

**Second Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

ENGROSSED

LLS NO. R26-1018.01 Shannon Wheeler x4340

SR26-008

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

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Senate Committees

SENATE RESOLUTION 26-008

101 **CONCERNING THE RECOGNITION OF THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF**
102 **WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY.**

1 WHEREAS, Western Colorado University was founded in 1901
2 in Gunnison, Colorado, as the Colorado State Normal School, becoming
3 the first institution of higher education on Colorado's Western Slope; and

4 WHEREAS, For 125 years, Western Colorado University has
5 served the students, families, and communities of the Gunnison Valley
6 and the broader Western Slope, evolving from a small teachers' college
7 into a comprehensive public university offering undergraduate and
8 graduate programs across the arts, sciences, business, education, and
9 environmental studies; and

10 WHEREAS, The institution's evolution from Colorado State
11 Normal School to Western State College in 1923 and ultimately to
12 Western Colorado University reflects its expanding academic mission and
13 enduring commitment to the region it serves; and

14 WHEREAS, Western Colorado University plays a vital role in
15 advancing Colorado's workforce by preparing graduates in high-demand

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

SENATE
Final Reading
May 5, 2026

1 fields, including education, the health sciences, natural resource
2 management, business, and outdoor industry leadership, while
3 maintaining a strong emphasis on experiential and place-based learning;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, The university is home to the nation's only collegiate
6 mountain rescue team, founded in 1968, whose members serve the
7 Gunnison Valley and exemplify Western's commitment to service,
8 leadership, and outdoor stewardship; and

9 WHEREAS, Western Colorado University's athletics programs
10 have produced national champions and Olympians, including a nationally
11 recognized ski team, multiple NCAA championship wrestling and
12 cross-country teams, and a storied football program, contributing to the
13 university's proud tradition of excellence; and

14 WHEREAS, The university's campus and surrounding landscape—
15 including the iconic "W" on Tenderfoot Mountain, the historic Leslie J.
16 Savage Library, and the Rady Family Sports Complex—reflect
17 generations of investment by students, alumni, faculty, and community
18 members who have shaped Western's enduring character; and

19 WHEREAS, Western Colorado University continues to build on
20 its legacy through a forward-looking strategic plan and innovative
21 programs, such as engineering through its partnership with the University
22 of Colorado Boulder, and a commitment to hands-on, place-based
23 learning that addresses the challenges and opportunities facing rural and
24 mountain communities; and

25 WHEREAS, Western's traditions and culture foster a strong sense
26 of community and belonging, connecting generations of Mountaineers to
27 one another and to the Gunnison Valley; now, therefore,

28 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-fifth General Assembly*
29 *of the State of Colorado:*

30 (1) That the Colorado Senate hereby recognizes and celebrates the
31 125th anniversary of Western Colorado University and honors its
32 enduring contributions to higher education, workforce development, and
33 community vitality across the Western Slope and the state of Colorado;

34 (2) That the Colorado Senate commends the students, faculty,

1 staff, alumni, and community supporters whose dedication over 125 years
2 has made Western Colorado University a source of pride for Gunnison,
3 the Western Slope, and the state of Colorado;

4 (3) That the Colorado Senate acknowledges Western Colorado
5 University's distinctive role in providing accessible, high-quality
6 education in a rural mountain community and recognizes its continued
7 commitment to serving the people, economies, and landscapes of
8 Colorado; and

9 (4) That the Colorado Senate encourages all Coloradans to
10 celebrate this milestone and to support the continued growth and success
11 of Western Colorado University in the years ahead.

12 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Resolution be sent to
13 the President of Western Colorado University, Brad Baca; the Governor
14 of Colorado, the Honorable Jared Polis; the Western Colorado University
15 Board of Trustees; the Colorado Commission on Higher Education; the
16 Western Colorado University Foundation; and the Gunnison City
17 Council.