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June 4, 2009

The Honorable Robert Burns, President
Arizona State Senate
1700 W. Washington, Room 204
Phoenix, AZ 85007

The Honorable Kirk Adams, Speaker of the House
Arizona House of Representatives
1700 W. Washington, Room 221
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear President Burns and Speaker Adams:

On behalf of the Hispanic Association of College and Universities (HACU), I am writing in strong support of a higher education budget which ensures that the higher education systems are able to provide a high quality, affordable, and accessible higher education to the students of the State of Arizona. We understand that, like much of the country, the State of Arizona has experienced a significant economic downturn and that difficult decisions must be made. However, we encourage the Legislature to work with the Governor, higher education leaders, and the business community to find solutions that continue to provide a well educated workforce to strengthen Arizona's economy.

Governor Brewer's recently unveiled budget proposal includes some provisions that will aid Arizona universities in continuing to provide vital services. The budget:

- 1) Protects university funds from legislative sweeps;
- 2) Protects the existing tuition and fee appropriation structure – meaning that tuition and fees students pay for their college education are used for that purpose;
- 3) Protects the non-general fund monies in SPEED for building renewal and new construction, both furthering education and putting people back to work in the construction industry; and
- 4) Uses federal stimulus dollars for higher education funding.

For Arizona to succeed economically, its universities must have adequate resources to ensure academic access and success among low-income and first generation college-going students. Additionally, the state must ensure that there are increases in financial aid that allow low- and moderate- income families to bear the burden of any tuition increases necessitated by cuts in state support to higher education.

We are hopeful that the Legislature will do its best to work with the Governor and higher education and business leaders to fully utilize federal stimulus dollars and find new state resources to support the education of its population and future workforce. I look forward to continuing to work with you to make college a reality for all students.

If we can be of any assistance, Erica Romero, our Executive Director of Western States Legislative Affairs, would be happy to help your office. Erica may be reached at eromero@hacu.net or (916) 442-0392.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Antonio Flores". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Antonio Flores
President and CEO

cc: Members, Arizona State Senate
Members, Arizona House of Representatives
Arizona HACU Member Institutions
Erica Romero, Executive Director of Western States Legislative Affairs, HACU

HACU is a registered lobbyist in Arizona. ID #105749