



RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER IN OPPOSITION OF INITIATIVE 108 AND AMENDMENT 50 FOR 2024 COLORADO BALLOT.

WHEREAS Metropolitan State University of Denver’s (MSU Denver) mission is to provide high-quality, accessible education that prepares students for successful careers in a multicultural, global, and technological society;

WHEREAS MSU Denver accomplishes that mission by serving a student body where 60 percent are first-generation, 96 percent are from Colorado, and 78 percent work in Colorado post-graduation; AND

WHEREAS access to high quality postsecondary programs is a central component of the State of Colorado’s economic competitiveness and job growth strategy, and its ability to sustain a vibrant and large middle class; AND

WHEREAS the State’s financial support of higher education constitutes 50 percent of MSU Denver’s operating budget and is therefore essential to keeping tuition reasonably affordable; current rates already consume 17 percent of the median Colorado family’s post-tax income; AND

WHEREAS property values and taxes have been increasing rapidly; relief is warranted and merits resolution. This need to reduce property tax burdens has been acknowledged and addressed in bipartisan legislation passed in the 2024 session; AND

WHEREAS all efforts that respect legal and democratic processes should be made to resolve the underlying concerns to protect the fiscal health of the state; AND

WHEREAS proposed Initiative 108 and Amendment 50, go further than is fiscally responsible and is projected to threaten Colorado’s long-term economic viability by creating a potential annual budget shortfall up to \$1.7 billion, according to Colorado’s non-partisan Legislative Council Staff; AND

WHEREAS the State has limited categories of discretionary spending that can be cut when revenues decline due to constitutional and statutory requirements and federal mandates. Without harming other vital parts of the state budget, like affordable rural hospital access, higher education expenditures represent the “balance wheel” where resources are often cut to balance the State’s annual budget; AND



WHEREAS the impact of this “balance wheel” in the face of lower revenues means that State support for higher education has shifted the tuition burden to students over the last thirty-two years. Colorado’s students are now graduating with increasingly higher amounts of college debt, which inhibits their ability to buy homes, build families, and contribute to the economy upon graduation; AND

WHEREAS the future Colorado workforce, as measured by enrollment rates directly out of high school has been declining recently, in large measure due to concerns about the cost of higher education; AND

WHEREAS these proposed budget cuts to higher education will lead to necessary decisions of raising tuition significantly and further obstructing the essential pathway MSU Denver – the State’s only modified open access public four-year college in Colorado— provides; AND

WHEREAS fewer low-income, first-generation, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Indigenous, student parent, and veteran students will be able to choose MSU Denver, thus leading to a projected lifetime loss of economic and social mobility for these Coloradans and challenging our State’s ability to recruit and sustain good, family-sustaining jobs; AND

NOW THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Metropolitan State University of Denver with fiduciary responsibility to serve the University and a commitment to Higher Education in Colorado hereby oppose proposed Initiative 108 and Amendment 50 on the 2024 Colorado ballot.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED as of August 7, 2024.

[SEAL]



BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF METROPOLITAN
STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

By: *Kristin D. Hultquist*
Name: Kristin Hultquist
Title: Board Chair

ATTEST:

By: *David Fine*
Name: David Fine
Title: Board Secretary