THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

9th SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH SENATE

10/7/2026

RESOLUTION #56##
Expanding Indigenous Initiatives

NOTICE: *A signature to sponsor means that you only wish for the legislation to be heard, whereas a signature to endorse means that you support the contents and/or actions of this legislation.*

WRITTEN BY: Cassidy Mendoza, Senator, Native American Cultural Center, Chair, University Affairs Committee; **Ferrin Ying**, Chief of Staff;

COLLABORATED WITH:

SPONSORED BY: Victoria-Quesada Stoner, ASCSU President;

ENDORSED BY: Liri Sananes, Senator, Accessibility Center, Chair, Accessibility Caucus; **Ava Fricke**, Assistant Director of Governmental Affairs; **Benjamin Gregg**, Vice President; **Makenzie Daniel**, Associate Director of Student Engagement & Partnership; **Kristina Rodriguez**, Director of Student Voice & Belonging; **Breanna Tsosie**, Senator, College of Liberal Arts; **Belle Hybertson**, Director of Governmental Affairs; **Pablo Kulisheck-Lopez**, Accessibility Coordinator; **Saira Hafeez**, Co-Director of Graduate Affairs; **Vasilios Kosmakos**, Associate Director of Environmental Affairs; **Kjell Gjelde-Bennett**, Senator, Asian Pacific American Cultural Center; **Odeth Tomas-Sarat**, Senator, Academic Advancement Center; **Soledad Langley**, Associate Senator, El Centro; **Ashley Perez**, Senator, El Centro; **Brandon Choi**, Associate Senator, Asian Pacific American;

ABSTRACT: *This Resolution aims to reinforce the CSU Land Acknowledgement by proposing necessary action items that strengthen CSU commitment to access and inclusion for Indigenous communities.*

WHEREAS (1),

President Lincoln signed the Morill Act into law on July 2, 1862, which gave federal public land to states to establish and fund public colleges. In 1870, the Colorado Agricultural College was founded, now known as Colorado State University. The mission of these publicly funded higher education institutions was to make higher education available to the working and industrial classes rather than just the wealthy elite; and,

WHEREAS (2),

As a land grant institution, Colorado State University has a responsibility to promote academic success and institutional accountability. Prior to the development of the university's land acknowledgement, plans were in place for it to be created by Tiffany Kelly, Assistant Director of the Native American Cultural Center. However, momentum for institutional action increased following an incident on campus in which a parent called the police on two prospective Indigenous students during a campus tour. In response, it catalyzed the university to establish the Native American Task Force, now known as the Native American Advisory Council, which played a key role in developing and publishing the university's land acknowledgement; and,

WHEREAS (3),

The purpose of land acknowledgements is to formally recognize Indigenous communities who historically inhabited the area of the land we are on. According to CSU's website, CSU's land acknowledgement aims to "maintain[s] the connection Native people and nations still have to this land."(1); and,

WHEREAS (4),

The current CSU Land Acknowledgement resonates with older generations of the Indigenous community but fails to connect with current Indigenous students on campus. The conversations surrounding the disconnect within Indigenous youth is the fact that CSU creates no actionable items to further the land acknowledgement and is not explicit about the historical context of forced removals and genocides that these communities experienced; and,

WHEREAS (5),

Only recognizing the fact that Indigenous Communities previously resided in the area is a disservice to the history of how these communities were removed. The Land Acknowledgement claims that it is the "educational and inclusion we must practice in recognizing institutional history, responsibility, and commitment", but fails to recognize the institutional responsibility to education and history in the statement; and,

WHEREAS (6),

Research examining land-grant universities and Indigenous communities has found that land acknowledgements are most meaningful when accompanied by concrete institutional actions, partnerships representation, and material commitments that support Indigenous people beyond symbolic recognition; and,

WHEREAS (7),

Institutions of higher education across the United States have increasingly recognized the value of Indigenous perspectives in decision-making processes through the creation of formal advisory councils, leadership positions, and governance structures intended to elevate Indigenous voices and strengthen relationships with Native communities; and,

WHEREAS (8),

Colorado State University established the Native American Task force in 2018 to advise university leadership on Indigenous priorities, address underrepresentation of Native Americans in academia and leadership, and counter systemic challenges on campus; and,

WHEREAS (9),

The Native American Advisory Council continues to advocate for greater Indigenous representation and inclusion within Colorado State University. One significant outcome of this work was the creation of the Assistant Vice President for Native American Affairs position in October 2022. The role was established to strengthen relationships with Tribal Nations, improve the recruitment and retention of Native American and Indigenous students, and provide leadership for campus-wide initiatives that advance Indigenous success and belonging. Efforts such as these reflect a broader movement in higher education to elevate Indigenous voices in institutional decision-making. For example, in 2024, the University of California Board of Regents welcomed Gregory Sarris, Chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, to its governing board, demonstrating that Indigenous representation at the highest levels of university leadership is both achievable and beneficial for public higher education institutions; **so,**

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED (1)

In order to truly reaffirm the history that Indigenous communities have to this land, ASCSU officially endorses the following actions, and encourages the University to implement these on campus; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED (2)

