

SENATE RESOLUTION
8652

By Senators Fraser, McAuliffe, Angel, Keiser, Parlette, Miloscia, Dammeier, O'Ban, Hasegawa, Roach, and Kohl-Welles

1 WHEREAS, The Magna Carta, also known as the Great Charter, is the
2 cornerstone of liberty and constitutional law; and
3 WHEREAS, On June 15, 2015, the 800th anniversary of this
4 fundamental legal document will be commemorated in Washington, the
5 United Kingdom, and throughout the world; and
6 WHEREAS, The Washington State Constitution of 1889 echoes the
7 famous "Free Man Clause" of the Magna Carta in Article I, Section 3
8 (Personal Rights), reading, "No person shall be deprived of life,
9 liberty, or property, without due process of law"; and
10 WHEREAS, The Magna Carta's "Free Man Clause" reads, "No free man
11 shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or
12 possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in
13 any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send
14 others to do so, except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by
15 the law of the land," thereby, for the first time, subjecting the
16 Crown to the rule of law; and
17 WHEREAS, King John of England sealed the Magna Carta on June 15,
18 1215, to settle disputes between the King and rebel barons, provide
19 protection for the rights of the church, limit feudal payments,
20 safeguard barons from illegal imprisonment, and place limits on the
21 Crown through the establishment of rule of law in English society;
22 and
23 WHEREAS, English people brought the concepts of the Great Charter
24 with them to the New World and used them as the basis of their
25 government charters; and
26 WHEREAS, The Charter of Massachusetts Bay, as well as the First
27 Charter of Virginia, thus provided colonists with liberties and
28 immunities similar to those recognized in the Magna Carta; and
29 WHEREAS, Lord Denning, a prominent English judge of the 20th
30 century, described the Magna Carta as "the greatest constitutional
31 document of all times—the foundation of the freedom of the individual
32 against the arbitrary authority of the despot"; and
33 WHEREAS, The legal principles of the Magna Carta are reflected in
34 the United States Constitution of 1787; and

1 WHEREAS, The framers of the Washington State Constitution
2 also relied on the principles of the Magna Carta when drafting
3 our state's constitution in 1889; and

4 WHEREAS, The Washington State Constitution thus preserves
5 major rights won through centuries of struggle, including the
6 many rights specifically protected in Article I (Declaration of
7 Rights), reflecting the legacy of the Magna Carta;

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State
9 Senate applaud this cornerstone of liberty and constitutional
10 law by commemorating the 800th anniversary of the sealing of the
11 Magna Carta, and encourage Washingtonians to engage in
12 educational and commemorative activities throughout the year;
13 and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Washingtonians are encouraged
15 to honor the rule of law on June 15, 2015, at a noon program and
16 reception at the Temple of Justice in Olympia, Washington, in
17 celebration of the Washington State Constitution and the 800-
18 year legacy of the Magna Carta.

19 I, Hunter G. Goodman, Secretary of the Senate,
20 do hereby certify that this is a true and
21 correct copy of Senate Resolution 8652,
22 adopted by the Senate
23 March 31, 2015

24 HUNTER G. GOODMAN
25 Secretary of the Senate