

House Joint Resolution 30

Sponsored by Representative LIM

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**.

Demands that American Museum of Natural History return Willamette Meteorite to Oregon.

JOINT RESOLUTION

1
2 Whereas the Willamette Meteorite was formed with the solar system 4.5 billion years ago, and
3 thousands of years ago, the meteorite hurtled to the Earth somewhere in Idaho; and

4 Whereas at the end of the last ice age between 12,500 and 15,000 years ago the last Great
5 Missoula Flood swept along a channel and eventually carved rivers and deposited massive debris in
6 the Oregon country; and

7 Whereas the Willamette Meteorite traveled from Idaho's Pend Oreille region until it came to
8 rest for thousands of years in an Oregon forest near the falls of the Willamette River; and

9 Whereas the Willamette Meteorite is made of nickel iron, has a flattened semicircular shape and
10 weighs 16 tons; and

11 Whereas the local Native American people were aware of the Willamette Meteorite's origins,
12 naming the meteorite Tomonowos, variously translated as "Heavenly Visitor" or "Visitor from the
13 Moon," and attaching a spiritual meaning to the object fallen from the sky; and

14 Whereas in 1902 the Willamette Meteorite was discovered on land owned by the Oregon Iron
15 and Steel Company, and, after much litigation, the Oregon Supreme Court ultimately awarded the
16 meteorite to the Oregon Iron and Steel Company; and

17 Whereas the Oregon Iron and Steel Company displayed the Willamette Meteorite at the Lewis
18 and Clark Exposition in 1905 but, upon the closing of the exposition, sold the meteorite to a woman
19 who then gave it to the American Museum of Natural History; and

20 Whereas the Willamette Meteorite is now located on the first floor of the American Museum
21 of Natural History's Hayden Planetarium in New York; and

22 Whereas in the year 2000 the American Museum of Natural History and the Confederated Tribes
23 of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon reached an historic agreement ensuring access to the
24 Willamette Meteorite by the Grand Ronde for religious, historical and cultural purposes but main-
25 taining the continued presence of the meteorite at the museum; and

26 Whereas the Willamette Meteorite is of great historical and spiritual significance to the people
27 and the State of Oregon, including the Native American community; now, therefore,

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

29 That we, the members of the Seventy-fourth Legislative Assembly:

30 (1) Believe that the presence of the Willamette Meteorite in the State of Oregon will honor our
31 state and its people and that it should be returned with due haste; and

32 (2) Join in demanding that the American Museum of Natural History return the Willamette

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.

1 Meteorite to its home, the State of Oregon.

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