

## **B 008 01**

### **EXECUTIVE ORDER**

#### **CREATING THE GOVERNOR'S BLUE RIBBON PANEL ON HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order creating the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century.

1. Background and Purpose

In Colorado – as elsewhere – the value and need of a college education are more pronounced than ever before. Colorado's continued economic prosperity and societal well-being are dependent, in large part, upon a well-educated citizenry. Among other indicators, the following reflect the value of, and need for, a college education:

- Colorado is experiencing some of the most rapid and sustained growth of any state in the nation.
- Between 1977 and 1997, the average income of high school graduates decreased by 4%, while that of college graduates increased by 28%.
- Economically, a variety of indices reflect the value of, and the need for, a highly educated citizenry. For example, Colorado is ranked seventh in per capita income, and between 1992 and 1999, Colorado had the fourth greatest increase in Gross State Product. The Corporation for Enterprise Development has graded Colorado "A" in each of the three major indexes contained in its report card for performance, business vitality and development capacity, earning top marks for seven years.
- Colorado is ranked first in the nation with respect to the percentage of our population that possesses a baccalaureate degree or higher. Yet, our high school graduates are not going on to college proportionately
- During the past decade, Colorado's population has increased by 31% and the percentage of high school seniors has increased by nearly 30%. Yet, the number of Coloradans enrolled full time in Colorado public institutions of higher learning has increased by only 10%.

- The recent national report card by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education generally ranked Colorado high, but the state received its lowest scores in the areas of participation and completion. There are some measures of college participation in which Colorado fares somewhat better. While the participation picture may be somewhat cloudy, it is crystal clear that for a rich state like Colorado, with such a highly educated population, the state must do much more to attract its own students, especially those from low incomes, to attend college.

The State of Colorado has the responsibility to foster the education of its citizenry, so as to prepare it for membership in the broad and multi-faceted workforce that our economy requires. To that end, this blue ribbon panel shall study the manner in which the state funds our post-secondary educational system, with the purpose of identifying barriers to higher education and assisting our citizens in surmounting them.

## 2. Mission and Scope

The mission of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century ("the Panel") is:

- To review the state's higher education funding mechanism, both historically and comparatively.
- To consider means by which college participation in Colorado may be increased, by gathering and analyzing information that addresses:

The number of Colorado citizens enrolled in college.

The quality and availability of opportunities for higher education in Colorado and the impact that current funding mechanisms have on those opportunities.

The extent to which our citizenry is benefiting from public funding to institutions of higher education.

The potential for allocation of additional state resources to higher education.

- To join with the members of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education ("the Commission") to amend as necessary the role and mission statements of each state institution of higher learning. This shall be accomplished by empowering the legislators on the Panel, as well as the Commission within its existing statutory charge, to conduct investigations, convene hearings, and develop recommendations for the Governor, the Panel, and the General Assembly, as may be appropriate. This report is due December 1, 2001.
- To recommend any new initiatives necessary to ensure the availability of resources and authority needed for the enhancement of the quality and nature of the Colorado higher education system.
- To report its findings to the Governor and to the joint House and Senate Education Committees by December 1, 2002. Specifically, in conjunction with the Commission, the Panel shall report on:

What changes might increase participation of all Colorado's citizens in higher education;

Whether existing financial resources provide opportunities and access to higher education for all Colorado citizens;

What effect existing funding methods have on institutions' ability to recruit students; and

Whether alternate forms of financing can allow more opportunities for Colorado's citizens.

3. Organization

The Panel shall have the authority to accept money and in-kind contributions from private entities only to the extent that such donations as may be needed to cover its reasonable expenses. Any money contributed to the Panel shall be directed to and deposited by the Treasurer of the State of Colorado, in an account within the Office of the Governor's budget, as authorized by law.

4. Membership

- A. The Governor shall appoint 17 persons to serve as voting members of the Panel. Of the 17, six shall be members of the Legislature as follows: three members from each of the House and the Senate. Of the Legislators, three shall be Republicans and three shall be Democrats. The remaining voting members shall be appointed so as to reflect the geographical, ethnic, professional, political, and educational diversity of the State of Colorado.
- B. A quorum shall consist of 9 Panel members and final recommendations to the Governor shall be approved by at least 11 voting members.
- C. Members of the Panel shall serve solely at the pleasure of the Governor and shall do so without compensation.
- D. The Governor shall designate a Chair and Vice-Chair from among the Panel members. The Chair shall adopt such rules and procedures as may be necessary for the orderly conduct of the Panel. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall serve in this capacity at the Governor's sole discretion.
- E. The Governor shall also appoint an Advisory Committee ("the Committee") to consult with, advise, or otherwise lend assistance and guidance to the Panel. The Committee shall consist of not more than 6 members. Members of the Committee shall serve solely at the pleasure of the Governor and without compensation.

5. Duration

The Panel shall be dissolved upon submission of its final report and recommendations to the Governor, or earlier upon written notice of termination by the Governor. The Panel shall be dissolved no later than December 31, 2002, unless extended by the Governor in writing.

GIVEN under my hand and the  
Executive Seal of the State of Colorado  
this second day of August, 2001.

Bill Owens  
Governor