The following actionable items such as but not limited to: CSU should expand Indigenous education opportunities by creating and adding Indigenous Language Courses to CSU's course catalogue, prioritize hiring within the Indigenous community to teach Indigenous centered courses, creation of Indigenous focused murals, incorporating Indigenous plants and seeds on campus, ensuring a fully funded Native American Cultural Center, ensuring a fully staffed Native American Cultural Center, provide annual funding for culturally significant ingredients in the Rams Against Hunger Food Pantry, and creating a seat for Indigenous representation on the Board of Governors; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED (3)

ASCSU encourages CSU as a land-grant institution to strive to find ways to expand inclusion and education for the Indigenous Community. CSU can inform students, staff, and CSU community members of CSU's factual history and CSU's history as a land grant institution. As a way to revitalize Indigenous cultures and histories, CSU has an obligation to uplift and elevate Indigenous people on the university level. A land acknowledgment with no actionable items from the university essentially renders the land acknowledgement useless; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED (4)

ASCSU supports the exploration and creation of a designated Indigenous representative position, advisory appointment, or other formal mechanism for Indigenous participation within Colorado State University's governance structure, including the Board of Governors, in consultation with the Native American Advisory Council, Indigenous community members, and Tribal Nations whose histories are connected to the lands upon which Colorado State University resides; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED (5)

ASCSU urges Colorado State University to establish formal consultation practices with the Native American Advisory Council and Indigenous communities regarding policies, initiatives, educational programming, land matters, and campus development projects that impact Indigenous students, faculty, staff; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED (6)

That a copy of this legislation be forwarded to Nathaniel Easley Jr., Chair, Board of Governors; Kenzo Kawanabe, Vice Chair, Board of Governors; Dominic Disanti, Treasurer, Board of Governors; Louis Martin, Secretary, Board of Governors; Polly Baca, Voting Member, Board of Governors; Ray Baker, Voting Member, Board of Governors; John Fischer, Voting Member, Board of Governors; Kayla Garcia, Voting Member, Board of Governors; Elizabeth Markey, Voting Member, Board of Governors; Patrese Atine, Assistance Vice President, Indigenous and Native Affairs; Dominique David-Chavez, Assistant Professor; Ricki Ginsberg, Associate Professor; Rasa Humeyumptewa, Assistant Director, Native American Cultural Center; Jan Iron, IT Professional; Sue James, Vice Provost, Faculty Affairs; Kelly Mapes, Career Management Center, Doreen E. Martinez, Associate Professor; Christopher Snodgress, Program Manager; Amy Parsons, President, Colorado State University; Tony Frank, Chancellor, CSU System; Lise Youngblade, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President, Student Affairs; Blanche Hughes, Vice President, Student Affairs; Kauline Cipriani, Vice President for Inclusive Excellence, Office of the President; Carmen Rivera, Assistant Vice President of Engagement and Belonging ; Montez Butts, Executive Director of the Lory Student Center, Student Affairs; Pamela Norris, Associate Executive Director Engagement and Talent Development, Student Affairs; Rickey Frierson, Assistant Vice President of Cultural Resource Centers ; Lindsey Sell, Associate

Executive Director Engagement and Belonging of the Lory Student Center ; Ben Schrader, Director, Adult Learner and Veteran Services, ASCSU Advisor; Duan Ruff, Director, Student Leadership Involvement and Community Engagement; Julia Pratt, Assistant Director for Student Government, Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement; Farah Shah, ASCSU/SLiCE Accounting Support for Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement; Tim Kefalas, ASCSU/SLiCE Accountant, Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement; Ali Raza, Assistant Director of Involvement, Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement, ASCSU Advisor; Elisa Randazzo, ASCSU Administrative Assistant; Warner College of Natural Resources College Council; Ag Council; College of Liberal Arts Representative Council; Natural Sciences College Council; College of Health and Human Sciences Dean's Leadership Council; College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences College Council; College of Business Dean's Student Leadership Council; Lisa Chandler, Assistant Director, Adult Learner and Veteran Services; Kathleen Fairfax, Vice Provost, International Affairs, Colorado State University; Chad Hoseth, Assistant Vice Provost, International Affairs, Colorado State University; Greg Wymer, Director, International Student Scholars and Services; Mary Ann Lucero, Executive Director, Academic Advancement Center; Elizabeth Sink, Lead, Multifaith and Belief Initiatives; Gaurav Harshe, Interim Director, Asian Pacific American Cultural Center; John Miller IV, Director, Black/African American Cultural Center; Aaron Escobedo Garmon, Director, El Centro; Maggie Hendrickson, Director, Pride Resource Center; Tyrone Smith, Director, Native American Cultural Center; Imani Lindberg, Interim Director, Survivor Advocacy & Foundational Education Center; Justin Dove, Director, Student Disability Center; Amy Taylor, Senior Director, Accessibility Center;

PASSAGE AND ENACTMENT OF RESOLUTION/BILL/LEX 56XX
SESSION OF PASSAGE

Yays – Nays – Abstentions

ASCSU SPEAKER OF THE SENATE RYER ROBERTS **DATE**

ASCSU PRESIDENT VICTORIA QUESADA-STONER **DATE**

RESOURCES:

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(1) CSU Land Acknowledgment
https://landacknowledgment.colostate.edu
Provides the land acknowledgment statement.

