



January 23, 2025

Commissioner Morath
Texas Education Agency

Dear Commissioner Morath,

We are writing to you on behalf of the Mexican American Legislative Caucus (MALC) to inquire about the Texas Education Agency's response to the Trump Administration's rescission of the "protected areas" policy, which will allow Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers to conduct arrests at schools. Specifically, MALC is requesting clear and detailed guidance from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) on how local school districts and school personnel should respond to and prepare themselves for federal immigration enforcement actions in Texas schools.

MALC is the country's oldest and largest Latino legislative caucus with the purpose of representing the interests of a united Latino constituency across the State of Texas. Texas is home to 1.6 million undocumented people, roughly 111,000 of whom attend Texas public schools. A large percentage of that undocumented population is Latino. As you are aware, schools serve as places of learning, growth, and security for children--regardless of their immigration status. The prospect of ICE officers entering classrooms to detain and remove students presents an unimaginable threat to Texas children's physical safety, emotional wellbeing, and ability to learn. This is true for students with and without status alike.

Additionally, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) strictly limits the disclosure of student records and personally identifiable information without parental consent. Despite these federal protections, school districts are struggling to reconcile conflicting messaging as to how they should interact with ICE agents on their campuses, while also trying manage staff and student concerns. MALC seeks to ensure that school districts have all information necessary to comply with federal laws and regulations and ensure the safety and wellbeing of immigrant students and their families, as well as school staff and personnel.

Given the urgent and sensitive nature of this issue, MALC urges the TEA to issue the following guidance for Texas school districts and school officials:

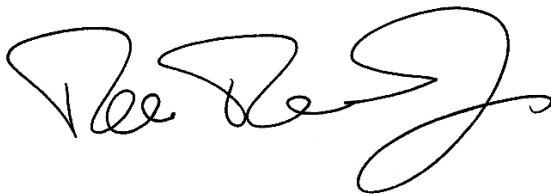
- **Clarify Information Regarding FERPA Obligations.** The TEA should immediately provide explicit direction to school district personnel on protecting student records and ensuring that no student's personal identifiable information is released to ICE without full compliance with federal privacy laws and due process.

- **Set Protocols for ICE Interactions on School Campuses.** The TEA should establish standardized procedures for school staff and personnel when confronted with ICE requests or enforcement actions on campus. This protocol should ensure that any law enforcement presence minimizes disruption to the educational setting and learning environment, and prevent unnecessary harm to students.
- **Provide Trauma-Informed Support for Students.** The TEA should encourage and support expansion of mental health and counseling resources on school campuses to help students cope with the fear and anxiety that ICE presence may cause, as well as repercussions of increased ICE presence in their communities.

Texas has long been committed to providing quality education for all children, regardless of their immigration status. It is imperative that the TEA act swiftly to protect the integrity of our educational institutions and the wellbeing of our students by ensuring that Texas schools are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities when faced with federal immigration enforcement actions. This issue is of critical importance to ensure that schools remain safe and supportive environments for all students, and maintain the integrity of students' legal and educational rights.

We appreciate your time and attention to this matter and look forward to your leadership in addressing this urgent concern and providing necessary guidance to Texas schools.

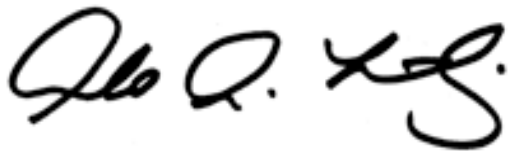
Sincerely,



State Representative Ramon Romero Jr.
Chair, Mexican American Legislative Caucus



State Representative Erin Gamez
Vice Chair, Mexican American Legislative Caucus



State Representative, Armando "Mando" Martinez
Secretary, Mexican American Legislative Caucus



State Representative Armando Walle
Legal Counsel, Mexican American Legislative Caucus



State Representative Mary Ann Perez
Treasurer, Mexican American Legislative Caucus



State Representative Rafael Anchia



State Representative Diego M. Bernal



State Representative Elizabeth "Liz" Campos



State Representative Lulu Flores



State Representative Josey Garcia



State Representative Linda Garcia



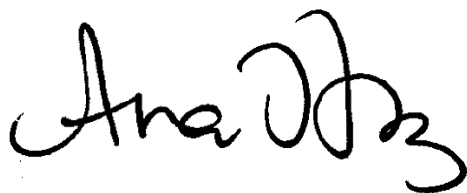
State Representative Cassandra Garcia Hernandez



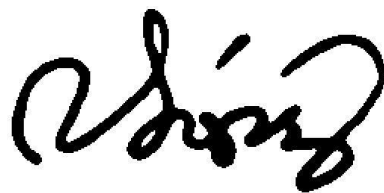
State Representative Jessica Gonzalez



State Representative R.D. 'Bobby' Guerra



State Representative Ana Hernandez



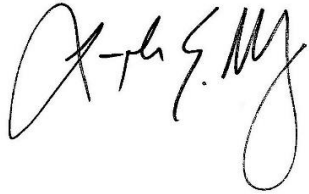
State Representative Ray Lopez



State Representative Trey Martinez Fischer



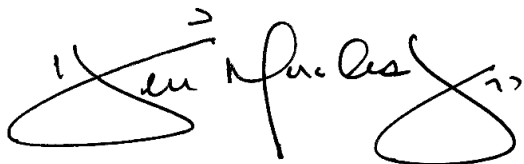
State Representative Terry Meza



State Representative Joe Moody



State Representative Christina Morales



State Representative Eddie Morales



State Representative Penny Morales Shaw



State Representative Vincent Perez



State Representative Ana-Maria Rodriguez Ramos



State Representative Gene Wu