



# Executive Summary of Remarks

AS DELIVERED TO THE UT SYSTEM BOARD OF REGENTS ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2011

*By Gene Powell  
Chairman, UT System Board of Regents*

It is a great honor to serve as Chairman of the UT System Board of Regents. We have a great team with tremendous talent, intellect, and experience. Together we can go forward to accomplish great things.

We have three goals:

1. Improve educational quality.
2. Increase undergraduate enrollment and the number of degrees conferred.
3. Reduce the cost of a baccalaureate degree. Tuition greatly outstrips inflation now, and this burden falls on the shoulders of Texas families.

We have challenges, but we should not talk about them in draconian terms. We have 15 strong institutions, 15 strong presidents, an excellent Chancellor, System staff, and Board of Regents. Our System institutions have 205,000 students and 105,000 employees. We are a large, well run organization with great resources and talent. Our job as we go forward into this century is to find ways to do what we do better, less expensively, and for more students.

We have a great State behind us. We have great leaders with a commitment to balancing the budget and keeping us out of debt. I have faith that we will continue to be great.

Higher education is facing many challenges. Meeting these challenges requires us to be flexible and open-minded. We have to look at what others are doing across the country.

I am announcing the creation of two special advisory committees:

1. Efficiency
2. Distance Learning

We will assemble the members next week. They will immediately go out and look at what others are doing and bring back suggestions to the Board of Regents, who will then implement ideas across the System. I know that the Chancellor and his staff have been working on efficiency for some time, and we will work with him on this.

In addition, Vice Chancellor Randa Safady has talked to us about changing our focus on philanthropic giving. How we use philanthropy to fund scholarships and help students. A slight movement of her numbers will help us do great things.

When we go to the Capitol, let's use facts and move forward. Texas has a great future; we just need to get through this rough spot.

I have asked Regent Jim Dannenbaum to spearhead our efforts in technology transfer. He will also remain our liaison to the Governor's office in that area. We don't know how much money we can produce out of research and invention. We need to take great ideas and great intellectual power and turn it into financial power.

Let me conclude with a sports metaphor. I remember that at halftime, there was never chaos in the locker room, even if you were down 14 points. In 15 minutes we analyzed the first half, broke it down, looked at our strong points and weak points, revised our plan, and went back on the field.

We've gone through a rough first half. We need to come together, focus, figure out what we've got to do, and go forward. I have faith that this group has the strength to do it.

Keep in mind our goals: lower cost, improve quality, more access to more students. Improve our enrollment and number of degrees. If we do this, we will have left our mark on the UT System. I promise you I will work as hard as anyone at the table. I won't ask you to do something I won't do. I plan to roll up my sleeves and go to work. And I ask you to do the same.