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LSG Analysis & Evaluation of Proposition 4 on November Constitutional Amendment Ballot

Proposition 4 (House Joint Resolution 14-2, 81st Legislature)

LSG Recommendation: **Favorable**

"The constitutional amendment establishing the national research university fund to enable emerging research universities in this state to achieve national prominence as major research universities and transferring the balance of the higher education fund to the national research university fund."

Texas lags behind other major states in the number of nationally recognized research universities, with only two public research universities of national prominence--The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University. Texas must continue strengthening these existing universities, and it also must focus resources on establishing additional nationally prominent research universities. The proposed amendment and its accompanying enabling legislation, House Bill 51, Acts of the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, 2009, would in effect repurpose the permanent Higher Education Fund and spur emerging state research universities in Texas in their efforts to achieve nationally recognized research status.

With far more qualified applicants than it can admit to its two public, nationally recognized, tier-one universities, Texas is losing thousands of its high school graduates to doctorate-granting universities in other states each year. Creating additional national research universities in Texas would better position the state to achieve its vision of a globally competitive workforce by providing greater educational opportunities within the state for its best and brightest students.

The state's additional investment in institutions of higher education would not only greatly expand the possibilities for students, resulting in a better educated populace, but would help the state maintain a competitive economic edge in technology and human capital in the 21st century. Investing in higher education yields a population of citizens, residing in the state, that can effectively serve in the 21st century workforce.

Top tier university development in the state of Texas is clearly necessary to provide adequate supply to meet the demands of the growing population.

For additional information, please contact LSG Director Joe Madden at 713-443-9421 or 512-463-0524.

The Legislative Study Group (LSG) is a caucus in the Texas House of Representatives that is committed to developing sound public policy that benefits all Texans. Founded in 1995, the LSG has worked through eight regular sessions and eight special sessions of the Texas Legislature, becoming one of the leading policy shops in the Texas Capitol. Printed In House.