
SENATE BILL 5061

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Senator Jacobsen

Read first time 01/12/09. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources,
Ocean & Recreation.

1 AN ACT Relating to enhancing the natural resource collections at
2 the Washington park arboretum; adding new sections to chapter 28B.20
3 RCW; and creating new sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the Washington
6 park arboretum is the official arboretum of the state of Washington.
7 The University of Washington and the city of Seattle cooperatively
8 established the arboretum in 1934, with Seattle holding title to most
9 of the property and the University of Washington owning, designing,
10 developing, and managing the collections at the arboretum and botanic
11 garden. The arboretum is a central component of the University of
12 Washington botanic gardens, along with collections around the center
13 for urban horticulture, in the Union Bay natural area, and in the Otis
14 Douglas Hyde herbarium.

15 The legislature finds that the Washington park arboretum contains
16 a dynamic collection of trees and other woody plants that are hardy in
17 the maritime Pacific Northwest. Collections are selected and arranged
18 to display their beauty and function in urban landscapes, to
19 demonstrate their natural ecology and diversity, and to conserve

1 important species and cultivated varieties for the future. There is no
2 fee for admission to the arboretum, allowing everyone to enjoy and
3 learn from its collections.

4 The legislature also finds that the Washington park arboretum holds
5 one of the most prestigious plant collections in the world. The
6 arboretum consists of approximately twenty thousand trees, shrubs, and
7 vines, of which over ten thousand are catalogued. The collection
8 includes approximately four thousand six hundred different species and
9 one hundred thirty-nine endangered species. Collections include
10 rhododendron, azalea, mountain ash, pine, spruce, cedar, fir,
11 crabapple, holly, magnolia, camellia, and Japanese maple. The
12 arboretum's collection of oaks and maples is the richest in the nation,
13 and the conifers, hollies, and magnolias also rank among the nation's
14 finest collections. The arboretum displays ninety-five percent of its
15 holdings, whose estimated value is almost eighty-two million dollars.

16 The legislature further finds that the Washington park arboretum's
17 mission is to serve the public, students at all levels, naturalists,
18 gardeners, and nursery and landscape professionals with its
19 collections, educational programs, interpretation, and recreational
20 opportunities. Therefore, the legislature intends to provide
21 additional tools and resources to the University of Washington botanic
22 gardens as it preserves and provides public access to the important
23 educational, recreational, social, and cultural state resources that
24 the arboretum and other botanic garden collections have to offer.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.20 RCW
26 to read as follows:

27 It is the goal of the legislature that the Washington park
28 arboretum's collections, exhibits, and facilities be preserved,
29 maintained, and presented in a manner befitting one of the world's most
30 prestigious plant collections. Therefore, the Washington park
31 arboretum must strive to:

32 (1) Enhance public appreciation for the aesthetic diversity of
33 temperate wood plants;

34 (2) Educate the public and regional school population about urban
35 landscape use and the natural biology of temperate wood plants;

36 (3) Conserve and keep healthy native, exotic, and cultivated woody
37 plants to preserve diversity for future appreciation;

1 (4) Maintain and enhance collections, exhibits, and facilities to
2 create the best possible ambiance and visitor experience; and

3 (5) Cooperate with local, regional, national, and international
4 entities that have a similar mission.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.20 RCW
6 to read as follows:

7 The University of Washington botanic gardens endowed curatorship is
8 established within the University of Washington to support a staff
9 position within the botanic gardens, which currently falls under the
10 college of forest resources. The purpose of the endowed curatorship is
11 to ensure that perpetual funding exists for a botanic gardens curator
12 who shall focus on: (1) The preservation, maintenance, and
13 presentation of the botanic garden's collections; and (2) the goals
14 established for the Washington park arboretum in section 2 of this act.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.20 RCW
16 to read as follows:

17 (1) The University of Washington botanic gardens endowed
18 curatorship account is created in the custody of the state treasurer.
19 All moneys appropriated by the legislature for the University of
20 Washington botanic gardens endowed curatorship or to the account must
21 be placed in the account. Money in the account may only be released
22 according to the procedures set forth in subsection (2) of this
23 section. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter
24 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

25 (2) The state treasurer must release money in the University of
26 Washington botanic gardens endowed curatorship account to the
27 University of Washington board of regents for inclusion in the
28 University of Washington consolidated endowment fund when the
29 University of Washington board of regents determines that it can match
30 the state funds requested with an equal amount of funds contributed by
31 nonstate sources for the University of Washington botanic gardens
32 endowed curatorship and requests that the funds be released. The state
33 and nonstate moneys must each be placed in the University of Washington
34 consolidated endowment fund. The University of Washington may not
35 invade the principal invested for the botanic gardens endowed

1 curatorship. Distributions from the consolidated endowment fund
2 resulting from this investment must be used solely for purposes of the
3 University of Washington botanic gardens endowed curatorship.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The department of natural resources'
5 natural heritage program shall host a working conference on the future
6 of arboretums and botanic gardens in Washington. The objective of the
7 conference is to explore the current status of arboretums and botanic
8 gardens in the state and develop strategies to sustain and enhance
9 these important scientific, educational, and recreational resources.

10 (2) The natural heritage program shall work with appropriate
11 arboretums, botanic gardens, and interested public and private entities
12 in preparing for and conducting the conference. To enhance the
13 effectiveness of the conference and its products, the natural heritage
14 program shall seek to frame issues and outline options through issue
15 summaries and preliminary meetings with appropriate entities.

16 (3) Among the topics that the conference should address are:

17 (a) The challenges currently facing Washington's arboretums and
18 botanic gardens, including funding, maintenance, and collections
19 management challenges;

20 (b) Strategies arboretums and botanic gardens might adopt to
21 address the identified challenges; and

22 (c) Recommendations on ways the legislature, state agencies, and
23 local governments might assist arboretums and botanic gardens address
24 the identified challenges.

25 (4) The natural heritage program shall schedule the conference at
26 a time sufficient to prepare a summary of the conference proceedings
27 and recommendations for submission to the appropriate committees of the
28 legislature by December 15, 2009.

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