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December 1, 2020

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Jennifer Jones
Executive Director, Sunset Advisory Commission
PO Box 13066
Austin, Texas 78711-3066

Dear Ms. Jones,

Thank you for sending the Sunset Advisory Commission's report of its review of the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission (THGC) and allowing an opportunity to provide comment. As you know, the Commissioner of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) – or the Commissioner's designee – serves as an ex-officio member of the THGC.

I am pleased that Texas institutions of higher education have taken a leading role in Holocaust and genocide education. For example, the Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies at The University of Texas at Dallas provides valuable research resources and offers a nationally recognized graduate certificate program in Holocaust Studies. Other institutions offer a variety of degree programs, certificates, and innovative courses that relate to Holocaust and genocide issues. I support their efforts, and I encourage appropriate, effective, and innovative ways for all Texas institutions of higher education to teach the lessons of the Holocaust and the devastating effects of genocide.

The THGC has collaborated with the THECB and Texas higher education institutions many times since its establishment. One effort resulted in the creation of online professional development modules that assisted faculty with incorporating the Social and Personal Responsibility student learning objectives into the statewide core curriculum. In 2011 and again in 2019, THECB staff provided the THGC with course information that allowed the THGC to work directly with institutions to better understand what existing resources are available in the state. Most recently, Dr. Allen Michie, who serves as the Commissioner's designee to the THGC, collaborated with faculty at The University of Texas at Dallas and The University of Texas of the Permian Basin to develop recommendations to allow THGC education awards to be made to Texas university students and student organizations.

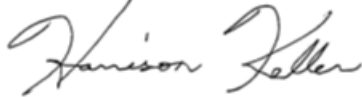
This past September, the THECB launched the [Open Educational Resources of Texas \(OERTX\) repository](#) which allows for digital educational materials to be freely shared among all Texas faculty and students. I welcome the THGC to include its educational materials in the repository and to continue to serve as liaisons with the four Holocaust museums in Texas to expand distribution of their existing materials through this online resource.

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The THECB supports Holocaust and genocide education throughout Texas at all levels of the curriculum. My staff and I are ready to work with organizations and institutions and serve as a resource in this endeavor.

Please let me know if I can be of any help or provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harrison Keller". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Harrison Keller, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Higher Education