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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TEXAS LT. GOV. DAVID DEWHURST AND SPEAKER JOE STRAUS ANNOUNCE JOINT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION GOVERNANCE, EXCELLENCE AND TRANSPARENCY

AUSTIN---Today, Lt. Governor David Dewhurst and Texas House Speaker Joe Straus (San Antonio) announced appointments to the Joint Oversight Committee on Higher Education Governance, Excellence, and Transparency. The joint oversight committee will: Ensure governing boards are following best practices when they develop and implement policy; look for major policy decisions to be adequately vetted and discussed transparently; and protect the excellence and high quality of our state's institutions of higher education.

"Over the last eight years, the Legislature has invested \$7.5 billion to improve higher education and provide greater access to Texas students who otherwise could not afford to get their degree," said Lt. Governor Dewhurst. "I believe the state's partnership with our colleges and universities merits ongoing involvement with the Legislature – not just during Session – in order to achieve the educational excellence Texans expect and our students deserve."

"Texans have made significant investments in higher education," said Speaker Straus. "We must do all that we can to ensure that these public institutions operate transparently and with world-class leadership. The talented members that we are appointing today understand that effective university governing systems enable our students to compete on the global stage."

Lt. Governor Dewhurst has appointed Sen. Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo) as joint chair of the committee. The committee members include Senators John Carona (R-Dallas); Robert Duncan (R-Lubbock); Rodney Ellis (D-Houston); Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo); Kirk Watson (D-Austin).

Speaker Straus has appointed Representative Dan Branch (R-Dallas) as joint chair of the committee. The committee members include Representatives Dennis Bonnen (R-Angleton); Joaquin Castro (D-San Antonio); Eric Johnson (D-Dallas); Lois Kolkhorst (R-Brenham); and Jim Pitts (R-Waxahachie).

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