

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SCR 8403

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government & Tribal Relations

Brief Description: Renaming Marathon Park after Joan Benoit Samuelson.

Sponsors: Senators Hunt and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Relations: 3/20/19, 3/27/19 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Renames Marathon Park as Joan Benoit Samuelson Marathon Park.
- Directs the Department of Enterprise Services to properly sign the park as the Joan Benoit Samuelson Marathon Park.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL RELATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Gregerson, Chair; Pellicciotti, Vice Chair; Walsh, Ranking Minority Member; Goehner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Dolan, Hudgins, Mosbrucker and Smith.

Staff: Desiree Omli (786-7105).

Background:

Marathon Park is a 2.25-acre waterfront park that was constructed in 1970 and is part of the Capitol grounds. It is located in the southwestern corner of Capitol Lake's north basin. Marathon Park received its name when the City of Olympia competed for, and won, the right to host the 1984 United States (U.S.) Olympic Trials for the first Women's Olympic Marathon. The marathon trials route began and ended at the park.

Joan Benoit Samuelson won the May 1984 Women's Olympic Marathon trials that took place at Marathon Park. She subsequently won the first-ever women's marathon at the 1984 Summer Olympics. Joan Benoit Samuelson set the world and U.S. Women's Marathon record in 1984, and set the U.S. Women's Marathon record on four other occasions. She was

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

inducted into the International Women's Sports Hall of Fame in 1999. The International Women's Sports Hall of Fame recognizes the athletic and coaching achievements of women, and selections are based on achievements, breakthroughs, innovative style, and ongoing commitment to the development of women's sports. In addition, she was inducted into the 2008 Olympic Hall of Fame in 2008. The Olympic Hall of Fame celebrates the achievements of Team USA's premier athletes and teams, as well as the impact of legendary coaches and special contributors. Joan Benoit Samuelson serves on various boards and councils. She also founded the TD Beach to Beacon 10K Road Race, formally known as the Peoples Beach to Beacon, in 1998 to benefit children's charities in Maine.

Summary of Bill:

Marathon Park is renamed Joan Benoit Samuelson Marathon Park in celebration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Women's Olympic Marathon trials. The Department of Enterprise Services is directed to properly sign the park as the Joan Benoit Samuelson Marathon Park.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This resolution commemorates a profound historic event. Eight individuals traveled to submit a bid to hold the Women's Olympic Marathon trials in Olympia. Olympia won the bid and, in 1984, the first women's marathon trial was held in Olympia. There were 238 women representing various communities who traveled to Olympia for the trials.

Before 1984, it was thought that women could not run that far. However, Joan Benoit won the trials with a time of 2 hours, 31 minutes, and 4 seconds, despite undergoing surgery two weeks before the trials took place. She went on to win the first U.S. Women's Marathon that year, where she set the record which she still holds today. Since then, Joan has generously helped youth and provided them encouragement in athletic events. She plans to travel to Olympia in May to celebrate the anniversary of her victory, so renaming this park would be a fitting tribute to her.

The resolution would not change the name of the park; rather, it adds to it to better identify for the public the reason for its name. It will commemorate a huge milestone, recognize Washington for hosting this historic event, and inspire women and girls to participate in athletic activities. It would also align with the upcoming women's suffrage commemoration.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Hunt, prime sponsor; Denise Keegan, The Olympia Women's Marathon Trials Legacy Committee; and Karen Fraser.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.