

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMISSION
ON EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR HISPANICS

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POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

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TUESDAY
APRIL 1, 2014

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The Subcommittee met in the Chapman Conference Center at Miami Dade College, 300 Northeast 2nd Avenue, Miami, Florida, at 1:30 p.m., Luis Fraga and Lisette Nieves, Co-Chairs, presiding.

PRESENT:

LUIS FRAGA, Co-Chair
LISETTE NIEVES, Co-Chair
MARCO DAVIS

JOSE DIAZ

SARA LUNDQUIST

MARK MCLENDON

DARLINE ROBLES

RICARDO ROMO

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(1:52 p.m.)

CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Let's go around the table. The Commissioners know each other. But we don't know our guests who are here. So I thought we'd go around the table and just say who we are, what we do and I'll start with myself. I'm Luis Fraga. I'm at the University of Washington.

MEMBER DIAZ: My name is Jose Diaz. I'm with a group called FL Dream and we work with immigrant youth to apply DACA.

CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Wonderful.

MEMBER McLENDON: I am Mark McLendon. I'm actually from Venezuela. I know. I get that look a lot of times. I'm the CFO for Tarrant County College. It's a community college in Fort Worth.

CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Fort Worth.

MEMBER McLENDON: Yes, we have probably about 100,000 students. And we've got about 27 percent Latino.

1 MEMBER ROBLES: Darlene Robles,
2 University of Southern California.

3 MR. CELA: Jose Cela with SER-Jobs
4 for Progress. We're a national organization
5 of 30 affiliates, non-profits around the
6 country. I'm a director from Miami.

7 MEMBER ROMO: I'm Ricardo Romo.
8 I'm President of the University of Texas San
9 Antonio.

10 (Off the record comments.)

11 I was just in Fort Worth.

12 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Oh, were you?

13 MEMBER ROMO: I had to give a talk
14 at a conference in Fort Worth. Yes.

15 MR. DAVIS: Marco Davis. Deputy
16 Director of the Initiative.

17 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: Sara Lundquist,
18 Santa Ana College, Santa Ana, California.

19 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Lisette Nieves,
20 Brooklyn, New York. Lingo Ventures.

21 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: And our
22 transcriber is.

1 COURT REPORTER: Nancy Retzer.

2 (Chorus of hi's and thank yous).

3 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Thank you for
4 doing this for us. We appreciate it very
5 much.

6 We gave you an outline of what
7 we're planning to do for our second symposium
8 and that's the primary focus of our work for
9 at least through June.

10 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Yes.

11 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: And then after
12 June once we get our report done. So we
13 wanted to ask if you had any questions or
14 responses to any section of our symposium.
15 They're the three areas that we're focusing
16 on, the college/university rating system, post
17 secondary education and work force development
18 and the -- What are we calling the third one,
19 Sara?

20 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: The community
21 college. We have a more extended name for it.
22 But that's for today's conversation.

1 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Right. I thought
2 we had --

3 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: We did. We
4 have a little phrase.

5 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: The Community
6 College completion agenda I think or something
7 like that is what we're trying to decide on.
8 And wondered if you had any responses or if
9 our fellow Commissioners that have not been
10 involved directly in putting it together if
11 you had any thoughts or responses.

12 We could have added at least 100
13 other topics there. We chose these because of
14 their timeliness we thought. We also chose
15 them because of developments in federal
16 policy. And we wanted to make sure that
17 Latinos were not left out of explicit
18 consideration of certain policy decisions.

19 So that's how we came to that
20 judgment. And we were informed as I believe
21 both Sara and Lisa had said earlier by a
22 previous meeting that we held and a discussion

1 about what issues seem to be important at a
2 meeting similar to this one and getting input
3 from a number of different people. So that's
4 how we decided on it.

5 But we wanted to give ourselves an
6 opportunity to rethink that or rethink
7 specific dimensions of those larger three
8 themes or anything of that sort. If anyone
9 has any response. Lisa and Sara, I don't know
10 if you have any further responses or comments
11 that you would like to make.

12 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: I only wanted
13 to add one thing which we haven't had a chance
14 to really highlight which is that the 2012 USC
15 symposium resulted in 18 focused
16 recommendations for policy and practice from
17 our higher education group. And the 2014
18 symposium will open with a progress report on
19 the status of those 18 issues.

20 I just want to throw open for our
21 collective consideration the possibility that
22 on some we will be able to identify

1 substantive progress. On others we might
2 refresh our strategy agenda. And it is
3 possible we will retire some of those
4 recommendations.

5 I only wanted to point to that to
6 underscore the depth of our commitment to
7 action and progress on these recommendations.
8 As we prepare for our symposium, the idea is
9 very distinctively different from an academic
10 research paper that sort of closes by listing
11 a set of questions for further research.

