

**SENATE RESOLUTION
1999-8654**

By Senators Franklin, Spanel, B. Sheldon, Roach and Benton

WHEREAS, In 1839, fifty-three Africans from modern-day Sierra Leone were kidnapped and illegally sold into the Spanish slave trade; and

WHEREAS, After enduring an horrific voyage to Cuba, the Africans mutinied and took over the ship known as the Amistad; and

WHEREAS, The Amistad set sail for Africa, but ended up off the coast of New England; and

WHEREAS, A group of abolitionists took up the Africans' cause and there ensued a lengthy court battle for the Africans' freedom; and

WHEREAS, The case was ultimately argued before the United States Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, The Supreme Court agreed with the plaintiffs, the Africans won their case in 1841, and were remanded their freedom; and

WHEREAS, The Amistad affair unified the abolitionists and advanced their cause, and civil libertarians increasingly used the judicial system to press their case, laying the groundwork for the abolition of slavery and the subsequent modern Civil Rights Movement; and

WHEREAS, A key legacy of the Amistad affair is the network of schools and colleges founded for the purpose of educating black Americans and giving them the means to pursue their rights, a practice which began during the Amistad trials and continues to this day; and

WHEREAS, A nonprofit educational foundation, Amistad America, is dedicated to maintaining the legacy of the Amistad incident and teaching the lessons of history, leadership, and cooperation through the use of the reproduced schooner Amistad; and

WHEREAS, Timber from the Pacific Northwest is essential for the completion of the Amistad's masts; and

WHEREAS, Employees of the Department of Natural Resources, through their Workforce Diversity Program, have raised over \$1,000 in contributions toward the purchase of selected timber for the Amistad schooner;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate commend and thank the employees of the Department of Natural Resources for their efforts to heighten awareness of diversity issues in our country and for raising donations to assist the Amistad America Project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate do hereby immediately transmit copies of this resolution to the Department of Natural Resources and to Amistad America.

I, Tony M. Cook, Secretary of the Senate,
do hereby certify that this is a true and
correct copy of Senate Resolution 1999-8654,
adopted by the Senate April 7, 1999.

TONY M. COOK
Secretary of the Senate