

SENATE RESOLUTION  
8681

By Senators Fraser, Honeyford, Nelson, Hewitt, Tom, Rolfes, Fain, Mullet, Bailey, Kline, Hobbs, Pedersen, Eide, Schoesler, Keiser, Hargrove, Ranker, Frockt, Lias, Conway, Darneille, Padden, Braun, Angel, Ericksen, Hatfield, Benton, Kohl-Welles, McCoy, Hasegawa, Pearson, Becker, Chase, Sheldon, McAuliffe, Cleveland, Billig, Parlette, Litzow, Roach, Brown, Dandel, Holmquist Newbry, Baumgartner, O'Ban, Hill, Rivers, Dammeier, and King

WHEREAS, 125 years ago, on February 22, 1889, fittingly on George Washington's Birthday, President Grover Cleveland signed legislation enabling the Washington Territory to proceed with the steps necessary to become a state; and

WHEREAS, From this date, the process proceeded expeditiously, taking only nine months, with a State Constitutional Convention held in Olympia July 4 to August 22, 1889, the proposed State Constitution approved by Washington's all-male voters on October 1, and the Proclamation of Statehood issued by the President on November 11; and

WHEREAS, Although these steps were achieved quickly, this action culminated a 36-year quest for statehood, which began with the establishment of the Washington Territory in 1853; and

WHEREAS, Prior attempts to achieve statehood involved actions during the 1870s, which included the unsuccessful 1878 Walla Walla Constitutional Convention, and actions during the 1880s, which included an effort to establish a "State of Tacoma"; and

WHEREAS, The Enabling Act specified many significant policies required to be included in the Washington State Constitution, including that "the constitution shall be republican in form," that it shall "make no distinction in civil or political rights on account of race or color, except as to Indians not taxed," that is "not be repugnant to the Constitution of the United States and the principles of the Declaration of Independence," that there be "perfect toleration of religious sentiment," and that "provision shall be made for the establishment and maintenance of systems of public schools, which shall be open to all the children...and free from sectarian control"; and

WHEREAS, The Enabling Act provided that, upon statehood, the national government would transfer significant amounts of land to the state government for purposes of supporting "common schools," "agricultural colleges," "normal schools," "a scientific school," and "charitable, educational, penal, and reformatory institutions"; and

WHEREAS, Provisions of the Enabling Act have been amended by Congress periodically, as the Act continues to guide and inform the principles governing the State to this day; and

WHEREAS, The Enabling Act also provided for the general judicial framework for the State, and appended the State to the Ninth Judicial Circuit of the federal court system; and

WHEREAS, Statehood finally allowed the citizens of the former Territory to have direct representation in Congress; and

WHEREAS, Washington State will commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the admission of Washington State to the Union on November 11, 1889, with events and ceremonies on November 11, 2014, which will include the return to the State Capitol of the "Keepers of the Capsule" after 25 years, to fulfill the oath they took in 1989 at the age of 10; and

WHEREAS, This historic return will feature the first updating of the State's 400-year time capsule, the swearing-in of the second generation of "Keepers of the Capsule" to watch and ward over the capsule on its journey to the year 2389, and the installation of the first 25 year time capsule materials since 1989 by the new generation of "Keepers of the Capsule";

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate call on the people of the State of Washington to commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the Enabling Act, enacted by Congress, which enabled Washington to become the successful, vibrant state it is today and will continue to be in the future.

I, Hunter G. Goodman, Secretary of the Senate,  
do hereby certify that this is a true and  
correct copy of Senate Resolution 8681,

adopted by the Senate  
February 17, 2014

HUNTER G. GOODMAN  
Secretary of the Senate