12 We want to pose an action for
13 urgent progress. And we want to commit to
14 helping to create momentum to achieve progress
15 in those areas and to have that kind of
16 vitality be associated with the convenings
17 that we have which are big pillars that mark
18 our journey across this landscape. So that's
19 the only reflection that I wanted to add to
20 the context that we're creating. Thank you.

21 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Anything else?

22 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: No. I think as

1 we discuss a little more I throw out some
2 things.

3 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Great. Any
4 thoughts anyone has? Anyone?

5 MEMBER DIAZ: I just wanted to
6 know has there been any thought or any
7 indication on like a program like DACA does
8 for access to post secondary education for
9 Hispanic youth as far as a conversation. Is
10 there anything you can share on that?

11 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: As appropriate
12 certainly in our first symposium, the issue
13 comes up about how to best serve the needs and
14 interests of and resources of.

15 MEMBER DIAZ: Right. Because the
16 reason why I bring it up is because a lot of
17 youth applying for DACA down here in South
18 Florida are doing it so they can access higher
19 education.

20 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: Absolutely. Or
21 are already in higher education.

22 MEMBER DIAZ: Yes. And certainly

1 like initiatives like giving in-state tuition
2 waivers for those, maybe college access with
3 DACA's access and also FIU has certainly
4 helped in that. That's something we focus on
5 and we have workshops on it to education the
6 youth on how they can get scholarships and all
7 that stuff.

8 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Yes. We are
9 hosting it at the City University at New York
10 which has one of the most robust kind of DACA
11 support systems for students. So I just want
12 to say that in fact a student keynote address
13 is actually going to be someone who went
14 through the process of that, organized the
15 Dream club across the university.

16 I put that out there because it's
17 always -- I would say instead of it being an
18 individual issue, it's an effect across the
19 work that we do if that makes sense.

20 MEMBER DIAZ: Yes.

21 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: So it's always
22 there. I also want to acknowledge that this

1 has enormous regional impact. And sometimes
2 when we discuss DACA we have to be very
3 conscious of what is this region doing, what
4 percentage of students does it impact here
5 versus here. Right.

6 And it shifts. Right. It's not
7 the number one issue for every area. So we
8 have to respect that piece as well. But I
9 don't think that we've ever had a convening
10 where it's not come up as an issue or
11 discussed it.

12 MEMBER ROMO: Two things. One is
13 some of the battles in some of the states are
14 just to keep it and retain it. In other
15 states, to gain it. So you have battles.
16 That's why the battles. And those battles are
17 different.

18 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Yes. They are.

19 MEMBER ROMO: So in Texas we're
20 trying to keep what we have which is in-state
21 tuition for the students. And another one
22 that's coming up is we've been giving in-state

1 tuition for students from Mexico who for a
2 long time came over from -- went back and
3 forth. Now it's harder.

4 So we're trying to maintain that
5 momentum of being a fair, progressive state in
6 that respect. But I will say just this past
7 Thursday I was a keynote speaker for the Cesar
8 Chavez March which is the largest march in
9 America in San Antonio.

10 And I went and spoke. What I
11 found is the students were very, very astute
12 about saying here's 25,000 people and of
13 25,000, 22,000 or 24,000 are connected to
14 justice and wages and jobs for not just farm
15 workers anymore but for people.

16 So the partnership is there. I
17 mean the dreamers showed up. We gave some
18 moments to the dreamers to speak and one who
19 spoke and she said I got here at age two and
20 didn't know until I was 18 that I wasn't an
21 American citizen. And it's a great story
22 because there were 500 people. "So I went on

1 to do with this and then I went on to TSA.
2 And my father was a gardener and say Mariachi
3 songs to make some extra money. I graduated
4 from college with no debt."

5 We just gave this person
6 affordability. So we hit affordability and we
7 have access. But access now extends not just
8 to access to Hispanics but access now to
9 dreamers. So it's an ongoing battle. But I
10 think what they did is what you're doing right
11 now. Come talk to people and get partners.

12 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Can I add one
13 thing on that issue that we're probably
14 dealing with more on the practitioner level?
15 When we did the symposium last time, there was
16 all the excitement and energy about the
17 application. And what we discussed was
18 waiting to see -- Luis said it. Did anyone
19 get their card yet? We wanted to know if it
20 was happening. Right. That's where we were
21 two years ago.

22 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: Yes.

1 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: We are in a
2 place right now where we have tens of
3 thousands who are feeling a little depressed
4 about it. And I have to say this piece which
5 is what we've done is opened the aspirations.
6 But we've still limited it.

7 And it's like what's going to
8 happen next. I can only think about my life
9 in these increments of time.

10 And so I say that which was not a
11 discussion we had two years ago. So today it
12 is a kind of a different discussion. There is
13 "Yes, thank you. I have my car. I can
14 travel." I can't believe how many want to go
15 to Disneyland. I thought it was just a
16 football player, whatever.

17 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: It's because
18 they're in New York.

