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UA3/9/2 Tribute to Western Kentucky University On Its Centennial Year

U.S. Senate

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Good Gary Ransdell
Congratulations on the 100th Senate Anniversary of WKU
Michael McConnell
USS F1.

TRIBUTE TO WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY ON ITS CENTENNIAL YEAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding institution of higher learning in my home State, Western Kentucky University. Next Tuesday, March 21, 2006, marks Western's 100th year of fulfilling its mission to "prepare students to be productive citizens of a global society" and to "provide service and lifelong learning opportunities for its constituents."

Located in Bowling Green, KY, Western Kentucky University has not always been known by its current name. On March 21, 1906, the Kentucky General Assembly approved legislation establishing two teacher-training institutions. Bowling Green was selected as one of the sites, and the Western Kentucky State Normal School was established. With a mission to train teachers, the newly created institution selected Henry Hardin Cherry as its first president.

Five years after its founding, the school moved to its current site on "the Hill," a scenic location overlooking the city of Bowling Green. This move would later lend itself to an appropriate school motto that is proudly used today, describing Western Kentucky University as "the home of the Hilltoppers." In 1922, the school was renamed and became known as Western Kentucky State Normal School and Teachers College; at this time, it was

also authorized to grant four-year degrees. In 1924, the first such degrees were earned and awarded.

In the years that followed, Western continued to expand its curriculum and shorten its name. While many "Hilltoppers" have followed the school's early roots and pursued degrees in education, the institution now offers a broader set of degree programs. On June 16, 1966, Western underwent its final name change and became known simply as Western Kentucky University. The university now has an enrollment of over 18,000 students and offers 88 academic majors and 57 academic minors. It also offers 18 associate degrees and graduate studies.

I always enjoy visiting Western and spending time with its students, faculty, and staff. I am proud to have partnered with the university to secure over \$48 million in federal funding for worthwhile projects such as the Western Mobile Health Unit and the ARS federal research lab. University President Gary Ransdell, the institution's ninth president, is a great leader, and we work well together. He has been successful in advancing the university and winning accolades from students, faculty, and educators nationwide.

Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Western Kentucky University on its Centennial Year.