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Correspondence Concerning the University's Name Change

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TYLER STATE COLLEGE

100 E. BERTA

TYLER, TEXAS 75701

February 17, 1975

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

TELEPHONE 214 595-0711

The Honorable Bill Clark
House of Representatives
Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Bill:

Pursuant to House Bill 630, which you have introduced, there are two basic considerations relative to the rationale for changing the name of Tyler State College which might be of significance as this legislation is considered. These primary considerations are as follows:

1. Concept of Identity -- There is a need to clarify the independent status of Tyler State College as it is perceived by other community and junior college institutions and the general public in the East Texas area.
2. Concept of Regional Service Area -- The objective in seeking an institutional name change is to employ a name which will convey and project the regional nature of the college which was charged by the Texas Legislature in creating the institution, i. e., to serve an area which, geographically, is the eastern portion of Texas.

Because of the relatively new concept of upper level institutions, we have experienced a certain amount of confusion and misunderstanding among area community and junior colleges and the general public concerning our relationship to Tyler Junior College. Many people have the idea that either Tyler Junior College has expanded into a four year program, or that the State of Texas, through the creation of the new upper level institution, has incorporated the first two years as a part of the senior institution. A fundamental cause of this problem is the similarity of the names of the two institutions -- Tyler Junior College and Tyler State College. As is apparent, only one word is different in these two names. The confusion exists among the citizenry of Tyler as well as throughout the area of Texas which we basically serve.

The problem becomes very real and is emphasized very directly in connection with our articulation, coordination and counseling efforts with

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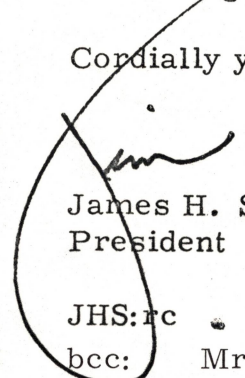
community and junior colleges in our East Texas service area. Even though the independent relationship of Tyler Junior College and Tyler State College is explained to students, the preconceived idea which many individuals have, that we are organizationally related, causes students to feel that they either would be transferring to a transformed junior college, or that they would be disloyal to their junior college. Again, the similarity in names, we have found, contributes very significantly and substantially to this area of misunderstanding.

I might point out that since the board of regents took action to recommend to the legislature that the name of Tyler State College be changed to Texas Eastern University, many, many, positive remarks have been received by those of us associated directly with the institution from community and junior colleges throughout the area. Likewise, students presently enrolled at Tyler State have been overwhelmingly complimentary about the proposed change. Further, members of the board of regents have received a great deal of positive input from citizens in their particular areas pertaining to changing the institutional name. Of course, I would remind you also that this matter was discussed with numerous leaders in Tyler prior to our board formally considering it. These individuals were completely in favor of changing the name in order to project the regional image consistent with the legislative charge. As you may recall, following these discussions, Mr. Isadore Roosth, then president of the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Ralph Spence and Dr. Tom Smith appeared before our board of regents on November 22, 1974 and strongly encouraged the Tyler State College Board of Regents to change the institutional name to one that would accomplish the institutional identity and the regional service area concepts which are so important to our program.

I appreciate very much your thorough understanding of the situation which exists relative to the confusion and misunderstanding which is resulting from the present name of Tyler State College and I trust that you will advise me if I can be of further assistance in furnishing information about this matter at any time.

Continuing kindest regards and best wishes.

Cordially yours,



James H. Stewart, Jr.
President

JHS:rc

bcc: Mr. John R. Sawyer