19 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: I know. Maybe
20 they're in New York. Or Disney World. But
21 all jokes aside, it really is not "Wait a
22 minute. Why do I have to think about my life

1 in these short terms spurts? Why can't I
2 think about my future in the long term?"

3 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Right.

4 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: So that's
5 another piece about the piece we're talking
6 about well-structured reform, immigration
7 reform, that I think we're going to start
8 hearing a new voice that we didn't hear two
9 years ago.

10 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Yes.

11 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: And, Lisette,
12 if I could just build on that. I think what
13 we heard this morning is that for every DACA
14 student we have we have one who hasn't
15 petitioned yet for DACA.

16 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: That's true.

17 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: So I felt this
18 title wave one for whom the clock is ticking
19 towards their expiration. And now they do
20 feel held hostage. And I just think it's
21 important to remember without comprehensive
22 immigration reform which is the refrain to the

1 symphony of our Commission that you hear all
2 the time, without that, these student will be
3 stuck in a cycle of getting tiny increments of
4 permission to continue their lives and to plan
5 a future.

6 And there's a cliff after the
7 community college because without any federal
8 aid to these students even if you're fortunate
9 enough to reside in a state that gives you in-
10 state tuition there's a cliff. Your costs
11 will raise exponentially even for the
12 university, public university, system as you
13 move out of community college.

14 So I don't think we're giving that
15 much attention to -- There's another class
16 ceiling at the associates level because of the
17 exponential increase at that next level. So
18 please know that our attention is riveted on
19 these issues. Our authority doesn't extend
20 directly to them. But you'll find them close
21 to heads and our hearts.

22 MEMBER ROBLES: I had a

1 conversation at the break and the three of you
2 organizers have been fabulous leading
3 everything. But I haven't read of the
4 conference because it's been just my fault.

5 What I want to know is where does
6 K-12 play into this because that's my
7 background. And often times we have higher ed
8 over here. Yet we're your pipeline.

9 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Right.

10 MEMBER ROBLES: So if there's some
11 way to include that in any of these when we
12 have our conference call in the next couple of
13 weeks.

14 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Yes.

15 MEMBER ROBLES: What we can do to
16 make that linkage across because we're your
17 pipeline and how to infuse that. I don't know
18 if it's possible, but let's talk about that.

19 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Go ahead. You
20 had a comment on this.

21 MEMBER McLENDON: I do. I wanted
22 to transition to another subject. I think

1 DACA is very important, but we need to put the
2 horse before we put the cart.

3 If I look at the gateway for
4 Latinos to higher education it's community
5 college. We service at least 80 percent.

6 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Absolutely.

7 MEMBER McLENDON: And if you look
8 at it, there's very few institutions who
9 control the biggest number. If you take the
10 Big 5 what we call ourselves in Texas, we
11 service between three-quarters to one million
12 students.

13 If we succeed or fail, Texas will
14 follow us. If Texas fails, the country will
15 fail just for the mere fact that out of the
16 three million high school graduates, one
17 million, the increase of 50 percent will come
18 out of the State of Texas.

19 So it is imperative that we look
20 at what we're doing today with what we have
21 before we extend the pipeline. So I'm going
22 to say this in a comment and I think I'll

1 expand it more and in there I'll make it
2 shorter. I look at the number seven. The
3 number seven to me is important. And I'll
4 tell you why seven is very important and then
5 I'll come exactly to the conclusion.

6 A child between seven and nine is
7 in the third grade, right. The way that Texas
8 determines their prisons' beds is how many
9 kids in third grade fail. That's how we count
10 our beds.

11 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Yeah. That's
12 national. Right.

13 MEMBER McLENDON: So we already
14 know in the third grade we have a problem. So
15 what some of the measures is let's test that
16 child and we find out that it's glasses. It
17 had nothing to do.

18 The second thing is when we look
19 at the transfers over in Tarrant County we
20 look at least at what is a grade level that
21 all these high school students have. Most of
22 them when we present them with an Accuplacer

1 they're sitting, the majority, 70 percent, on
2 7th grade English and Math.

3 This student even though he has a
4 high school degree or GED cannot go into
5 college. So what we have to do is we have to
6 do remediation. So I think open access is
7 fantastic. And we're for it.

8 We will take anybody or everybody.
9 But what happens is a lot of funds are taken
10 to take that child over. The one who fails
11 out of that program and never gets to college
12 has a great opportunity to join the TDC. TDC
13 is the Texas Department of Corrections.

14 I had an opportunity to go there
15 and talk to the commissioner. And I encourage
16 your entire committee to go see what happens
17 in the Texas prison systems. The Texas prison
18 systems tells me for every individual that we
19 have in prison which is a disproportional
20 amount of African American and Latino males
21 are there.

22 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Absolutely.

1 MEMBER McLENDON: It costs
2 \$37,000. And if you figure that he is or she
3 is supporting another one it's costing us
4 \$70,000 for every year that individual is in
5 there.

