
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8019

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Senators Lias, Wagoner, Hobbs, Becker, Saldaña, Wellman, Wilson, C., and Zeiger

Read first time 01/22/20. Referred to Committee on State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections.

1 TO THE HONORABLE DONALD J. TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
4 THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled,
7 respectfully represent and petition as follows:

8 WHEREAS, The United States is home to more than ten percent of
9 the world's known active and potentially active volcanoes, most of
10 which are currently under-monitored or not monitored at all by
11 volcanologists, geologists, hydrologists, and other scientists; and

12 WHEREAS, Previous volcanic eruptions have demonstrated that
13 unanticipated eruptions constitute major disasters, including severe
14 loss of life, damage to property, and interruption of regular trade,
15 shipping, and economic activity; and

16 WHEREAS, It has been shown that state-of-the-art monitoring
17 equipment on active volcanoes can give scientists enough warning to
18 notify officials and to provide for evacuations of at-risk areas,
19 sparing residents injury or death, such as in the case of the
20 eruption of the Kilauea volcano in Hawaii in 2018, which destroyed
21 over seven hundred homes but led to zero deaths as a result of a
22 timely evacuation order; and

1 WHEREAS, The 2018 update to the United States Geological Survey
2 National Volcanic Threat Assessment identifies over one hundred sixty
3 active or potentially active volcanoes, identifying eighteen
4 volcanoes as high risk; and

5 WHEREAS, A majority of the high-risk volcanoes identified lie in
6 the Cascade range spanning Washington, Oregon, and Northern
7 California; and

8 WHEREAS, Many volcanoes in the Cascades of Oregon and Washington
9 have few, if any, direct monitoring, which poses a severe threat to
10 human life in both states; and

11 WHEREAS, The installation of volcano monitoring equipment can be
12 undertaken with minimal impact on protected wilderness areas, due to
13 the size and design of the equipment; and

14 WHEREAS, In March 2019, the 115th Congress passed the John D.
15 Dingell Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, which was then
16 signed into law by the President, which established the National
17 Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring System Act and appropriates
18 approximately fifty-five million dollars over the five-year period
19 between 2018-2022 for the express purpose of installing and upgrading
20 monitoring systems at United States volcano observatories,
21 commensurate with the threat to human activity posed by various
22 volcanoes;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully urge Congress to
24 mandate that the United States Geological Survey submit a five-year
25 management plan for the use of these funds in areas of high need,
26 such as the Cascades, and establish a committee to implement them as
27 soon as possible; and to approve the submitted plan within a
28 reasonable time frame so that preventable loss of life, property, and
29 shelter can be avoided to the fullest extent possible in the event of
30 future eruptions.

31 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
32 transmitted to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United
33 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
34 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State
35 of Washington.

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