

Senate Joint Resolution 12 - Introduced

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 12
BY BOLKCOM, DOTZLER, JOCHUM,
J. SMITH, WAHLS, and
BOULTON

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Joint Resolution recognizing the fossil crinoid as the state
2 fossil.
3 WHEREAS, the study of fossils contained in sedimentary rock
4 formations in the state provides geologists with evidence of
5 the geological and paleontological history of the state; and
6 WHEREAS, fossils of crinoids, marine invertebrates that
7 live in all depths and temperatures, are abundant in the rock
8 of marine origin underlying the state, including significant
9 deposits in the cities of Burlington, Le Grand, and Gilmore
10 City; and
11 WHEREAS, the crinoid has survived approximately 500 million
12 years of earth history and remains an active part of the
13 world's ocean life; and
14 WHEREAS, crinoid skeletal fragments make up a significant
15 portion of the limestone deposits of Iowa, providing Iowa
16 industry with the limestone used for road base, as agricultural
17 lime, as building stone, and as the raw material for cement
18 including "portland cement", which is used to form the most
19 widely used type of construction cement; and
20 WHEREAS, in addition to the economic benefits resulting from
21 the presence of fossil crinoids, the crinoid has also brought
22 recognition to the state and to citizens of the state as the
23 result of the research of both professionals and amateurs; and
24 WHEREAS, three of these researchers have received
25 recognition in the global scientific community for their
26 efforts: Charles Wachsmuth (1829-1896), a German immigrant who
27 settled at Burlington and who, due to his collecting, research,
28 and writings regarding the crinoid, received an appointment
29 to the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University;

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30 Frank Springer (1848-1927) who, as an attorney practicing in
31 Burlington, became a friend and coworker of Charles Wachsmuth
32 with whom he produced many texts on crinoids and for whom a
33 room at the Smithsonian Institution is named; and Bernice H.
34 Bean (1879-1966) who, as a farmer near Le Grand, collected,
35 studied, and wrote about crinoids, saving thousands of
36 perfectly preserved fossil crinoids from destruction, thereby
37 providing universities and museums across the nation with
38 exhibits of these specimens, including a past exhibit at the
39 State Historical Building; and

40 WHEREAS, pictures of crinoids found in Iowa have been
41 featured on the covers of scholarly journals and magazines; and

42 WHEREAS, members of the paleontology community have referred
43 to the city of Burlington as "the crinoid capital of the
44 world"; and

45 WHEREAS, the fossil crinoid, also referred to as the sea
46 lily, is a symbol of the state's geological and paleontological
47 heritage, has provided economic benefits to the state as a
48 source of limestone, and is recognized for its completeness and
49 beauty worldwide; NOW THEREFORE,

50 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. STATE FOSSIL DESIGNATION. The fossil crinoid
2 shall officially be designated as the state fossil of Iowa.

3 Sec. 2. OFFICIAL REGISTER. The edition of the Iowa official
4 register shall include an appropriate illustration of the
5 fossil crinoid, accompanied by suitable text in the section
6 devoted to the state flower, state bird, state rock, and state
7 tree.

8

EXPLANATION

9 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
10 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

11 This joint resolution proposes the official designation
12 of the fossil crinoid as the state fossil. The resolution
13 describes the way in which the fossil crinoid has benefited the
14 state, including the fossil's economic and aesthetic benefits.
15 The Iowa official register shall include an appropriate
16 illustration of the fossil crinoid accompanied by suitable text
17 in the section devoted to the state's official symbols.