

January 27, 2003

The Honorable Phil Bredesen  
Governor of Tennessee  
State Capitol  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Dear Governor Bredesen:

As Chairman of the Southern Regional Education Board, I want to welcome you to membership on the Board. As Governor, you are a member of the Board of America's first compact for education. SREB, an interstate organization focused on state education issues, was established by action of Southern governors and legislatures over fifty years ago to enable Southern states to work together to pool their resources and accomplish together what they cannot do alone. Tennessee was among the original signers of the Southern Regional Education Compact that includes 16 states. More recently, for example, Tennessee colleges and universities joined with more than 300 public and independent colleges and universities to form SREB's *Electronic Campus*, the nation's largest higher education electronic marketplace, with 8000 courses and 250 degree programs available on-line.

As Governor, you serve *ex officio* as one of Tennessee's five representatives on the Board. Other Tennessee members and term completion dates are: Peaches G. Blank (2003), Andy Womack (2004), President Paul E. Stanton, Jr. (2005), and Speaker Pro Tem Lois M. DeBerry (2006). Each year on June 30 a term on the Board expires, and you will have the opportunity to reappoint that person or you may appoint someone else to the term. The only stipulation is that the SREB Compact requires that each state must have at least one educator and one legislator in its representation on the Board.

President Stanton is currently serving as the Board's Vice Chairman. Senator Ben Atchley and Representative Gene Davidson serve on SREB's Legislative Advisory Council as gubernatorial appointees and do not serve a specified term. Speaker DeBerry serves on the Council for a specified term by virtue of being a legislative member of the Board. The Council advises the Board on legislative matters and serves as a permanent steering committee for SREB's Annual Legislative Work Conference at which legislators and educators meet to discuss matters of mutual interest. Legislators who serve on the Council value their membership for the information and perspectives they receive as well as the network of legislative colleagues they develop.

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SREB's Regional Contract program, which began in the early years of the Board, enables states to share costly programs for health professionals and to postpone--or even avoid--duplicating some of these programs. Thousands of people in states without schools of dentistry, osteopathic medicine, podiatry and veterinary medicine have earned degrees at nationally recognized colleges and universities. Collectively, in 2003-2004 Tennessee will receive approximately \$2,505,000 from SREB states for providing services through SREB's contract-for-services program for dentistry and special aid programs at Meharry Medical College, for medicine and special aid at Meharry Medical College, for optometry at Southern College of Optometry and for dentistry at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis.

I know that SREB President Mark Musick will want to seek an appointment with you to review Tennessee's participation in the Board's many programs which benefit Tennessee citizens.

In the meantime, I hope you will mark your calendar for the Board's 2003 Annual Meeting to be held June 22-24 at the Driskill Hotel in Austin.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM:klr

cc: Mark Musick, President  
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