

Senate Concurrent Resolution 5

Sponsored by Senator BENTZ (at the request of Danielle Clenet) (Pre-session filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Designates basin wildrye as official state grass.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas large and important portions of Oregon are dominated by grass, including the Columbia Plateau and the northeastern section of the Blue Mountains; and

Whereas throughout the rest of the state, small prairies and meadows form important habitats and provide recreational opportunities; and

Whereas grasslands are significant in Native American culture and traditions; and

Whereas a state grass would encourage Oregonians to learn more about the variety of ecosystems and the cultural history of our state; and

Whereas a state grass would help to expand our understanding of what it means to be an Oregonian; and

Whereas a state grass would help to develop awareness of the frequently underappreciated region of Oregon that lies east of the Cascade Mountains; and

Whereas the native grass basin wildrye (*Leymus cinereus*) grows up to 10 feet tall and is the largest cool-season perennial bunchgrass native to the western United States; and

Whereas scientists frequently use basin wildrye in conservation efforts because its very deep root system helps stabilize soil; and

Whereas basin wildrye provides shelter from predators for species of concern like the greater sage grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*); and

Whereas basin wildrye is important to ranchers and wildlife enthusiasts because it is one of the few grass species that protrudes above snow and provides forage in winter months for large grazing animals; and

Whereas the Northern Paiute and Klamath Tribes used the roots, leaves, stems and seeds of this robust grass in important ways, including for medicine, bedding, arrows and food; and

Whereas basin wildrye can be found in 18 Oregon counties; and

Whereas many states, including several of Oregon's neighboring states, have an official state grass; and

Whereas no other state has yet claimed basin wildrye as its state grass, which gives Oregon an opportunity to cement it as a defining part of our cultural heritage; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

That basin wildrye is the official grass of the State of Oregon.

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.