

**RCW 50.65.200 Washington serves—Findings—Declaration.** The legislature finds that:

(1) Budget constraints are causing severe gaps and reductions in vital services to local communities and citizens. Some of these gaps in services can be filled by citizen volunteers through an organized program to recruit and place volunteers and to expand opportunities for volunteers to serve their communities;

(2) The federal government is proposing expansion of national services programs. These programs may require significant matching resources from states. State funds supporting the Washington serves program can serve as a required matching source to leverage additional federal national service resources;

(3) Washington state has, through the Washington service corps, successfully offered service opportunities and meaningful work experience to young adults between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five years;

(4) The need exists to expand full-time volunteer opportunities to citizens age twenty-one and over, to encourage senior citizens, college graduates, professional and technically skilled persons, and other adult citizens, to contribute their critical expertise, experience, labor, and commitment to meeting the needs of their communities;

(5) It is appropriate and in the public's interest for Washington state to create opportunities for citizens to engage in full-time, meaningful volunteer service in governmental or private nonprofit agencies, institutions, programs, or activities that address the social, economic, educational, civic, cultural, or environmental needs of local communities;

(6) Through volunteer service, citizens apply their skills and knowledge to the resolution of critical problems or meeting unmet needs, gain valuable experience, refine or develop new skills, and instill a sense of civic pride and commitment to their community;

(7) There is a need to coordinate state and federally funded volunteer service programs that provide living allowances and other benefits to volunteers to maximize the benefits to volunteers and the organizations in which they serve.

It is therefore the legislature's desire to expand full-time volunteer opportunities for citizens age twenty-one and over and to provide appropriate incentives to those who serve. Such a program should be implemented statewide and coordinated across programs.

[1993 sp.s. c 7 s 1.]