



The Honorable Senator Joan Huffman
Chair, Committee on Finance
Texas State Senate

The Honorable Senator Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa
Vice Chair, Committee on Finance
Texas State Senate

The Honorable Senator Brandon Creighton
Chair, Subcommittee on Higher Education
Texas State Senate

The Honorable Senator Mayes Middleton
Vice Chair, Subcommittee on Higher Education
Texas State Senate

Dear Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs,

On behalf of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), I am writing to express our organization’s views on current Texas legislation in the diversity, equity, and inclusion space. As legislation is being considered in the Senate chamber, we have concerns as to how they might impact our on-campus student chapter members pursuing careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

The Hispanic population represents a 40.2 percent of the entire state of Texas. With nearly 12 million of its population being Hispanic, any proposed language limiting expenditures made by colleges and universities to direct-support student organizations like SHPE, could potentially disenfranchise a vast majority of Hispanic constituency in the Texas region seeking to strengthen their STEM studies and advance workforce opportunities with SHPE’s local support, and its nationwide network.

SHPE is a non-partisan non-profit organization that, since 1974, has dedicated its mission to increasing and promoting access to STEM education and advancing workforce development opportunities for the Hispanic community. We primarily accomplish this through more than 250 collegiate student chapters around the nation. SHPE’s mission of bridging the gap between Hispanics and STEM is, continues to be, an essential component to strengthening the domestic STEM workforce, related National Security industries, and improving emerging technologies needs by bringing Hispanics into the workforce of critical industries by way of leadership and hands-on opportunities at on-campus student chapters.

In Texas, SHPE has a grand total of 2456 members all across the state. Our membership is comprised of students that are first-generation, military veterans, identify with special abilities, from a low socio-economic background, or transfer from community colleges in their undergraduate and graduate STEM degrees. Through our college and university chapters, members receive access to more than \$300,000 in scholarships, paid internships, fellowships, and co-op opportunities. They also get face time with Fortune 500 companies and government agencies seeking to grow local economies with domestic Hispanic talent. Furthermore, students obtain access to a nationwide network that not only brings them mentorship, career, and professional development benefits, but also relevant competitions and awards opportunities that strengthen their road map to successful and fulfilling jobs in the STEM industry.

To further our mission of growing the STEM education and workforce pipeline, our membership engages with local communities at high-schools, middle-schools, and elementary-schools to support, enhance,

and complement current K-12 STEM learning. Through these community outreach programs, our members connect with young students and increase STEM education access, awareness, while improving pathways to college-readiness. Moreover, our members also connect with parents to broaden and expand their financial literacy knowledge in order to prepare them for college and better support their students throughout their STEM journey.

With the leadership of our on-campus chapters, SHPE continues to positively impact graduation rates while equipping future generations to be highly skilled, problem-solving, and solution finders in Texas' STEM workforce.

We strongly recommend that you ensure that the Texas legislature does not intentionally or inadvertently risk cutting off funding for student organizations like SHPE chapters. The critical role that our chapters play in growing Texas' short-term and long-term STEM education and workforce pipeline is well-evidenced and beneficial to the State's economy.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our recommendations in the above and thank you for your leadership and consideration of our priorities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Miguel Alemañy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Miguel Alemañy
Chief Executive Officer