

DRAFT "INVEST IN UTAH'S FUTURE" RESOLUTION

Whereas, Utah's public colleges and universities in the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) have a strong history of working in good faith with the Legislature to help keep costs low and operate efficiently.

Whereas, a college education is the best investment you can make for your future.

- Utah residents with a 4-year college degree earn 60% more annually than Utah residents with only a high school diploma.
- The Pew Research Center reports that individuals who only hold a high school diploma are three times more likely to be unemployed and four times more likely to live in poverty.

Whereas, with the Legislature's strong support, student and tuition debt in Utah levels are some of the lowest in the country.

- The College Board ranks Utah as the 3rd lowest cost of attendance in the country for four-year public institutions.
- The Project on Student Debt reports that the average Utah student loan debt is \$21,520, as compared to the national average of \$29,400.

Whereas, the Utah System of Higher Education plays a critical role in economic development and supplying the state's talent force.

- More than 27,000 Utah high school juniors and seniors earn college credit.
- Eight out of ten Utah high school students who enroll in college, enroll in a USHE institution
- USHE awarded 32,491 degrees and certificates for the 2013-2014 academic year.
- 167,317 students were enrolled in USHE institutions for the Fall of 2014.
- **When comparing the most popular college degrees from USHE institutions with the top "5-Star" occupations that require a college degree, as defined by the Department of Workforce Services, there is a strong correlation between degrees and occupations.**
- Over 80 new certificate programs have been developed in the past three years based on direct input from employers within Utah.

Whereas, the State Board of Regents and USHE support the aggressive goal set by the Governor and supported by the Legislature that by the year 2020, 66% of Utah's adult population will have earned a post-secondary degree or certificate. By reaching the 66 by 2020 goal:

- **Utah will see an increase of \$14.2 billion in wages over the next 30 years, with a an increase in \$358 million in subsequent effect on gross state product expansion.**
- **\$1.4 billion in additional tax revenue for Utah.**
- **An estimated 42,057 Utah residents can avoid the downward cycle of intergenerational poverty.**
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Whereas, USHE colleges and universities are committed to keeping a college education affordable to grow the future of Utah, an estimated a first tier tuition increase of 2.5% will be needed.

Therefore, be it resolved, the Utah System of Higher Education, through the leadership of the State Board of Regents and the support of the Utah Legislature, continue to pursue policies that best help students prepare, pay and complete a college degree or certificate on time that ultimately provides a critical stepping stone to improving the quality of life of all Utah residents.