

Dream no small dreams for they have
no power to move the human heart.

-Goethe

Open Letter

By Armando Villarreal

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Dear Representatives,

Congratulations and welcome to a journey, an adventure to explore and discover new possibilities to advance life.

This Youth Congress is homegrown here in South Texas. It is not some government program from Austin, or Washington—it is not some feel good project from some large organization. It is made here. It belongs, it is built and moved forward by you.

Starting out I saw this Youth Congress as a gift one generation gives the next. A lofty sentiment. But as I traveled doing presentations I began to change. I saw that it is you who are providing the gift. My coming up experiences were shaped by the Raza Unida Party, Vietnam and the Cold War, Watergate, Black Power, the United Farm Workers and the liberation struggles of that era.

As you move forward with your life you also will have experiences that will shape your awareness and outlook. How often do you hear the banner phrase that the Youth are the future. Its overuse drains it of vitality. Plainly put I see the road before you stretching further than the road behind you. And on this road the more experience you accumulate the better you will be able to deal with injustice.

Every generation arrives on the scene with its own hunger for justice, it's own dreams to make real. And you are the new arrivals.

The Pilot. Here you are asked to do the work of sinking in the core root that will grow the South Texas Youth Congress. At the Corpus Christi meeting you will produce the groundwork to make this possible.

At the first annual session you will propose, discuss, debate and vote on three issues to get introduced in the next general session of the Texas Legislature.

Have passion in your beliefs. Challenge and question things with intelligence and respect.

I offer you this to contemplate—Think fiber-optics, renewable energy, safe water and clean air, work for security and safety for the elderly, imagine less poverty, trust in human rights, believe in those coming up behind you and what you will leave.