

## **Resolution of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education regarding the “Student Access Tuition Model”**

March 5, 2010

*Whereas*, public higher education is critical to the future of the State of Colorado, our citizens and our economy; and

*Whereas*, Colorado’s system of higher education including research universities, state colleges, community colleges and vocational schools provides an array of high quality programs across the state at comparatively low cost; and

*Whereas*, the State of Colorado is experiencing an historic drop in state revenues requiring significant reductions in state support across state programs and particularly for higher education; and

*Whereas*, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funds for education will no longer be available to the State of Colorado’s public system of higher education in fiscal year 2011-12; and

*Whereas*, for most institutions tuition is the main source of revenue to offset the pending reductions in state support to avoid suspending campus operations or creating significant damage to instructional programs; and

*Whereas*, the Administration of Governor Ritter, the General Assembly, institutions of higher education, and the Commission share a common commitment to sustain access to higher education and keep higher education affordable for Colorado students and families; and

*Whereas*, the Commission believes the governing boards of institutions of higher education can determine appropriate levels of tuition with the commitment to ensuring access and affordability for low and middle income students.

*Whereas*, the Commission recognizes the long term need for addressing public funding of institutions of higher education, and urges the Higher Education Strategic Planning Committee to continue to its work to develop a long range strategic funding solution.

*Now, therefore, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education Resolves:*

For fiscal years 2011-2013, that the governing boards of the state’s public institutions of higher education should be allowed to seek tuition increases greater than 9 percent and operational flexibility through four-year financial and accountability plans to be reviewed and approved by the Commission, provided that:

The plans proposed by governing boards demonstrate that they can ensure access and affordability;

The plans consider and maximize all sources of financial aid to reduce the impact of tuition increases for Colorado’s low and middle income students and families;

Available state revenues are allocated with a “system-wide” approach to avoid suspending campus operations or closing institutions; and

Operational flexibilities included in the plans demonstrate savings, efficiencies or service improvements for institutions, governing boards and/or the higher education system as a whole.

*Be it further resolved:*

That the Higher Education Strategic Planning Group, the Office of the Governor, and the General Assembly consider the issues raised by the twelve CEO’s of Colorado’s Public Institutions of Higher Education in their letter dated March 3, 2010 related to the Higher Education Strategic Planning Group’s recommendation dated March 5, 2010 (“The Student Access Model”).