

**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REGARDING WESTERN
GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY**

2015 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Wayne A. Harper

House Sponsor: Eric K. Hutchings

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor supports partnering with Western Governors University to create Western Governors University Utah to meet the needs of Utah's adults.

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

- ▶ expresses support for partnering with Western Governors University to create Western Governors University Utah to meet the needs of Utah's adults;
- ▶ strongly urges the Utah State Board of Regents to:
 - recognize and endorse online, competency-based education as an important component of Utah's higher education system;
 - include Western Governors University Utah in all of the same promotional efforts that it exerts on behalf of each current Utah institution of higher education;
 - display and address prominently on its website the opportunities that Western Governors University Utah provides to prospective students;
 - work to eliminate unnecessary barriers to the delivery of education programs provided by Western Governors University;
 - work with the university, as appropriate, to integrate Western Governors



28 University Utah's academic programs and services in the state's higher education policy and
29 strategy; and

30 • present a report of its efforts to take the actions strongly urged in this resolution
31 in the September 2015 meeting of the Utah Legislature's Education Interim

32 Committee; and

33 ▶ urges the Utah Department of Workforce Services to explore methods for
34 promoting online competency-based educational opportunities like Western
35 Governors University Utah for dislocated workers and other Utahns in need of
36 higher education achievement and bachelor's degrees.

37 **Special Clauses:**

38 None



40 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

41 WHEREAS, Utah's adults are in need of greater access to opportunities to obtain higher
42 education degrees;

43 WHEREAS, currently, 43% of Utah's adults hold a post-secondary degree or certificate;

44 WHEREAS, Governor Herbert has set a goal to have 66% of Utah's population aged
45 25-35 achieve a post-secondary degree or certificate by 2020;

46 WHEREAS, for Utah's citizens to be competitive in the global economy, more citizens
47 need the skills and knowledge that come with degree completion and college credentials;

48 WHEREAS, Western Governors University was created to provide access to affordable
49 education and training opportunities through online, competency-based programs;

50 WHEREAS, Western Governors University is a nationally recognized nonprofit and
51 independent university that is regionally and nationally accredited;

52 WHEREAS, Western Governors University offers online degrees based on
53 demonstrating competency as opposed to degrees based on credit hours, clock hours, or grades;

54 WHEREAS, Western Governors University is fully independent and requires no state
55 direct financial participation for it to offer its curriculum to its students;

56 WHEREAS, Western Governors University provides a viable and self-sustaining
57 complement to traditional learning methods through online, competency-based distance
58 learning methods;

59 WHEREAS, Western Governors University has demonstrated success in providing
60 online, competency-based education to Utahns and shares the state's goals for increasing the
61 number of citizens who have obtained high-quality bachelor's degrees through cost-effective,
62 flexible, and quickly initiated means; and

63 WHEREAS, the state of Utah should take additional steps to enable Western Governors
64 University to expand services in the state for the benefit of Utah's citizens:

65 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
66 Governor concurring therein, supports partnering with Western Governors University to create
67 Western Governors University Utah to meet the needs of Utah's adults.

68 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor strongly urge the
69 Utah State Board of Regents to:

- 70 • recognize and endorse online, competency-based education as an
71 important component of Utah's higher education system;
- 72 • include Western Governors University Utah in all of the same
73 promotional efforts that it exerts on behalf of each current Utah
74 institution of higher education;
- 75 • display and address prominently on its website the opportunities that
76 Western Governors University Utah provides to prospective students;
- 77 • work to eliminate unnecessary barriers to the delivery of such education
78 programs provided by Western Governors University;
- 79 • work with the university, as appropriate, to integrate Western Governors
80 University Utah's academic programs and services in the state's higher
81 education policy and strategy; and
- 82 • present a report of its efforts to take the actions strongly urged in this
83 resolution in the September 2015 meeting of the Utah Legislature's
84 Education Interim Committee.

85 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge the Utah
86 Department of Workforce Services to explore methods for promoting online competency-based
87 educational opportunities like Western Governors University Utah for those dislocated workers
88 and other Utahns in need of higher education achievement and bachelor's degrees.

89 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Utah State

90 Board of Regents, the Utah Department of Workforce Services, Western Governors University,
91 and the members of Utah's congressional delegation.

Legislative Review Note
as of 1-19-15 6:25 PM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel