



NELSON W. WOLFF
COUNTY JUDGE
PAUL ELIZONDO TOWER
101 W. NUEVA STREET, SUITE 1019
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78205-3482
(210) 335-1326 • FAX (210) 335-2926
Email - nwolff@bexar.org

November 9, 2016

William H. McRaven
Office of the Chancellor
The University of Texas System
601 Colorado Street, 4th Floor
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Admiral McRaven,

Since the early 1970s, the University of Texas at San Antonio and the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio have become part of our region's identity and keys to our prosperity. As elected officials, we are keenly aware of the roles they play in educating young San Antonians and growing our No. 1 industry, health care and the biosciences. Our community has worked hard to be good partners to the UT System, and we want to help strengthen these institutions.

That's why we ask you to formally consider merging UTSA and our Health Science Center into a single, freestanding academic institution.

We believe that combining UTSA and UTHSCSA would create a national powerhouse, enhancing Texas's reputation for academic excellence. A merger would expand the research capacity and academic strength currently enjoyed by the two institutions separately. The combined university would clearly find itself on the state's list of Tier One institutions. It would also strengthen the Health Science Center's mission of training doctors and nurses; conducting world-class research; fighting cancer, diabetes, and other diseases; and improving health care throughout South Texas.

As you know, the UT System appointed a panel in 2009 to evaluate a potential combination of the universities. The panel recommended maintaining the status quo. However, we believe the subsequent development of new medical schools in Austin and the Rio Grande Valley, both part of universities offering undergraduate and graduate tracks, is ample reason to revisit the question of a merger.

Indeed, universities across the country — including in California and Texas — have demonstrated the benefits of undergraduate and graduate universities that include medical schools.

For a more detailed discussion of the benefits of a merger, we have attached a guest editorial we recently wrote for the San Antonio Express-News.

We hope you will give our request serious consideration in the coming months. Of course, we are available to discuss this further at your convenience.

Thank you for your time, and for your service to the UT System, to the State of Texas, and to our nation.

Sincerely,

Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff

Councilman Joe Krier