6 So we have to look at holistically
7 how do we better those numbers. Some of the
8 things that I think that you can help us is
9 you are addressing a lot of the right things.
10 One, how do we look at an early engagement of
11 the child? Second, how do we start measuring
12 their progress in the 7th or 8th grade?
13 Third, how do we establish a career for the
14 child? And then, fourth, how do we make
15 community colleges better equipped to deal
16 with some of the problems?

17 And my recommendation to you is
18 that all of these work together. But we need
19 -- how do you say -- a summarized, cookie-
20 cutter approach to hit the 80/20 rule. And
21 this Commission would be more successful if it
22 picks the highlights.

1 We can't solve every problem. We
2 can't fix every child. Not every child needs
3 to go to Stanford. We have programs for
4 airplane mechanics. We have programs for
5 firemen. We have programs for welders that
6 will allow them to go from a \$5.00 to a \$25 to
7 \$40,000 a year.

8 But we get so much information.
9 We get so many theories. We get so many
10 specialists that after a while it's sometimes
11 a little perplexing. So I think that if we
12 could narrow our focus to saying "Here's ten
13 things you can do" or "Here are eight things
14 to do" instead of 45. I think there are so
15 many that I think it's overwhelming.

16 The other thing I'm going to say
17 is my wife is a schoolteacher. And I'll just
18 say the last anecdote because I think the
19 opinion of everybody is important. And she's
20 a Catholic schoolteacher.

21 But when we moved to Fort Worth --
22 she's from Peru -- the phone in my house I

1 wanted to unplug it because it will not stop
2 ringing for Latino or bilingual teachers.

3 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Absolutely.

4 MEMBER McLENDON: So she is going
5 to a school. Now she is going to public
6 school. So the difference between a faith-
7 based teacher and a public school teacher is
8 different. Their demeanor is different.
9 Their cordiality is different because the
10 system is changing.

11 But anyway when she goes to these
12 schools she came one day telling me this child
13 was hanging on to her skirt and wanted to go
14 home with her. And she said, "Why? Why do
15 you want to go?"

16 He said, "Well, last night my
17 sister was trying to stab my dad because my
18 dad wanted to hit her with a stick because
19 she's pregnant." And so the child says, "I
20 don't want to go home. I want to go with you
21 because you're so sweet."

22 Now that little angel in the first

1 grade when he goes to the fifth grade is
2 already using inappropriate language. And
3 when he goes or she goes to the seventh grade
4 turning him around is a difficult state.

5 So all I'm saying is I think that
6 all the things that you all have in mind are
7 excellent. But you could kind of summarize
8 them for us and come to the organizations. We
9 need to have people at the table who are going
10 to make the difference of the bigger numbers.
11 And so you need to have -- Like in Texas, if
12 you come and you talk to the five largest
13 community colleges, we will ensure that the
14 other schools will do the same just by that.
15 So you need to have us at the table.

16 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: So you may be --
17 Can I respond to you? You may have done this
18 already, but if you look at our first report
19 from our first symposium and we have looked at
20 the three specific areas, right.

21 MEMBER McLENDON: Right.

22 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: One was accessing

1 financial aid. A second was increasing
2 academic competence and directly get at the K-
3 12 sort of issues.

4 MEMBER McLENDON: Right.

5 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: And the third one
6 empowering Latino families. We have some very
7 specific recommendations.

8 The reason we did it that way was
9 to serve the purpose that you just described
10 to try to provide not a cookie-cutter way of
11 getting it done, but how to initiate more
12 creative thinking but based upon actual
13 experiences of educational institutions in
14 combination with research, in combination with
15 developments and federal policy.

16 So some of what you're saying I
17 think has been part of our approach. And we
18 did it by making some tough decisions as to
19 what we would leave out.

20 So what you're asking us to do I
21 think we've done. And what we're doing in
22 this next session is we're trying to do it in

1 the same sort of way by focusing in specific
2 areas that we think are particularly critical
3 in moving the needle for our Latino students.

4 MEMBER McLENDON: Could you
5 prioritize?

6 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: We did.

7 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: We did.

8 MEMBER McLENDON: Even within
9 those recommendations, you did?

10 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: We did.

11 MEMBER McLENDON: Okay. I'm
12 sorry.

13 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: The way we set up
14 the recommendations is that there are
15 immediate ones. So there are six in each
16 area. The first two are immediate. That is
17 we recommend that they be enacted right away.

18 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: Now. Yes.

19 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: The second two
20 are medium term. That is enacted within the
21 next two to four. These are not
22 recommendations just for the Federal

1 Government. They've got a large Federal
2 Government component for a Federal Advisory
3 Commission. Right.

4 But there are things in there
5 about institutional responsibility, about
6 states. Part of our logic in looking in these
7 policy areas is that they acknowledge the fact
8 that the Federal Government isn't just the
9 only actor. But you need to instill action at
10 all different levels.

