
SENATE BILL 5092

State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Senator Jacobsen

Read first time 01/13/09. 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; creating new sections; and making an appropriation.

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 the
9 property and the University of Washington designing, developing, and
10 managing the arboretum and botanic garden. The arboretum is a central
11 component of the University of Washington botanic gardens, along with
12 collections in the Union Bay gardens, around the center for urban
13 horticulture, in the Union Bay natural area, and in the Otis Douglas
14 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 both natural 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. The state treasurer must release money in
22 the account according to the procedures set forth in subsection (2) of
23 this section. The account is subject to allotment procedures under
24 chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for
25 expenditures.

26 (2) Until June 30, 2014, the state treasurer must release one
27 million dollars from the University of Washington botanic gardens
28 endowed curatorship account to the University of Washington board of
29 regents for inclusion in the University of Washington consolidated
30 endowment fund when both: (a) The University of Washington board of
31 regents requests that the funds be released; and (b) the University of
32 Washington demonstrates to the treasurer that it will match the state
33 funds with an equal amount of funds contributed by nonstate sources for
34 the University of Washington botanic gardens endowed curatorship. The
35 state and nonstate moneys must each be placed in the University of
36 Washington consolidated endowment fund. The University of Washington

1 may not invade the principal invested for the botanic gardens endowed
2 curatorship. Distributions from the consolidated endowment fund
3 resulting from this investment must be used solely for purposes of the
4 University of Washington botanic gardens endowed curatorship.

5 (3) The state treasurer must transfer any funds remaining in the
6 University of Washington botanic gardens endowed curatorship account on
7 July 1, 2014, to the general fund.

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

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

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

21 (a) The challenges currently facing Washington's arboretums and
22 botanic gardens, including funding, maintenance, and collections
23 management challenges;

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

26 (c) Recommendations on ways the legislature, state agencies, and
27 local governments might assist arboretums and botanic gardens address
28 the identified challenges.

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

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The sum of one million dollars, or as much
34 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending
35 June 30, 2010, from the general fund to the University of Washington

1 botanic gardens endowed curatorship account created in section 4 of
2 this act for the purposes of this act.

--- END ---