

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5595

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government & Elections, February 10, 2023

Title: An act relating to the state nickname.

Brief Description: Adopting the evergreen state as the state nickname.

Sponsors: Senators Wilson, J., Rolfes, Holy, Wilson, L., Lovick, Nguyen, Randall, Wilson, C., Valdez, Kuderer, Torres, Pedersen, Dhingra, Lovelett, Padden, Keiser, Muzzall, Short, Robinson, Schoesler, Dozier, Wagoner, Billig, Van De Wege, Warnick, Fortunato, Rivers, Braun, King, Gildon, Boehnke, McCune, Shewmake, Saldaña, Cleveland, Trudeau, Frame, Conway, Hasegawa and Hunt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 2/07/23, 2/10/23 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Designates "The Evergreen State" as the official state nickname.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Valdez, Vice Chair; Wilson, J., Ranking Member; Dozier, Fortunato, Hasegawa and Kuderer.

Staff: Danielle Creech (786-7412)

Background: On November 11, 1889, Washington became the 42nd state to enter the Union. In the late 1800's, Charles Tallmadge (C.T.) Conover, a pioneer Seattle realtor, newspaper columnist, and historian, nicknamed Washington "The Evergreen State." Conover, who was also instrumental in retaining the name of Mount Rainier, gave Washington this nickname for its abundant evergreen forests.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Today "The Evergreen State" is generally accepted as a reference to the state of Washington. The nickname was used by Governor John H. McGraw in his 1893 inaugural address, and has been considered by the Legislature for official designation, but has never been adopted. The nickname can be seen engraved on Washington State license plates, on memorabilia sold at souvenir shops, and inscribed on the April 2007 United States memorial quarter honoring Washington State. While many state symbols, including the official state flag, song, dance, and seal have officially been designated as such by the Legislature, no official state nickname has been designated.

Summary of Bill: "The Evergreen State" is designated as the official nickname of the state of Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The Evergreen State is a nickname that has long been associated with Washington and assumed to be official. It implies that the state remains green and fresh, but it's also part of our commerce and our economy. This is a rare chance to pass an easy bill. The Senate has considered this several times and it would be good to finally make it official.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Jeff Wilson, Prime Sponsor; Timothy Lonon.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.