11 MEMBER McLENDON: Right.

12 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Federal, state,
13 local and institutional. And so the
14 recommendations that we make facilitate that
15 sort of understanding. And then the last two
16 are long term, ten years or more, in terms of
17 what we think might affect the research and
18 philanthropic and larger policy agendas that
19 are being pursued. We did that very
20 intentionally as we put those together. We're
21 hoping to follow a similar model in what we're
22 going to do in this particular circumstance.

1 In the K-12, I just wanted to
2 respond very quickly. The whole idea of the
3 rating system I think has to have a
4 fundamental understanding of what the
5 capacities are, your point as well, of many of
6 our students at access institutions and
7 increasingly other institutions. You can't
8 talk about that without talking about K
9 through 12 very explicitly.

10 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Right. And our
11 workforce in higher education (1) is having
12 someone who has a statewide -- Right here in
13 Florida -- called Take Stock in Children. And
14 the person who runs that literally I mean, as
15 you know about this, used to be a college
16 president and now is running that. It's for
17 children across Florida building the pipeline
18 to higher ed.

19 And I think the piece that we
20 don't often talk about is that one thing they
21 do want to do is work. Right. And the
22 choices that Latino males make to not to go to

1 school is usually related to going to work.
2 Not going to take drugs. Not going to be
3 engaged in violence.

4 We know that about decision
5 making. So if we know that why are we not
6 creating pathways that respect these choices
7 within it?

8 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: Within the
9 system.

10 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: So that's one
11 that's going to be looking at that, too. I
12 think that as we said we can't think
13 vertically about this. We have to think
14 horizontally about it.

15 I do want to recognize that there
16 are still certain things that we know we could
17 do better on. And I will say coming from a
18 state where municipally that's who runs the
19 show because we can't count the state to run
20 the show.

21 I'm just being honest. Just
22 funding wise \$1.0 million in the school

1 system. New York City pays for 60 percent of
2 that bill. No other city does this. Right.
3 So the governor and the mayor have this fight.
4 I'm just saying that as an example.

5 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Right. It's
6 different circumstances.

7 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: And it's really
8 interesting. It's different circumstances and
9 I don't think that's always a negative thing.
10 But it's an interesting relationship about
11 power play and who makes decisions, who
12 doesn't and stuff like that.

13 What we do know is that there are
14 some things that we continue to do in HSIs
15 that we know do not serve our young people.
16 And it's not about political will. It's about
17 leadership. If we know putting someone
18 through a standard 16 weeks of remedial
19 education is going to guarantee that more than
20 half will not continue, why do we do it? When
21 we know what Miami did, they've done boot
22 camps and it works.

1 I'm just giving this. We know
2 this. We know this.

3 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: We know that.

4 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: And we don't do
5 it. That is not a Federal decision. That is
6 not even a state decision. This is about will
7 and leadership that can make that happen. And
8 I throw that there because this is about us
9 holding each other accountable as well.

10 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: And, Lisette, I
11 want to build on that just to narrow the lens
12 a little out of commitment to accomplish the
13 recommendations that we have and to invite our
14 colleagues joining at the table to know that
15 this Commission is really centered around Goal
16 2020 which is a completion centered goal.

17 It's not a goal of how to improve
18 the systemic efficiency of the public higher
19 education system or the elite privates or the
20 non-elite privates. It's about completion.
21 And so I want you to know it's about Latino
22 completion.

1 So that does require us to look
2 enormously at the front area of entry higher
3 education institutions. But I want to just
4 refocus your attention on that because we
5 actually believe that having the courage to
6 narrow our focus is the only thing that will
7 enable us to actually succeed in accomplishing
8 our recommendations.

9 We're trying to be courageous
10 about that. And we're trying to find the very
11 best priorities knowing that if we have this
12 many our boat won't float.

13 MEMBER ROMO: Yes. I think we
14 pretty much settled it. I mean we did our
15 work. We got the priorities of what's going
16 on. If anybody has any additional thoughts
17 they can send them. I think we are now
18 looking at the future.

19 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Yes, very future
20 oriented.

21 MEMBER ROMO: And now the pressing
22 thing as a priority is the ranking/rating

1 system.

2 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Absolutely, yes.

3 MEMBER ROMO: So I'm going to
4 leave shortly. If you want to engage in that
5 I'm happy to have a conversation going on
6 that.

7 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Let's do it.

8 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Other thoughts?
9 Ideas? Reactions? Responses?

10 MEMBER ROMO: Is this on the
11 ranking/rating system?

12 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Yes.

13 PARTICIPANT: The only question I
14 had was the one about the higher education and
15 work force. What was the hot button there? Or
16 what was the thing?

17 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: So quite often
18 in thinking about the rankings and ratings, it
19 came up like as if it was planted. "Well, if
20 we have to measure what the salaries are and
21 the jobs that they go to related to their
22 majors."

