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Date: September 18, 2020

To: President Mark Kennedy, CDO Theodosia Cook, Board Secretary Jose Padilla, Chair Gallegos and Vice-Chair Smith

From: Faculty Council Chair Joanne Addison

Re: Land Acknowledgment

Faculty Council expresses its support for Regent Griego's resolution concerning land acknowledgment and calls upon our President to publicly support this resolution and our Board of Regents to vote to enact this resolution (appended).

Universities and colleges across the country and our state, including Colorado State University, the University of Denver, Fort Lewis College and others, have taken an important step in acknowledging their history with Native American and Indigenous people through issuing formal land acknowledgments. It is past time for CU to take action. We therefore ask our President and the Board of Regents to take the lead on this important step after engaging in critical dialogue with the Native American and Indigenous members of our community, as well as tribal leaders, in visible and meaningful ways. Additionally, as has been made clear by our colleagues at CU's Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies: "a [meaningful Land Acknowledgment statement](#) must address historical wrongs and inequities, not just the fact that others once occupied the land."

Finally, we also request that this land acknowledgement be read aloud before special events such as Commencement. Doing so is an important correction to the erasure of Indigenous people's history and a small step toward a more just and open culture at CU.



## CU Board of Regents Agenda Item

### Agenda Item Details

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Meeting September 10, 2020

Subject Action Item: Commitment to Work in Partnership with Indigenous Communities to Draft Land Acknowledgment

Recommended Action Administration RESOLVED that the University of Colorado System shall continue its efforts to strengthen relationships with Indigenous community members and leaders by writing language for a Land Acknowledgment by the end of calendar year 2020, to be submitted for approval at the first Board meeting of calendar year 2021.

**RECOMMENDATION FROM:** Regent Griego

### **STATEMENT OF INFORMATION:**

The University of Colorado's Guiding Principles call on the University to be a conscientious steward of its physical and natural resources, as well as to promote diversity to ensure the rich interchange of ideas in the pursuit of truth and learning (Regent Policy 1B). Consistent with these principles, the University should initiate a process to rightly acknowledge the history of the Indigenous peoples and nations that originally stewarded Colorado lands, including lands now occupied by the University's four campuses. The University's Chief Diversity Officer is currently working with all campuses to research and propose appropriate recognition steps. Consistent with that goal, this Resolution aims to support and build upon the current efforts by the Office of the President to develop meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities, and thoughtfully designing a Land Acknowledgment represents one essential step by the University to understand, reflect on, and honor the difficult truths of this history.

The University of Colorado Board of Regents also recognizes "that a respect for diversity requires a sincere willingness on the part of the institution to allow all its diverse stakeholders to share in the decision making process" (Regent Policy 10P). The University's

process for writing a Land Acknowledgment should reflect this value. The University's Administration must collaborate with Indigenous community members and leaders to draft the Land Acknowledgment and ensure it respects the communities' connection to these lands, includes appropriate language, and contains accurate information. The goal of this process should be not only to develop the Land Acknowledgment but also to continue building a meaningful, ongoing relationship between the University and the Indigenous and Native communities.

This Resolution, if approved by the Board, will authorize the University of Colorado System Administration, through the Office of the President or appropriate designee, to work with Indigenous community members and leaders to craft an agreed-upon Land Acknowledgment. This collaborative process should produce a proposed Land Acknowledgement by the end of calendar year 2020, and the proposed language should be submitted to the Board at its first meeting in calendar year 2021.

**PREVIOUS ACTION(S):**

None.

DRAFT