

**RESOLUTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ARBORETUM
FOUNDATION CONCERNING SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL BILL 118794**

WHEREAS, the Washington Park Arboretum (the Arboretum) is an irreplaceable public asset of historical and cultural significance that is enjoyed by over 300,000 visitors each year;

WHEREAS, the Arboretum is managed, supported and cared for by a unique collaborative public-private partnership among the City of Seattle, University of Washington, and the Arboretum Foundation;

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle adopted a Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan after an extensive public engagement process that addresses both physical improvements and programs within the Arboretum

WHEREAS, the Arboretum is a living research facility with an internationally recognized, world-class collection of thousands of botanical specimens critical to research on a wide range of important topics including plant conservation, climate change, and pest management,;

WHEREAS, the Arboretum is a living classroom used by over 6,500 pre-K and K-12 students each year from diverse backgrounds who participate in education programs focused on sustainability and reconnecting people to the natural environment;

WHEREAS, the Arboretum Foundation and its members contributed over \$6,700,000 during the past 10 years and over 12,000 volunteer hours annually in support of its mission to promote, protect and enhance the Arboretum for current and future generations by strengthening and building a diverse and engaged community of donors, volunteers and advocates;

WHEREAS, the Arboretum includes a Japanese Garden visited by over 60,000 people annually, and the City of Seattle and Arboretum Foundation, after consultation with the University of Washington, recently entered into an agreement where the Foundation will be the main support organization for the Japanese Garden;

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle recently broke ground on a multimillion dollar Arboretum Loop Trail using mitigation funding obtained by the City of Seattle, the University of Washington, and the Arboretum Foundation to off-set the impacts of the SR 520 Bridge replacement by the State of Washington; and,

WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council recently introduced Council Bill 118794 under which City parks, including the Arboretum, would be open to unlimited public camping indefinitely.

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of Directors of the Arboretum Foundation has concluded as follows:


1. Council Bill 118794 is inconsistent with the Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan.
2. Council Bill 118794, if passed, will cause damage to the Arboretum, including physical improvements, research projects, educational programs, public safety, the Japanese Garden, the Loop Trail, historical structures, and irreplaceable botanical specimens.
3. Council Bill 118794, if passed, will undermine public support for parks, support for public entities such as the Seattle Park District, support for the University of Washington Botanic Gardens, support for private foundations who contribute to public parks, such as the Arboretum Foundation, and support for special assessments necessary to develop and maintain new parks such as the Seattle Waterfront Program.
4. Council Bill 118794, if passed, will limit the ability to form public-private partnerships to support parks as a means of supplementing public funding.
5. Council Bill 118794, if passed, will undermine public support for programs addressing homelessness by needlessly creating conflict and animosity among people using and supporting parks and people seeking shelter in public parks.
6. There are reasonable alternatives to address homelessness in Seattle that are not inconsistent with the Master Plan, will not cause damage to the Arboretum and other parks, will not undermine public support for parks, and will not undermine public support for programs addressing homelessness.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Directors of the Arboretum Foundation urges the City Council to withdraw Council Bill 118794 and to conduct a complete assessment, with full public participation consistent with applicable State and Federal laws, of alternatives to addressing homelessness in Seattle, including alternatives that avoid and minimize adverse impacts on public parks such as the Washington Park Arboretum.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Arboretum Foundation at a regular meeting on September 21, 2016, and signed by the President and Secretary in authentication of its adoption.



Sherrey Luetjen, President



Paige Miller, Executive Director