1 And I'm a political science and
2 philosophy graduate at every level and I get
3 it. We're killing humanity. I mean gloom
4 and doom on this all the time.

5 There was a report that just came
6 out by Gallup that said 90 percent of chief
7 academic officers felt highly confident that
8 they were preparing their graduates for the
9 workforce. Ten percent of the largest
10 employers in this country, only ten percent,
11 felt that college degree with that.

12 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: It's the
13 opposite.

14 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: There's a gap.

15 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: And it's a
16 complete opposite.

17 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Not 80/20.

18 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: And so I put
19 that out there and some of that is because (a)
20 there aren't robust ways of engaging the two.
21 And you know what? I get it. You know what?
22 Teaching someone to do something and creating.

1 I'm not saying college presidents
2 have to do all things. But there is where
3 there is a third sector that has a strong role
4 in figuring this out as well, too.

5 I feel strong about that.
6 Everybody knows my bias on that. I've had to
7 work with both often. But I just think that's
8 where that came from.

9 I think the last piece is that
10 young people looking at the return on
11 investment in ways they hadn't before. And
12 you'll see those shortcuts and they'll assume
13 that I can get this job doing X. And this is
14 what I'm going to do. There has to be other
15 ways we think about that.

16 I guess the last thing is very few
17 higher ed institutions as we know this -- and
18 I'm not beating up on the higher ed
19 institutions on this -- have robust placement
20 structures for their students. They haven't
21 looked for a job in 30 years themselves. And
22 I don't mean that in a bad way.

1 This is a reality. It's change.
2 And then the last part in higher ed is we
3 haven't talked about this. If we potentially
4 can see 25 percent of the jobs lost due to
5 technological innovation, we know that this is
6 data that's come out. What does that mean for
7 those most vulnerable in the workforce which
8 is disproportionately Latino?

9 And so there is this kind of ultra
10 forecasting that has to happen that we're all
11 dealing with. I would say those are the
12 things. And quite often they get subsumed
13 under the rankings discussion but not
14 discussed alone in a way that I think we could
15 be ahead of it and providing recommendations
16 and not necessarily just getting it under the
17 rankings.

18 Does that make sense? That was
19 some.

20 MEMBER McLENDON: I look at a
21 little bit different now in a most respectful
22 manner.

1 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Sure.

2 MEMBER McLENDON: What we are
3 hearing from industry in the United States and
4 actually more in international is that the
5 steam demand is for very elite populations.
6 That's not my reality. I'm not worried about
7 that.

8 I'm worried about placing 27,000
9 students. We are in the top 20 schools in the
10 nation for graduates. We send about 4,000 --
11 We graduate nearly every year 4,500 graduates.
12 It's a tremendous number.

13 But we leave more behind than we
14 graduate. There is a bigger demand in North
15 Texas which is one of the strongest economies
16 in the nation for technical people.

17 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Absolutely.

18 MEMBER McLENDON: Technical people
19 who have computerized skills and who have a
20 basic knowledge. And we're working with
21 people like Chase. We're trying to work with
22 Lockheed. We're even having this -- We're

1 trying to even help people in China.

2 And what they want is a new
3 technician or a new labor force who not only
4 used to be the manual skilled individual but
5 is the manual skilled individual who has
6 computer competence and has customer service
7 and has reading ability and has general
8 knowledge.

9 And this kind of individual is
10 what allows places like Lockheed and Bell and
11 Chase that has a 3,000 to 4,000 call center.
12 Those are the jobs that we see that they
13 cannot fill.

14 Of course, the stem is an area
15 that's not being filled. But that area that's
16 not being filled is not my reality. Thirty-
17 five hundred people that we graduate are the
18 possible engineers or doctors or whatever.
19 But at least 45,000 students are the ones that
20 are left behind that if we don't get them into
21 a job or we don't improve their thing they're
22 going to destroy their credit. They're going

1 to have a problem.

2 So I'm not being selfish. I think
3 we can work in both things and getting the
4 degrees. But I'm thinking for us in the
5 community college there are so many
6 professions for students that do not or are
7 not set -- You know, not everybody can be a
8 physics instructor.

9 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: No, no. I just
10 want to end on --

11 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: -- your focus.

12 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Right. And I
13 was going to say. This has always been our
14 focus. I think it's important to know that
15 how we have characterized stem in this country
16 has been elite in nature. And that's not
17 exactly what all the demand driven jobs are in
18 stem. So I think that's important to know.

19 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's right.

20 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: I created a stem
21 program. Thousands get employed on Wall
22 Street. They have a seminar of community

1 college. Okay. Nobody calls them stem, but
2 that's exactly what they are.

3 I leave that there because I think
4 that's part of pushing back. And some of that
5 has to do with how and where we've looked at
6 hard sciences and how we've created that in
7 the academy.