(2) University of California Board of Regents Welcomes New Appointees
https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-board-regents-chair-uc-president-welcome-new-appointees-board-regents
Announces the appointment of Indigenous leader Gregory Sarris to the University of California Board of Regents. Demonstrates a model for Indigenous representation in university governance.

(3) Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs (CCIA)
https://ccia.colorado.gov/
Outlines Colorado's government-to-government relationship with Tribal Nations. Highlights the importance of Indigenous consultation and representation in public decision-making.

(4) University of California President's Native American Advisory Council
https://diversity.universityofcalifornia.edu/about/presidents-native-american-advisory-council/
Describes the University of California's formal advisory council composed of Native leaders, scholars, and community members. Provides an example of meaningful Indigenous participation in university leadership.

(5) Native Nations and Land-Grant Universities at the Crossroads
https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1423410.pdf
Examines the relationship between land-grant universities and Indigenous communities. Argues that land acknowledgements should be paired with concrete institutional actions and commitments.

(6) Land Grant Universities Establish Leadership Positions to Repair Relations with Native American Communities
https://insightintoacademia.com/land-grant-universities-establish-leadership-positions-to-repair-relations-with-native-american-communities/
Examines different universities across the country who implemented new Native American leadership to repair and build relationships.

(7) Morill Act (1862)

https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/morrill-act
Provides information surrounding the Morill Act and provides information about what the act does and who it impacts.

(8) Atine named to new Indigenous and Native American Affairs leadership position
https://source.colostate.edu/atine-named-to-new-indigenous-and-native-american-affairs-leadership-position-filled/
Addresses the new VP position within CSU and provides information on who is stepping into this role.

(9) 'A long-lasting impact': Details behind land acknowledgment
https://collegian.com/articles/news/2020/08/category-news-a-long-lasting-impact-the-details-behind-csus-land-acknowledgment/
The article provides the history of CSU's land acknowledgment. It also discusses the impact of the land acknowledgment and what comes after the statement.

(10) CSU History
https://online.colostate.edu/about/csu-history.dot
Examines CSU's history briefly and the highlights commitments the university wants to abide by.

(11) Native American Advisory Council
https://president.colostate.edu/native-american-advisory-council/
Reviews the Native American Advisory Councils history and goals and provides a list of current membership.

THAT THIS LEGISLATION SHALL BE FORWARDED TO:

Tony Frank, Chancellor of the Colorado State University System
Amy Parsons, President of Colorado State University
Lise Youngblade, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President
Blanche Hughes, Vice President of Student Affairs
Carmen Rivera, Assistant Vice President of Engagement and Belonging
Kauline Cipriani, Vice President for Inclusive Excellence
Montez Butts, Executive Director of the Lory Student Center
Pamela Norris, Associate Executive Director Engagement and Talent Development of the Lory Student Center
Rickey Frierson, Assistant Vice President of Cultural Resource Centers
Lindsey Sell, Associate Executive Director Engagement and Belonging of the Lory Student Center
Ben Schrader, Director of the Adult Learner and Veteran Services, ASCSU Advisor
Julia Pratt, Assistant Director for Student Government of Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement
Farah Shah, ASCSU/SLiCE Accounting Support for Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement
Tim Kefalas, SLiCE Accounting Manager for Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement

Ali Raza, Assistant Director of Involvement for Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement, ASCSU Advisor
Duan Ruff, Director of Student Leadership Involvement and Community Engagement
Elisa Randazzo, ASCSU Administrative Assistant
Warner College Council
Ag Council
College of Liberal Arts Representative Council
Natural Sciences College Council
College of Health and Human Sciences Dean's Leadership Council
College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences College Council
College of Business Dean's Student Leadership Council
Lisa Chandler, Assistant Director of Adult Learner and Veteran Services
Kathleen Fairfax, Vice Provost of International Affairs for Colorado State University
Chad Hoseth, Assistant Vice Provost of International Affairs for Colorado State University
Greg Wymer, Director of International Student Scholars and Services
Mary Ann Lucero, Executive Director of the Academic Advancement Center
Elizabeth Sink, Lead of Multifaith and Belief Initiatives
Gaurav Harshe, Interim Director of the Asian Pacific American Cultural Center
John Miller IV, Director of the Black/African American Cultural Center
Aaron Escobedo Garmon, Director of El Centro
Maggie Hendrickson, Director of the Pride Resource Center
Tyrone Smith, Director of the Native American Cultural Center
Imani Lindberg, Interim Director of the Survivor Advocacy & Foundational Education Center
Justin Dove, Director of the Student Disability Center
Amy Taylor, Senior Director of the Accessibility Center

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INTRODUCTION DATE/SESSION: **ARCHIVE DATE:**

COMMITTEE'S REVIEWED: **MONETARY? Y/N**