SENATE RESOLUTION

8711

By Senators Ranker, Ericksen, Dansel, Frockt, Cleveland, and Bailey

WHEREAS, Dr. W. Bruce Shepard is retiring from his position as President of Western Washington University in June 2016, after serving as the University's 13th President; and

WHEREAS, President Shepard is a true public servant in higher education, with four decades of experience as an educator and academic leader, including eight years as President of Western Washington University, seven years of public service as Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, six years of service as Provost at Eastern Oregon University, and twenty-three years with Oregon State University, where he earned tenure as a Professor of Political Science and served in various roles in the University's administration; and

WHEREAS, Under President Shepard's leadership, Western Washington University has been recognized as a regional and national leader for academic success and community engagement, including repeated recognition by *U.S. News & World Report* as the highest ranking public master's degree granting university in the Pacific Northwest and one of the best values in public higher education by *Kiplinger's*; ranking first in the nation three years in a row among medium-sized universities in sending graduates to the Peace Corps; and being the top national producer in 2013 among public master's degree granting institutions for Fulbright Scholarship winners; and

WHEREAS, President Shepard has prioritized Western's role in building a stronger Washington as a publicly-purposed university, highlighted by the fact that nine out of ten Western students are from the state of Washington, and the vast majority of Western alumni live in Washington, including in every county throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, President Shepard led the University to successfully navigate the Great Recession, effectively managing the University's finances while protecting Western's distinctive academic excellence as well as affordability for students; and

WHEREAS, During President Shepard's tenure at Western, STEM degree production has increased by fifty percent, including a tripling of the number of computer science degrees produced; and

WHEREAS, President Shepard has strengthened Western's commitment to serving, educating, and graduating first-generation, low-income, and traditionally underserved students, helping to establish an empathetic campus culture that values inclusivity and diversity; and

WHEREAS, Through his leadership, President Shepard has consistently challenged the Western community and residents throughout Washington State to consider tough questions around racial privilege, equity, and social justice, and worked to ensure that quality higher education is accessible to students of all backgrounds and demographics; and

WHEREAS, Through his leadership, President Shepard has fostered greater equity and inclusion on the Western Washington University campus through multiple initiatives that have enhanced the quality of life for students, faculty, and staff; and

WHEREAS, President Shepard has been a champion of shared governance and leading by listening, beginning his service at Western by holding listening sessions involving several thousand faculty, staff, and students on campus, followed by over one hundred conversations with diverse constituency groups around Washington and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Under President Shepard's leadership, Western has invigorated a culture of philanthropy and elevated its reputation throughout the state, leading to the success of the sixty million dollar *Western Stands for Washington* fundraising campaign; and

WHEREAS, President Shepard's legacy and devotion to public higher education will have lasting beneficial effects on the state of Washington and the students, faculty, and staff of Western Washington University for years to come;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate recognize President Bruce Shepard for his service in higher education and for his dedication to access, innovation, diversity, equity, sustainability, and academic excellence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to President Shepard and the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University.