

Centennial Resolution Language

Note: This is a resolution template commemorating the 100th anniversary of Cooperative Extension. Cornerstone Government Affairs will work to identify sponsors to introduce the resolution in both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives during 2014. This resolution template can be used as presented or adapted for use with your state legislatures or local governments.

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Smith-Lever Act, the founding legislation of the nationwide Cooperative Extension System

Whereas May 8, 2014, marks the centennial of the signing of the Smith-Lever Act (Act of May 8, 1914, Ch. 79, 38 Stat. 372, 7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.), which established Cooperative Extension, the nationwide transformational education system operating through land-grant universities in partnership with federal, state and local governments.

Whereas U.S. Sen. Hoke Smith of Georgia and U.S. Rep. A. F. Lever of South Carolina authored the Smith-Lever Act to expand the “vocational, agricultural and home demonstration programs in rural America” by bringing the research-based knowledge of the land-grant universities to people where they live and work.

Whereas Cooperative Extension is a critical component of the three-part land-grant university mission and works collaboratively with research, particularly the Agricultural Experiment Station System, and academic programs in 106 colleges and universities, including historically black, Native American and Hispanic-serving institutions; in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and six U.S. territories to reach traditional and underserved audiences in all communities.

Whereas the Cooperative Extension System continues to receive federal programmatic leadership and support enabled by the Smith Lever Act and other legislation through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Whereas Cooperative Extension’s research-based education for farmers and ranchers helped establish the United States as a leading agricultural-producing nation in the world.

Whereas since 1924, when the clover emblem was adopted by USDA to represent 4-H, Cooperative Extension’s nationwide youth development program has reached millions of youth and helped prepare them for responsible adulthood.

Whereas Cooperative Extension prepares people for healthy, productive lives through sustained education, such as the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, breaking the cycle of poverty and reducing expenditures for federal and state assistance programs.

Whereas Cooperative Extension provides rapid response to disasters and emergencies through the Extension Disaster Education Network and other similar efforts by providing real-time alerts and resources so Extension educators can respond to urgent needs resulting from hurricanes, floods, oil spills, fire, drought, pest outbreaks and infectious diseases affecting humans, livestock and crops.

Whereas Cooperative Extension translates science-based research for practical application through local and online learning networks where educators are uniquely available to identify emerging research questions, connect with land-grant university faculty to find answers and encourage application of findings to improve economic and social conditions.

Whereas Cooperative Extension engages with rural and urban learners through practical, community-based and online approaches, resulting in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and motivation to strengthen the profitability of animal and plant production systems, protect natural resources, help people make healthful lifestyle choices, ensure a safe and abundant food supply, encourage community vitality and grow the next generation of leaders.

Whereas many states are celebrating the centennial of the signing of the Smith-Lever Act with resolutions and proclamations, and many land-grant institutions also are commemorating the signing of the historic legislation.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Senate/House of Representatives:

Recognizes the significance of the Smith-Lever Act to the establishment of Cooperative Extension nationwide.

Encourages the people of the United States to observe and celebrate the centennial with a focus on launching an innovative and sustainable future for Cooperative Extension.

Honors the university faculty and local educators who dedicate careers to providing trusted education to help people, families, youth, businesses and communities solve problems, develop skills and build a better future.

Thanks Cooperative Extension volunteers who provide thousands of hours to promote excellence for 4-H, Master Gardeners, family and consumer sciences and other programs in their communities.

Encourages continued collaboration and cooperation among federal, state and local governments to ensure Cooperative Extension's sustainability as the nation's premiere nonformal educational network.

Celebrates millions of youth, adults, families, farmers, ranchers, community leaders and others who engage in Cooperative Extension learning opportunities designed to extend knowledge and change lives.