

**SENATE RESOLUTION
8651**

By Senator Regala

WHEREAS, The Slavonian community has been a vital and vibrant part of Tacoma and western Washington for more than a century by providing leaders in fields of endeavor ranging from salmon fishing to politics, business, the judiciary and higher education; and

WHEREAS, Names such as Lieutenant Governor John Cherberg, State Senator and Court of Appeals Judge Jack Petrich, former University of Washington President Henry Suzzallo, fisherman and later airline founder Nick Bez, and shipbuilders Joe Martinac and the Skansie Brothers were all of Slavonian descent; and

WHEREAS, The Slavonian American Benevolent Society was founded in 1901 in Tacoma by immigrants from the Dalmatian Coast and islands in what is now Croatia; and

WHEREAS, The Society has maintained and nurtured ethnic traditions by providing a place to share cultural activities through plays, music and social events that bring people together around food, dancing and the sharing of songs from Dalmatia; and

WHEREAS, In 1906, the Slavonian American Benevolent Society built a lodge on North 30 Street in Old Tacoma. In addition to producing plays in the native Serbo-Croatian language, the Lodge was home to the first productions of the Tacoma Little Theater; and

WHEREAS, The Lodge was designated as an historic building by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1975, and is now listed on the National Historic Register. The structure is one of the longest standing buildings maintained by an ethnic-cultural group in our state; and

WHEREAS, The Society, which originally was an all male organization, changed the rules in the 1950s to allow women members to expand the number of family activities available to members; and

WHEREAS, The calendar of events includes the traditional Three Kings Dance in January; Vela Gospa in August, and the Daffodil Dinner in April; and

WHEREAS, members of the Slavonian American Benevolent Society have chosen to celebrate its Centennial by commissioning a sculpture by Larry Anderson commemorating the life and work of early immigrants from Croatia;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Washington recognize and congratulate the Slavonian American Benevolent Society for one-hundred years of outstanding accomplishments and service; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be presented to the Slavonian American Benevolent Society and President John Petrinovich.

I, Tony M. Cook, Secretary of the Senate, do hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of Senate Resolution 8651, adopted by the Senate March 29, 2001.

TONY M. COOK
Secretary of the Senate