8 I don't need any disrespect for
9 that. But I want to let Dr. Romo speak a
10 little bit about the rankings please so people
11 can get a good five/ten minutes on that.

12 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Absolutely.

13 MEMBER ROMO: We've got four
14 minutes to have to go catch a plane.

15 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: I think the
16 people are the airport can get you.

17 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: We'll need that
18 help, too.

19 MEMBER ROMO: I went to an
20 accreditation session and heard numerous
21 individuals sort of say "It's going to come.
22 This is something." And part of it is it's

1 something that's going to happen because you
2 don't have to have congressional approval.

3 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Yes.

4 MEMBER ROMO: So you can just
5 declare -- You can just tell Art Duncan "Did
6 I not tell you to do this" and it's going to
7 start moving. There will be a point there
8 where they will have to have some
9 congressional stuff.

10 And I credit the President for
11 giving us a heads-up. And we need to rethink
12 how we do this. And I certainly understand
13 his frustration with many of the things that
14 are going on in education.

15 And some of them have to do with
16 this affordability crisis. Part of it is
17 driven by --

18 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's part of
19 it.

20 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Part of it is
21 driven by it, yes.

22 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: It's a large part

1 of it.

2 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: It is.

3 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: You're right
4 about that.

5 MEMBER ROMO: And so we have a lot
6 of work to do. And I think we ought to do and
7 I think you've already talked about getting
8 some researchers to look into this. Get some
9 graduate students and some other people to
10 start finding out what kind of position papers
11 are out there.

12 There are some good position
13 papers out there. ACE had a position paper.
14 In fact, the person that was the vice
15 president for ACE spoke on the ranking system
16 and the rating system.

17 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: And the person
18 who is the lead author on that report is one
19 of our respondents.

20 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Is speaking. Is
21 one of the respondents, yes.

22 MEMBER ROMO: Excellent.

1 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: I just spoke to
2 her last week.

3 MEMBER ROMO: You done good. But
4 the first thing we have to do is --

5 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: On record.

6 MEMBER ROMO: -- fully understand
7 what it is they're trying to solve.

8 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: You're right.

9 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Yes.

10 MEMBER ROMO: And how you solve
11 that problem. And what you see in terms of
12 some proposed solutions. And then determine
13 from different ideas as to whether or not we
14 can take a position.

15 Our position may be that we tweak
16 something or that we just say no.

17 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's right.

18 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: That's right.

19 MEMBER ROMO: But it does --

20 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's why we're
21 bringing it to the meeting.

22 MEMBER ROMO: And as described by

1 some of the early press you might assume when
2 you read this that it's okay. So if you have
3 Pell grants and you have Federal grants, they
4 will not -- and if you have a school that
5 doesn't have a good retention rate or
6 graduation rate, i.e., graduated by four years
7 like Stanford, Princeton that graduate 90
8 percent of the class in four years, you could
9 be impacted by that.

10 I think that's us. I mean our
11 Latino students for economic reasons do not
12 worry about four years. It's either work and
13 go to school or not.

14 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Right. The
15 choices.

16 MEMBER ROMO: It will not be go to
17 school full-time.

18 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's right.

19 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Absolutely.

20 MEMBER ROMO: So if you're not
21 going to -- If that's the reality, yes. I
22 mean the majority of our students, 50 percent

1 of our students, are taking 12 hours.

2 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: That's right.

3 MEMBER ROMO: They're not taking
4 15.

5 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's right.

6 MEMBER ROMO: They understand
7 that. And if you bring them in they'll tell
8 you very quickly --

9 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Why they can't.

10 MEMBER ROMO: -- why they're doing
11 it. So of course the interesting thing about
12 San Antonio in Texas is the economy is pretty
13 good. So things are kind of moving along.
14 These young people can get jobs. There's like
15 a demand for them. There are signs up there
16 "Want to hire."

17 So I think we ought to think in
18 terms of -- One way we define it is if you do
19 it the way you think you ought to do it it
20 will impact Hispanic students in this respect.
21 There are a lot of Hispanics at institutions
22 like mine where the graduation rate we're not

1 going to move that needle very fast. It's
2 going to stay at -- The graduation rate is way
3 off because of what we have in terms of the
4 kind of students we're getting.

5 Now remember the New York Times
6 said and Obama quoted it "If you come from a
7 family in the bottom quarter then one in 10
8 will graduate."

9 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Will graduate,
10 yes.

11 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Yes.

12 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: That's clear.

13 MEMBER ROMO: If you come from a
14 family in the top quarter, eight of ten will
15 graduate. So you have this tremendous gap.

16 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Yes.

17 MEMBER ROMO: And those are my
18 students.

19 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Absolutely.

20 MEMBER ROMO: I mean I walk up. I
21 find they are from the bottom quarter. So if
22 I'm going -- You can just imagine that I have

1 some people say "Well, wait a minute. If
2 they're from the bottom quarter, they're not
3 going to graduate in four years." You have a
4 very tough situation.

