

UTRGV Applauds Legislative Delegation

Austin, TX – Senator Eddie Lucio (D-Brownsville), was among those mentioned for exemplary leadership in supporting UTRGV’s priorities for the 86th Legislative Session

Bailey: Legislative session was good for UTRGV*

EDINBURG, RGV – UT-Rio Grande Valley President Guy Bailey has thanked the region’s legislative delegation for helping secure more funding for the university in the just-ended 86th Legislature.

Bailey spoke about legislative achievements, new programs and buildings, and future goals in his State of the University Address. It was given at a luncheon hosted by the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce and held at the Edinburg Conference Center at Renaissance. The main sponsors were DHR Health and Bert Ogden Motors.

“We’ve just finished the legislative session. This legislative session was a good one for us. The one before was not very good for anybody in the state. Our legislators worked themselves to death. It was just a tough session. This was a good session for us,” Bailey said.

Bailey then ran through some of the legislative highlights.

“First of all we have a JAM program. That is a Joint Admissions Medical program for our medical school. Most of the big medical schools like Baylor College of Medicine, UT Southwestern, the one in San Antonio, have this,” Bailey said.

“We have this now because of the work of our legislators. There was a cancer clinic in downtown McAllen, a cervical cancer clinic run by UTMB. That is now run by the UTRGV School of Medicine. That was transferred to us.”

Bailey said funding went up for the university.

“Our appropriations were up by about \$22 million this year, (with) an increase of \$12.2 million for the School of Medicine. That is a 21 percent increase for the School of Medicine and \$9.8 million for the general academic (fund). That is a nearly four percent increase there. So, we had significant increases,” Bailey said.

Bailey explained that for university like UTRGV, state funding is vital.

“In our case, state funding is absolutely crucial. State appropriations comprise of about 40 percent of our budget. So, when our appropriations go down, that makes a difference. Where does the rest of the budget come from? Tuition, things like that, endowment and research funding. So that is really a major investment and we appreciate it.”

Bailey then called out the Valley legislative delegation by name.

“All of you know Senator Juan Hinojosa, Senator Eddie Lucio down in Brownsville. Representatives, and we have a bunch of them in the Valley, all of them that work for us: Longoria, Guerra, Canales, Muñoz, Guillen, another Lucio, Dominguez, our newest one down in Brownsville and Mando Martinez. All of those people work for us to make this happen and we appreciate it greatly.”

Trauma Center

Bailey said UTRGV did not only benefit from increased funding. He said headway was made in developing a Level 1 Trauma Center.

“What happened in the legislature was more than just funding for us. You know the Valley has never had a Level 1 Trauma Center. Think about that. We have one and a half million people here. One and a half million people but no access to Level 1 trauma,” Bailey said.

“The legislature provided money this time for DHR and that Level 1 trauma center will be established soon. We look forward to working with them in that. The impact on the Valley really cannot be overestimated. It is a tremendous thing. We are very proud of them and very proud to be part of that and we are very appreciative of our legislative delegation. It is a tremendous thing.”

* Taylor, Steve. "Bailey: Legislative session was good for UTRGV." *Rio Grande Guardian*, 5 June 2019, <https://riograndeguardian.com/bailey-legislative-session-was-good-for-utrgv/>