## TOPIC: Degree Authorization – Recommendation of Approval for Renewal of Authorization for Taft University System

**PREPARED BY: Heather DeLange, Office of Private Postsecondary Education**

1. **SUMMARY**

This agenda item recommends the renewal of Full Authorization for the Taft University System pursuant to the Degree Authorization Act (§23-2-101 C.R.S.).

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## BACKGROUND

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) has statutory responsibility for administration of Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, commonly referred to as the Degree Authorization Act (DAA). The Act sets out the terms by which the Commission may authorize accredited private colleges and universities, out-of-state public colleges and universities, and seminaries and bible colleges to operate in Colorado.

The DAA outlines the Department’s jurisdiction over private education programs available to the residents of the state of Colorado. The DAA establishes standards to (1) prevent misrepresentation, fraud, and collusion in offering educational programs to the public and (2) protect, preserve, foster, and encourage the educational programs offered by private educational institutions, which meet generally recognized criteria of quality and effectiveness as determined through voluntary accreditation.

Pursuant to statute and policy, all authorized institutions under the DAA must renew authorization periodically. The renewal period varies by the type of authorization that the institution holds from the CCHE. A private college or university that has full authorization “shall apply for renewal of authorization in accordance with the schedule for institutional reaccreditation by its accrediting body or every three years, whichever is longer.” Taft University System recently received its accreditation renewal from the Distance Education Accrediting Commission.

The Taft University System of Denver is a private, for-profit college located in Denver, Colorado and has been operating in Colorado as an accredited institution since 2006. The system office is located in Colorado and is comprised of William Howard Taft University and the Taft Law School. The former operates out of Colorado and the law school is located in California. The Distance Education Accrediting Commission accredits the system as one institution; the two institutions are considered divisions of Taft University System.

1. **STAFF ANALYSIS**

The Taft University System received a renewal of accreditation from the Distance Education Accrediting Commission at its January 2025 meeting. The Commission’s decision was based on the institution’s self-evaluation report, the Chair’s report, the institutional response to the Chair’s report and the institution’s most recent progress report. The vote demonstrates the Commission’s determination that the institutions is in compliance with the standards of accreditation. Taft will undergo another comprehensive review for its next renewal of accreditation by June 2028.

With the renewal of accreditation by DEAC, Taft University System applied to the Department for renewal of Full Authorization in accordance with the schedule for reaccreditation by its accrediting body.

In addition to maintaining its accreditation, Taft University System continues to meet and comply with all authorization requirements for authorization to operate in Colorado.

1. **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff recommends the Commission approve the renewal of Full Authorization for the Taft University System.**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

C.R.S §23-2-103.3(5) A private college or university that has authorization from the commission pursuant to this section and maintains its accreditation shall apply to the department for reauthorization in accordance with the schedule for reaccreditation by its accrediting body or every three years, whichever is longer. A seminary or religious training institution shall apply for reauthorization every three years. A private college or university or seminary or religious training institution that seeks reauthorization shall submit an application in accordance with the procedures and policies adopted by the commission and shall pay the reauthorization fee established by the commission pursuant to [section 23-2-104.5](http://web.lexisnexis.com/research/buttonTFLink?_m=0440209b70196c0a450023ec95de11c7&_xfercite=%3ccite%20cc%3d%22USA%22%3e%3c%21%5bCDATA%5bC.R.S.%2023-2-103.3%5d%5d%3e%3c%2fcite%3e&_butType=4&_butStat=0&_butNum=3&_butInline=1&_butinfo=COCODE%2023-2-104.5&_fmtstr=FULL&docnum=1&_startdoc=1&wchp=dGLzVzB-zSkAb&_md5=fccf21cdb05ad81de4864a4d217ac5a1).