



Legislation Text

File #: 2009-0414, **Version:** 1

Clerk 07/07/2009

A MOTION supporting the proposal to designate Washington state's coastline and Puget Sound a Maritime National Heritage Area.

WHEREAS, Washington state has a rich and varied maritime heritage, as described in the following excerpt from materials prepared by the Washington state Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation:

"There are stories here. Canoe cultures. The age of European exploration. Gray, Thompson, the Pacific Fur Company, Hudson's Bay Company. Trade with Asia, shipped east on James J. Hill's railroad. Oyster boats, fishing fleets, the mosquito fleet. Whaling ships from Grays Harbor to Westport. Canneries up and down the coasts. Steamers to the Klondike. Freighters, tankers, container ships. Bremerton, Everett and Bangor. Lighthouses and shipwrecks. Dozens of tribal groups and affiliations. The Alaska fleet, sheltered and repaired in protected Puget Sound waters. Salmon and more salmon, caught and dried and canned. Then, fewer and fewer salmon, stewarded and defended and celebrated. And always fishing, shipping, trading, and lives shaped by water. Washington's Pacific and inland coast is a place where maritime dramas large and small helped to shape a nation," and

WHEREAS, the National Heritage Area designation has been created by Congress to recognize nationally-important natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources, and the designation of an area as a National Heritage Area requires an act of Congress, and

WHEREAS, there were forty-nine National Heritage Areas across the United States as of May 2009, but none on the west coast, and

WHEREAS, the possible benefits of designation as a National Heritage Area include the following, as

described by the Washington state Department of Archaeology And Historic Preservation: "Designation as a National Heritage Area can raise awareness of the quality and importance of local history, helping communities preserve their historic resources and share the story of their past. Increased heritage tourism provides economic benefits to heritage organizations, as well as restaurants, lodging, and other community businesses. Better coordination between heritage groups strengthens the ability to compete for grant funding. National Heritage Areas receive technical assistance from the National Park Service to support development and operations. In the past, National Heritage Areas have received some federal funding, although future funding of the program is uncertain," and

WHEREAS, there is no increased federal regulation associated with National Heritage Areas, and

WHEREAS, the area being studied for inclusion in a Washington State Maritime National Heritage Area extends along Washington's coastline north from Willapa Bay, through the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and around Puget Sound to the Canadian border, and extends into Seattle to include Lake Union, though those boundaries are subject to modification based on an ongoing feasibility study, and

WHEREAS, the feasibility study is being managed by the Washington state Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, with guidance by a steering committee assembled for this project. The steering committee includes representatives from tribes, local and state government, heritage organizations, and other interested stakeholders. The steering committee's ultimate recommendations will be guided by the results of the public outreach from the feasibility study;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The King County council hereby expresses strong support for the proposal to designate Washington state's coastline and Puget Sound a National Heritage Area.

B. The clerk of the council shall send a copy of this motion to Governor Gregoire and to each member of Washington state's congressional delegation.

C. The council thanks the staff of the King County Historic Preservation Program for its efforts to promote that designation and requests that it continue those efforts.