

**SENATE RESOLUTION  
2000-8754**

*By Senators Franklin, Fairley, Swecker, McAuliffe, Wojahn, Rasmussen, Stevens, Snyder, Sheldon, B., Goings, Winsley, Thibaudeau, Shin, Jacobsen, Kline, Long, Patterson, Brown, Eide, Prentice, Haugen, Spanel, Kohl-Welles, Sheldon, T., Gardner, Loveland, Heavey, Bauer, Costa, Fraser, Roach and Sheahan*

*WHEREAS, In 1839, fifty-three Africans from modern-day Sierra Leone were kidnapped and illegally sold into the Spanish slave trade; and*

*WHEREAS, After enduring an horrific voyage to Cuba, the Africans mutinied and took over the ship known as Amistad; and*

*WHEREAS, Amistad then set sail for Africa, but ended up off the coast of New England; and*

*WHEREAS, A group of abolitionists took up the Africans' cause and there ensued a lengthy court battle for the Africans' freedom; and*

*WHEREAS, The case was ultimately argued before the United States Supreme Court; and*

*WHEREAS, The Supreme Court agreed with the plaintiffs, the Africans won their case in 1841, and were remanded their freedom; and*

*WHEREAS, The Amistad affair unified the abolitionists and advanced their cause, and civil libertarians increasingly used the judicial system to press their case, laying the groundwork for the abolition of slavery and the subsequent modern Civil Rights movement; and*

*WHEREAS, A nonprofit educational foundation, Amistad America, is dedicated to maintaining the legacy of the Amistad incident and teaching the lessons of history, leadership, and cooperation through the building and sailing of a replica of Amistad; and*

*WHEREAS, Timber from the Pacific Northwest was essential for the completion of the new Amistad's masts; and*

*WHEREAS, Commissioner of Public Lands Jennifer Belcher and the Department of Natural Resources Diversity Committee took it upon themselves to help the new Amistad's builders locate the appropriate timber on the Olympic Peninsula near Quilcene; and*

*WHEREAS, The DNR Diversity Committee also raised more than \$1,000 in donations to help pay for construction of the Amistad replica; and*

*WHEREAS, Many more donations to the Amistad project totaling more than \$500 came from people in Tacoma; and*

*WHEREAS, The new freedom schooner Amistad is scheduled to be christened and launched on March 25, 2000, at Mystic Seaport, Connecticut; and*

*WHEREAS, Launch ceremonies will be led by ship sponsors Ruby Dee and her husband, Ossie Davis, the renowned couple of the theater and arts; and*

*WHEREAS, Amistad will sail as an educational ambassador, teaching lessons of history, cooperation, and leadership to Americans of all ages, interests, and cultural backgrounds in the many ports she will visit;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the members of the Washington State Senate do hereby commend all those who have worked to build the freedom schooner Amistad, and honor the goals they share of teaching all Americans that justice must precede any true freedom; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate do hereby immediately transmit copies of this resolution to Public Lands Commissioner Jennifer Belcher, the Diversity Committee at the Department of Natural Resources, and to the Amistad America organization.*

I, Tony M. Cook, Secretary of the Senate,  
do hereby certify that this is a true and  
correct copy of Senate Resolution 2000-8754,  
adopted by the Senate March 7, 2000.

TONY M. COOK

Secretary of the Senate