OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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September 28, 2023

U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20202 Secretary Thomas J. Vilsack

Secretary Miguel A. Cardona, Ed.D.

U.S. Department of Agriculture 1400 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250

Thank you for your letter dated September 18, 2023, in which you offered to host a meeting to

Dear Secretary Cardona and Secretary Vilsack:

discuss state funding for Auburn University and Alabama A&M University. In the letter, you cite an unconstitutional, Jim Crow-era federal law from 1890 that allowed states

to establish so-called "separate but equal" universities for the education of African Americans. That law reflects a dark time in our Nation's history, and I am proud of the work that has been done since that time to shed the injustice of "separate but equal" and to create opportunities for all students—no matter their race—to learn and thrive in Alabama. As the United States Supreme Court has recognized, "things have changed in the South." We are "separate but equal" no longer. I am proud of the important work being done at both Auburn

educational opportunities for all Alabamians, and I have been proud to sign into law the largest education budgets in Alabama history during my tenure as Governor-generous budgets that help all our public universities thrive. Please send my State Budget Office any data or other written materials you would like us to review. In the meantime, I am confident that, as long as I am Governor, Alabama will never return to an era of "separate but equal" when it comes to higher-education funding decisions.

University and Alabama A&M University. My administration is committed to enhancing

Governor

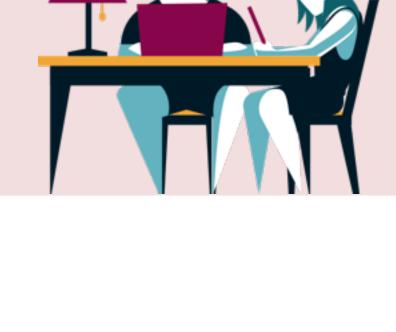
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