SENATE RESOLUTION

8652

By Senators Fraser, McAuliffe, Angel, Keiser, Parlette, Miloscia, Dammeier, O'Ban, Hasegawa, Roach, and Kohl-Welles

WHEREAS, The Magna Carta, also known as the Great Charter, is the cornerstone of liberty and constitutional law; and

WHEREAS, On June 15, 2015, the 800th anniversary of this fundamental legal document will be commemorated in Washington, the United Kingdom, and throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, The Washington State Constitution of 1889 echoes the famous "Free Man Clause" of the Magna Carta in Article I, Section 3 (Personal Rights), reading, "No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law"; and

WHEREAS, The Magna Carta's "Free Man Clause" reads, "No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land," thereby, for the first time, subjecting the Crown to the rule of law; and

WHEREAS, King John of England sealed the Magna Carta on June 15, 1215, to settle disputes between the King and rebel barons, provide protection for the rights of the church, limit feudal payments, safeguard barons from illegal imprisonment, and place limits on the Crown through the establishment of rule of law in English society; and

WHEREAS, English people brought the concepts of the Great Charter with them to the New World and used them as the basis of their government charters; and

WHEREAS, The Charter of Massachusetts Bay, as well as the First Charter of Virginia, thus provided colonists with liberties and immunities similar to those recognized in the Magna Carta; and

WHEREAS, Lord Denning, a prominent English judge of the 20th century, described the Magna Carta as "the greatest constitutional document of all times—the foundation of the freedom of the individual against the arbitrary authority of the despot"; and

WHEREAS, The legal principles of the Magna Carta are reflected in the United States Constitution of 1787; and

WHEREAS, The framers of the Washington State Constitution also relied on the principles of the Magna Carta when drafting our state's constitution in 1889; and

WHEREAS, The Washington State Constitution thus preserves major rights won through centuries of struggle, including the many rights specifically protected in Article I (Declaration of Rights), reflecting the legacy of the Magna Carta;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate applaud this cornerstone of liberty and constitutional law by commemorating the 800th anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta, and encourage Washingtonians to engage in educational and commemorative activities throughout the year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Washingtonians are encouraged to honor the rule of law on June 15, 2015, at a noon program and reception at the Temple of Justice in Olympia, Washington, in celebration of the Washington State Constitution and the 800-year legacy of the Magna Carta.

I, Hunter G. Goodman, Secretary of the Senate,

do hereby certify that this is a true and

correct copy of Senate Resolution 8652,

adopted by the Senate

March 31, 2015

HUNTER G. GOODMAN

Secretary of the Senate