

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1020

As of March 9, 2023

Title: An act relating to the state dinosaur.

Brief Description: Designating the *Suciasaurus rex* as the official dinosaur of the state of Washington.

Sponsors: Representatives Morgan, Callan, Ryu, Simmons, Reed, Gregerson, Thai and Ormsby.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/20/23, 88-5.

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 3/17/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the *Suciasaurus rex* as the Washington State dinosaur.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

Staff: Megan Tudor (786-7478)

Background: Mesozoic Era. In a land before time, between approximately 245 and 66 million years ago dinosaurs thrived on Earth. This time was designated as the Mesozoic Era and is divided into three distinct periods; Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous. During the Cretaceous period, between approximately 145 to 66 million years ago, dinosaur diversity increased rapidly to include one of the most well-known theropods, the Tyrannosaurus rex. Theropods are two-legged carnivores such as Tyrannosaurus and Velociraptor that likely paved the way for modern birds.

The *Suciasaurus* and Washington. On April 10, 2012, a dinosaur fossil was discovered by two Burke Museum research associates on the shores of Sucia Island State Park in the San Juan Islands. This fossil was identified as a partial femur bone from a theropod dinosaur that lived approximately 80 million years ago, in the late Cretaceous period. It took almost a year to fully excavate the section of fossil from the surrounding rock and re-attach the

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pieces. The fossil is 16.7 inches long, which the Burke Museum estimates would have been part of a femur measuring more than three feet in length. The area of Sucia Island where the fossil was recovered is from shallow marine rocks of the Cedar District Formation. Presence of fossilized clams lead scientists to estimate the approximate location of where the theropod died to be between Baja California, Mexico, or Northern California. The exact designation of theropod is unknown, yet evidence suggests it may be a species similar to Daspletosaurus. The theropod fossil has been nicknamed the *Suciasaurus rex* in recognition of the island where it was discovered.

Washington is the 37th state to have found a dinosaur fossil. Twelve states and Washington D.C. have designated official state dinosaurs.

Summary of Bill: The *Suciasaurus rex* is the state dinosaur of Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.