



SENATE RESOLUTION 26-008

BY SENATOR(S) Catlin and Coleman, Amabile, Baisley, Ball, Benavidez, Bridges, Bright, Carson, Cutter, Danielson, Daugherty, Exum, Frizell, Gonzales J., Hinrichsen, Jodeh, Kipp, Kirkmeyer, Kolker, Lindstedt, Liston, Marchman, Mullica, Pelton B., Pelton R., Rich, Roberts, Rodriguez, Simpson, Snyder, Sullivan, Wallace, Weissman, Zamora Wilson.

CONCERNING THE RECOGNITION OF THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY.

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Western Colorado University plays a vital role in advancing Colorado's workforce by preparing graduates in high-demand fields, including education, the health sciences, natural resource management, business, and outdoor industry leadership, while maintaining a strong emphasis on experiential and place-based learning; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(2) That the Colorado Senate commends the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community supporters whose dedication over 125 years has made Western Colorado University a source of pride for Gunnison, the

Western Slope, and the state of Colorado;

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

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

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

James Rashad Coleman Sr.
PRESIDENT OF
THE SENATE

Esther van Mourik
SECRETARY OF
THE SENATE