H-4009.1

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**HOUSE BILL 2747**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Ramel, Lekanoff, Riccelli, and Ormsby

AN ACT Relating to establishing the state microanimal; adding a new section to chapter 1.20 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the tardigrade, which means "slow stepper" and is sometimes called the water bear or moss piglet, is among the most resilient animals alive today, having survived the last five mass extinctions. A native of Washington state that is found in every county and habitat, the tardigrade lives in mosses, lichens, marine and freshwater sediments, soil, sea water, fresh water, glaciers, hot springs, deserts, and rain forests. The legislature finds that tardigrades are ecologically important because they eat plant cells and other microorganisms, such as crop destroying nematodes, and help to clean both soil and water. Due to its ability to withstand extremes, such as boiling mud pots in Yellowstone, glaciers on mountaintops, the vacuum of space, extreme drought, and radiation, scientists are studying the tardigrade for new methods of adapting to climate change and for ways to prevent radiation damage from cancer treatments. Tardigrades may also be the first colonists on the moon since they crash landed there in August 2019. The legislature finds that the tardigrade's extreme achievements warrant its recognition as the state microanimal.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 1.20 RCW to read as follows:

The tardigrade is hereby designated as the official microanimal of the state of Washington.

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