5 We basically are not going to move
6 the graduation rates because that is our base.
7 Those are the folks that come to my school.
8 So just on the matter of graduation rates, we
9 have that.

10 Secondly is the whole factor of
11 what they do when they graduate. Some of
12 these students want to go to graduate school.
13 And graduate school always isn't easy. There
14 are many people, my daughter who went to
15 Harvard, graduated from Princeton, hang out
16 for a year, worked in New York, get a flat.

17 By the scales what she did hurts
18 the school because she didn't go get a job
19 right away. And then she didn't get a job for
20 the next five years because she was in
21 graduate school. So those are the things.

22 Too many people. Too many people

1 who are basically not moving in the direction
2 of graduate, get a job. I'm an engineer now.
3 All is good. They're not going to --

4 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: But there are
5 caveats that they were be engaged in higher
6 ed. Right. The question is how many in
7 school and working and how many in school or
8 working.

9 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: Right. That's
10 a false negative.

11 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Exactly.

12 MEMBER ROMO: Thank you all.

13 (Off the record comments.)

14 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: These are the
15 four questions that right now are focusing our
16 attention on the rating system that I've given
17 to the person who is going to write them and
18 I'll address them.

19 First, can a system of rating
20 colleges and universities benefit Latino
21 students and families by providing them with
22 more transparent information about costs and

1 completion rates? That's one.

2 Two, what are the risks that such
3 a system will stigmatize and punish colleges
4 and universities of which Latinos tend to
5 enroll? That's an HSI focus in part.

6 Three, can such a system serve to
7 provide disincentives for institutions to
8 enroll more Latino students?

9 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: That's the big
10 one.

11 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Especially those
12 students who have challenges in the K-12.

13 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: In our rating
14 system, the K-12, we did that.

15 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Yes.

16 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: We quickly moved
17 the kids out to either alternative sites.

18 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's right.
19 That's how you bump up --

20 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Created new
21 schools.

22 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's how you

1 create new schools. Right.

2 And then the big question is can a
3 system be designed that focuses on information
4 and accountability simultaneously. If it
5 could, what would it do? What would it look
6 like? How would you measure?

7 One of the proposals that exists
8 now in the Department of Education is that the
9 number of Pell students who you have be
10 counted as a plus to balance the low
11 completion rates. The number of first
12 generation students be counted as if you will
13 a plus to balance the completion rates or the
14 earnings that occur subsequently.

15 So all of this is in the mix right
16 now and in the discussion. It makes it I
17 think absolutely critical.

18 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: Not to make
19 those things invisible.

20 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's right.

21 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: And that's what
22 we object to.

1 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Yes. Exactly
2 right. But in a recent conversation I had
3 with a very senior Department of Education
4 official, no one from the White House
5 Initiative, this is coming.

6 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Yes, we know.

7 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: We know it's
8 coming. It's coming.

9 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: They are entirely
10 committed. In fact, it's possible that there
11 will be the initial outline of it before we
12 even have our meeting.

13 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: Right.

14 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: So we have an
15 agreement that they will let us know what the
16 outlines of it might be before our meeting.

17 PARTICIPANT: What are the
18 concerns of the traditionally top tier --

19 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: I want to be
20 respectful, but we have to get back.

21 MEMBER LUNDQUIST: We do.

22 PARTICIPANT: I just had one quick

1 question. What do the Harvard type
2 universities think about this?

3 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: They don't care.

4 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: They're not
5 worried about it. They don't have -- The
6 schools that are worried are the higher
7 performing state colleges that count on Pell.
8 Because along with this is saying do we not
9 pay tuition up front. Hold back a percentage
10 of Federal aid until we see them graduate.

11 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: That's right.

12 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: That is going to
13 hit a public system much harder than it will
14 be a private. I'm just being honest.

15 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: Right.

16 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: So that's a
17 reality. And the for-profits will feel that
18 as well, too.

19 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: The for-profits
20 will feel that.

21 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: So that's
22 another.

1 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: One of the ways -
2 - We've got to go back. One of the ways I've
3 been thinking about this is that we should
4 take university endowments and money devoted
5 to athletics into account as part of the
6 formula for determining what an institution's
7 commitment is. That would transform this.
8 And you tie it -- this is the best one --

9 CO-CHAIR NIEVES: And this is a
10 former Notre Dame person.

11 CO-CHAIR FRAGA: And Stanford.
12 You link it to likelihood of funding for
13 research. It isn't until you link it to
14 research funding, any sort of a rating system,
15 that the highly selective institutions will
16 take it seriously.

17 (Whereupon, the above entitled
18 matter was concluded.)
19
20
21
22

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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: President's Advisory Commission on
Educational Excellence for Hispanics

Before: US Department of Education

Date: Tuesday, April 1, 2014

Place: Miami, Florida

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