



## FUND OUR FUTURE: Stop the Privatization of Campus Services

# TSEU supports increased state funding to keep our public universities public

### TSEU POSITION:

Increase state funding for higher education to stop the privatization of campus services. The privatization of campus services at public universities is a direct result of the Texas Legislature's perpetual and deliberate disinvestment in proper funding for public higher education. This is a radical shift away from the Texas constitutional mandate to "maintain universities of the first-class." The Texas legislature should renew its commitment to uphold this mandate by substantially increasing funding for higher education. This will eradicate the incentive for public institutions to turn to privatization and restore the state's ability to carry out its mission of providing quality, affordable higher education to our citizens.

### The Case Against Privatization:

Invest in keeping our public universities public. Privatization threatens not only the mission, but also the very existence of public higher education in this state. A public institution of higher learning in Texas should aspire to be a community of people working together towards the dual goals of providing quality education of the highest order to our citizens while also conducting research and development of the highest order on behalf of our citizens. Reaching these aspirations infuses the Texas economy with an innovative competitive advantage and a highly skilled workforce to match. It is a sound investment for Texas to allocate significant resources to these communities. In order for this investment to yield maximum returns it is imperative for the university workforce to be cohesive. It should operate as a collective within the university and all contributions in service of the institution should be recognized as valuable. Privatization fractures that cohesiveness by banishing vital operators from the community and sending the message that those contributions are not valuable. Privatization prioritizes profit over people and market efficiency over service quality. The quality of services deteriorates because the allegiance of outside vendors is to the corporation and not the university. Furthermore, a perpetual threat of the possible expansion of privatization on campus demoralizes the workforce by placing a dark cloud of uncertainty above the university community. Overall, privatization runs counter to the very idea of public higher education and weakens the legislature's ability to regulate it in order to ensure that it remains accountable to the citizens of Texas. Privatization threatens the very existence of public higher education and the Texas legislature should eradicate that threat by reeling in institutional autonomy through the restoration of funding.

### Privatization and the Flagships:

- **Texas A&M University:** On August 3rd, 2012, Compass Group USA assumed management and operational responsibility for Texas A&M food service, custodial service, landscaping, and building maintenance departments. The jobs of an estimated 1600 Texas A&M employees were outsourced with less than half securing employment with Compass Group USA. All former Texas A&M employees lost not only their jobs with A&M, but also their healthcare and inclusion in the Teachers Retirement System. Many former Texas A&M employees who secured employment with Compass Group USA have subsequently been fired by the company.
- **The University of Texas at Austin:** On January 29th, 2013, UT President Bill Powers announced his intention to pursue recommendations given by the UT Committee on Business Productivity in its report "Smarter Systems for a Better UT." Included in the recommendations were plans for a massive privatization of campus services. President Power specifically cited the Texas A&M privatization as a model for pursuing the implementation of the committee's recommendations.

