permanent University Fund." In visiting with UTB President, Juliet Garcia, and UTPA President, Robert Nelsen, your directive to the Legislature amounted to a resounding commitment in addressing the needs of today's student population and establishing the critical foundation for tomorrow's South Texas leaders. Generations to come will note your seventh State of the State Address and will mark January 29, 2013 as the day, that their governor directed the Legislature to provide South Texas a place in the Permanent University Fund. As a proud grandfather of five lovely children, I thank you for helping make their future a much brighter one and agree with you in saying that "this area of the state is critical to our state's future, and our investment in the children of South Texas will be returned a thousand fold,"

In following up on your commitment to improve higher education opportunities of our Valley constituents, I respectfully request consideration of higher education funding on the call of the Second Special Session. As you are aware, the Chairman of the Senate Higher Education Committee, the Honorable Kel Seliger, has already filed Senate Bill 6 in the hope that you open the call for this purpose. With this letter I join Chairman Seliger, and many others including Senator Judith Zaffirini, who hope that you will afford us the opportunity to continue to work to meet your resolve in making the Lone Star State the home of an "affordable, accessible higher education system" that is second to none. Texas must be given the opportunity to increase its higher education infrastructure so that we can remain competitive in the international market place. The 83rd Regular Legislative Session demonstrates a missed opportunity in taking a giant step forward to improve higher education and critical infrastructure resources. For UTB this means having to lease space in order to meet their current student population needs. That is why I respectfully ask you for your leadership to allow us to address critical infrastructure improvements during the Second Special Session.

In closing, our Valley constituents thank you for your leadership and for your steadfast commitment in making Texas a place to be envied by the rest of the nation: a state with endless opportunities for prosperity and with an unwavering resolve in working to develop needed solutions to the most pressing problems. Thank you and may God Bless You!

Sincerely yours,

Eddie Lucio, Jr.  
State Senator

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