

SENATE RESOLUTION
8673

By Senators Regala and Jacobsen

WHEREAS, Walter B. Williams, former leader of HomeStreet Bank for nearly three decades and a community leader, grew up in Seattle, Washington; and

WHEREAS, Walter Williams graduated from the University of Washington and Harvard Law School; and

WHEREAS, A Veteran of World War II, Walter served on the Pacific islands of Bougainville, Guam, and Iwo Jima as a Japanese Language Officer in the United States Marine Corps. While in Japan, Walter carried letters from the Japanese POWs to their families. Walter then became president and long-time member of the Japan-American Society of Washington, where he worked to promote goodwill between the two nations; and

WHEREAS, For nearly three decades Walter was president and chairman of Continental, Inc., which evolved into HomeStreet Bank; and

WHEREAS, Walter served as a Washington state Representative from 1961 to 1963; and

WHEREAS, Walter served eight years in the State Senate from 1963-1971. His efforts focused on improving schools and increasing the effectiveness of both state and local government; and

WHEREAS, Walter Williams was president of many community organizations including the Rotary Club of Seattle, the Economic developmental Council of Puget Sound, the Puget Sound Association of Phi Beta Kappa, and the Downtown Seattle Association; and

WHEREAS, Walter served on the boards of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, the Seattle King County Municipal League, The Evergreen State College Foundation, and Medina Children's Services. He was also a founding member of Washington Roundtable; and

WHEREAS, In 1997 Walter was honored as First Citizen, an annual award honoring a King County resident who has provided outstanding public service and leadership; and

WHEREAS, One of Walter's great loves was the Seattle Woodland Park Zoo. In 1984, he was appointed by then Mayor Charles Royer to chair a 50-member Zoo Commission at a time when the Zoo was at a crossroads. Walter recommended placing a King County Zoo bond issue on the ballot in 1985 and led it to passage. Walter served as a key player in the Zoo's construction into a world-class facility; and

WHEREAS, Walter's loving wife of 60 years, Marie, passed away in September 2006; and

WHEREAS, Walter B. Williams passed away November 9, 2006, leaving behind his loving four children: Kathryn Williams, Bruce Williams, Marcia Williams, and Wendy Williams;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate commemorate Walter B. Williams' accomplishments and contributions to Washington state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the Washington State Senate, HomeStreet Bank, and Walter Williams' four children.