
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8009

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Senators Lovelett, Das, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser, Lovick, Rolfes, Saldaña, Stanford, Trudeau, Wellman, and C. Wilson

Read first time 02/07/22. Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks.

1 TO THE HONORABLE JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
2 STATES, AND TO THE HONORABLE JAY INSLEE, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF
3 WASHINGTON, AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE
4 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF
5 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO
6 THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, THE WASHINGTON CONGRESSIONAL
7 DELEGATION, THE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE
8 SERVICE, AND THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME AND DIVISION
9 FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

10 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
11 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled,
12 respectfully represent and petition as follows:

13 WHEREAS, The people of Washington have an important relationship
14 with nature and have called on their local, state, and federal
15 government to preserve and protect nature both within the State of
16 Washington and across the United States; and

17 WHEREAS, Washington is the home of species and habitats that are
18 of ecological, spiritual, cultural, historic, recreational, and
19 scientific value to the people of Washington and need to be protected
20 both now and for future generations; and

21 WHEREAS, Washington ecosystems support 140 mammal, 470 marine and
22 freshwater fish, 341 bird, 25 amphibian, 21 reptile, 3,100 vascular
23 plants and lichen, and over 20,000 invertebrate species, of which 7.3

1 percent are at risk of extinction, ranking 18th in the United States;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission lists 45
4 species as endangered, threatened, or sensitive, and another 102 as
5 candidate species; and

6 WHEREAS, The biodiversity crisis poses severe challenges to
7 species with narrow ecological niches, many of which depend on the
8 continued health of the nine diverse ecoregions in Washington; and

9 WHEREAS, Washington faces unique threats to biodiversity as the
10 most densely populated state in the Western United States; and

11 WHEREAS, Washington already continues to lead and collaborate on
12 other aspects of environmental conservation across state and local
13 lines; and

14 WHEREAS, Washington and the United States are facing an
15 unprecedented biodiversity crisis, largely driven by human activity;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Addressing the biodiversity crisis requires coordinated
18 action at a local, regional, national, and global scale; and

19 WHEREAS, The decline of biodiversity disproportionately impacts
20 Indigenous and other communities that rely on nature for essential
21 services, including Native Americans and Alaska Natives who offer
22 unique perspectives and traditional ecological knowledge critical to
23 preserving biodiversity; and

24 WHEREAS, The United States possesses an abundance and great
25 diversity of species of fish, wildlife, and plants that are of
26 significant value to the United States for intrinsic, aesthetic,
27 ecological, educational, cultural, recreational, economic, and
28 scientific reasons; and

29 WHEREAS, The decline of biodiversity presents a direct threat to
30 the security, health, and well-being of the people of the United
31 States by causing economic harm through the loss of valuable
32 ecosystem services such as zoonotic disease buffering, pollination,
33 water filtration, soil replenishment, provision of game species,
34 medicinal products, recreational opportunities, and others; and

35 WHEREAS, Communities of color, low-income communities, tribal
36 communities, and other populations have been disproportionately
37 impacted by the siting of environmentally degrading activities, and
38 excluded from conservation efforts, and face disproportionate impacts
39 from biodiversity loss; and

1 WHEREAS, There is no coordinating policy to maximize the
2 effectiveness of the federal government's conservation efforts and
3 collaboration with the states, local governments, tribes, private
4 landowners, and other nongovernmental stakeholders; and

5 WHEREAS, The United States should play a leading role on the
6 international stage in addressing the biodiversity crisis, yet the
7 United States is not a party to the Convention on Biological
8 Diversity, the Convention on Migratory Species, and other relevant
9 international agreements; does not issue a national biodiversity
10 outlook, contrary to most other countries; and does not have a
11 national biodiversity strategy as part of the Intergovernmental
12 Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Your memorialists respectfully
14 call on the federal government to:

15 (1) Establish a national biodiversity strategy to ensure the
16 conservation and restoration of the nation's biodiversity; secure and
17 restore the ecosystem services provided by nature for current and
18 future generations; deliver on the United Nations sustainable
19 development goals; set ambitious yet necessary goals for protecting
20 biodiversity in the coming decades; promote social equity and justice
21 in the conservation of the nation's biodiversity; coordinate the
22 actions of federal agencies to advance the conservation of
23 biodiversity; promote collaboration among the federal, state, and
24 tribal governments, nongovernmental stakeholders, civil society, and
25 internationally to advance conservation; honor the federal trust
26 obligations to tribal nations and Native Americans; and provide
27 global leadership in addressing the biodiversity crisis; and

28 (2) Develop the national biodiversity strategy with significant
29 public input and in collaboration and coordination with federal and
30 state agencies, including those in Washington, tribes, communities of
31 color, low-income communities, private landowners, and other
32 nongovernmental stakeholders; and

33 (3) Include in the national biodiversity strategy direction on:
34 Supporting the national goal of conserving at least 30 percent of
35 United States lands and waters to protect biodiversity by 2030;
36 setting other goals necessary to reduce the threats to biodiversity
37 as indicated by the best available scientific information; taking
38 action to protect threatened, endangered, and at-risk species from
39 further imperilment or extinction; reviewing existing laws, plans,
40 programs, and strategies that are relevant to addressing threats to

1 biodiversity to assess how they can contribute to the objectives of
2 this Memorial and, as found necessary, to recommend new laws, plans,
3 programs, and strategies; and funding existing conservation programs
4 and developing new funding sources.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be
6 immediately transmitted to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.,
7 President of the United States, the Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor of
8 the state of Washington, the President of the United States Senate,
9 the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each member of
10 Congress from the State of Washington, the secretary of the Interior,
11 the director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the
12 United Nations environment programme and division for sustainable
13 development goals.

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