



Legislation Text

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To Celebrate the Fifth Anniversary of Western Governors University Ohio

WHEREAS, Western Governors University Ohio was established on June 21, 2018 by the Ohio Department of Higher Education, initiating a significant new partnership in career preparation and workforce development for Ohio through the state's newest accredited university; and

WHEREAS, authorized by the Ohio General Assembly and signed by the Governor in House Bill 49 of the 132nd General Assembly as part a policymaking commitment to close Ohio's skills gap, Western Governors University Ohio, as a not-for-profit, online, and competency-based institution, has for the past five years provided a new and affordable pathway for adults to upskill their existing careers or pursue new career opportunities in such in-demand fields as health care and nursing, business, teaching, and information technology; and

WHEREAS, Western Governors University traces its roots to 1997 and a partnership of 19 U.S. state governors who sought to offer students, particularly adult learners, the chance to attain an accredited college degree while working and caring for their families. This initiative recognized the transformative power of competency-based learning as a key to reimagining higher education by giving credit for actual knowledge and existing skills rather than measuring time spent in a classroom; and

WHEREAS, since Ohio became the eighth additional state to join the original WGU partnership in 2018, Western Governor University Ohio's annual enrollment has grown to nearly 5,000 students and the university has awarded degrees to nearly 10,000 graduates from throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, its affordable and flexible model of online learning offers career-enhancing opportunities for many Ohioans who often are missed by traditional, classroom-based education, 77 percent of its students work full time and 71 percent come from underserved populations; and

WHEREAS, Western Governors University Ohio has partnership agreements with Ohio's two-year community colleges, allowing credits earned at those institutions can transfer seamlessly to their programs ensuring that students don't miss a beat as they pursue their bachelor's or master's degrees; and

WHEREAS, Western Governors University Ohio is making a positive impact in our community, with 1000 active students in Central Ohio, helping our businesses find the skilled workers they need; and

WHEREAS, Western Governors University Ohio succeeds in its mission without receiving state fiscal support or subsidies of any kind, while its programs complement the higher-education opportunities offered through Ohio's excellent public and private colleges and universities, to provide an additional option for motivated students who want to advance in their careers; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS: That this Council celebrates the fifth anniversary of Western Governors University Ohio