SENATE RESOLUTION

8657

By Senators Padden, Miloscia, Hargrove, Rolfes, Billig, Parlette, Bailey, King, Chase, Hewitt, Becker, Brown, Warnick, O'Ban, Conway, Hasegawa, Hatfield, Fraser, Kohl-Welles, Dammeier, Darneille, Angel, Roach, Schoesler, Keiser, Sheldon, and Nelson

WHEREAS, Down syndrome occurs when there are three, rather than two, copies of the 21st chromosome in an individual; and

WHEREAS, There are over 400,000 people living with Down syndrome in the United States, making it the most commonly occurring chromosomal condition and a significant cause of intellectual and developmental delay, with one in every 691 babies born with Down syndrome; and

WHEREAS, Down syndrome occurs in people across all economic levels and races, with 80 percent of children born with Down syndrome born to women under age 35; and

WHEREAS, The life expectancy for people with Down syndrome has increased to age 60, when in 1983 people with Down syndrome were expected only to live to be 25; and

WHEREAS, We should encourage citizens to work together to promote respect towards, and to celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of, individuals with Down syndrome, so these individuals can achieve their goals, take pride in their achievements, and reach their fullest potential; and

WHEREAS, Tremendous work is being done by organizations such as the Down Syndrome Community and The Arc of Washington State to protect the right to equality, inclusion, education, and support for people with Down syndrome across the state; and

WHEREAS, Eric Matthes is a self-advocate with Down syndrome who works for The Arc of King County, where he is a powerful voice on behalf of people with Down syndrome as the president of People First of Washington, where his professionalism and interpersonal skills have served the local community and increased awareness in the greater Seattle area and around the state; and

WHEREAS, Individuals with Down syndrome have proudly represented Washington State in the Special Olympics, where Heather Comer of Spokane Valley was a Gold Medalist in alpine downhill skiing at the 2013 Special Olympics World Games in South Korea, she was the 2013 Washington State Athlete of the Year, and she is a board member on the Special Olympics and the Arc of Spokane, Mallory Smith of Tacoma competed in basketball, cycling, golf, and bowling, and Angela Martin of Seattle served with the board of directors with the Special Olympics for nine years and competed in alpine skiing and aquatics; and

WHEREAS, The work of human and civil rights activists around the United States and the world have paved the avenues whereby people with Down syndrome can attend local schools, get married, maintain jobs, live at home, receive appropriate health care, and lead fulfilling, integrated lives;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate recognize and honor these exemplary individuals with Down syndrome and the dedicated communities that wholeheartedly support them; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to Eric Matthes, president of People First of Washington; Sean King, president of the Down Syndrome Community; and Sue Elliott, executive director of The Arc of Washington State.

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

do hereby certify that this is a true and

correct copy of Senate Resolution 8657,

adopted by the Senate

April 10, 2015

HUNTER G. GOODMAN

Secretary of the Senate