
State Government & Tribal Relations Committee

HB 1700

Brief Description: Establishing a memorial on the capitol campus to commemorate eastern Washington.

Sponsors: Representatives Kretz, Chapman, Dent, Barnard, Ormsby and Timmons.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Specifies criteria for an Eastern Washington Memorial (Memorial) on the Capitol Campus in Olympia, including specific trees.
- Creates a non-appropriated account for the deposit of funds, gifts, and grants to support the establishment and maintenance of the Memorial.

Hearing Date: 2/14/23

Staff: Jason Zolle (786-7124).

Background:

The Capitol Campus in Olympia is home to many memorials for various events and groups of people. These include the World War II Memorial, the Law Enforcement Memorial, the Prisoners of War/Missing in Action Memorial, the Medal of Honor Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and the Korean War Memorial. The Legislature also authorized the creation of a Global War on Terrorism Memorial in 2022.

Eastern Washington is home to a number of species of plants and animals that are not generally found west of the crest of the Cascade Mountains. These include:

- Ponderosa Pine trees, a towering conifer with long needles that has bark smelling of

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vanilla or butterscotch when scratched;

- Greater Sage-Grouse, a large and intricately plumaged ground-dwelling bird known for its elaborate courtship displays that involve strutting performances; and
- Gray Wolves, a keystone species responsible for restoring healthy ecosystems through a trophic cascade that benefits numerous other species from songbirds and beavers to fish and butterflies.

Early settlements by European-Americans in Eastern Washington were located in the Walla Walla Valley and were primarily agricultural with a missionary focus on converting local Native Americans. The first chapter in this history was punctuated by a number of violent conflicts between settlers and the tribes. Currently, Eastern Washington produces roughly 70 percent of the country's production of apples, and Eastern Washington agriculture is responsible for the state being the largest national producer of hops, spearmint oil, and sweet cherries.

Summary of Bill:

Standards for an Eastern Washington Memorial (Memorial) on the Capitol Campus are established. The Memorial must recognize the flora and fauna, rich agriculture and forestry, and history of Eastern Washington. The Memorial must include Ponderosa Pine, Quaking Aspen, and Western Larch trees. The design of the Memorial must celebrate Eastern Washington's unique beauty, agricultural significance, and history.

The Memorial will be implemented by the State Capitol Committee in consultation with the Department of Natural Resources. A Washington State Eastern Washington Memorial Account (Account) is created in the custody of the State Treasurer to support the establishment and maintenance of the memorial. The Secretary of State (Secretary) may solicit and accept gifts, grants, or endowments for this purpose, which must be deposited into the Account. The Account is subject to allotment but not appropriation, and only the Secretary may authorize expenditures.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 9, 2023.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.