
SENATE BILL 6085

State of Washington 62nd Legislature 2012 Regular Session

By Senators Swecker, Pridemore, Hargrove, and Haugen

Read first time 01/11/12. Referred to Committee on Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to the permitted use of state facilities; adding a
2 new section to chapter 43.19 RCW; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the free
5 exercise of religion is a fundamental right and that Washington state
6 should refrain from inhibiting religious activities when those
7 activities are not in conflict or inconsistent with the state's
8 interests.

9 (2) The legislature further finds that there is a need to clarify
10 ambiguous language under Article I, section 11, of the Washington state
11 Constitution, which states that "No public money or property shall be
12 appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise or
13 instruction, or the support of any religious establishment . . ."

14 (3) The legislature finds Article I, section 11, of the Washington
15 state Constitution was intended to ensure public money and property was
16 not directly used for the primary purpose of supporting a religious
17 establishment, and this provision was not meant to prohibit the free
18 exercise of religion on state property that is open to general use by
19 the public.

1 (4) The legislature intends to provide the department of enterprise
2 services statutory guidance in interpreting and applying Article I,
3 section 11, of the state Constitution in order to allow the use of
4 capitol grounds for religious activity and provide consistency in the
5 application of rules regarding use of capitol grounds.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.19 RCW
7 to read as follows:

8 (1) The department of enterprise services shall not prohibit the
9 use of capitol grounds for religious purposes, provided that the
10 particular portion of the capitol grounds to be used is open to the
11 public for events of a similar size and nature and the impact to the
12 state as a result of the use is no greater than the impact by other
13 allowed uses.

14 (2) The department of enterprise services shall apply policies
15 regarding the use of state grounds consistently to various religious
16 activities, including religious activities that involve elements of
17 cultural and societal significance.

18 (3) This section shall not allow the direct appropriation or
19 application of state resources for a religious purpose, other than the
20 use of capitol grounds consistent with this section.

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