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**SENATE BILL 5206**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators MacEwen and Hunt

Prefiled 01/06/23.

1 AN ACT Relating to intercollegiate athletic conference  
2 participation; amending RCW 28B.10.703; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that it is in the  
5 public's interest to preserve the shared state history and athletic  
6 achievement of the University of Washington and Washington State  
7 University by maintaining these schools in the same athletic  
8 conference. Further, the legislature finds that this historic rivalry  
9 has existed since 1900 and contributed to a shared history between  
10 the two higher education institutions that can not be replicated in  
11 separate athletic conferences. In cases such as the University of  
12 Texas and Texas A&M University, where historic in-state rivals have  
13 departed a shared athletic conference, the traditions surrounding  
14 that rivalry have fallen by the wayside. Further, the legislature  
15 finds that it is in the best interest of the student athletes that  
16 the opportunity to play in-state rivals remains a feature across the  
17 multitude of sports supported at each institution.

18 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.10.703 and 1977 ex.s. c 169 s 32 are each  
19 amended to read as follows:

1       (1) The governing boards of each of the state universities, the  
2 regional universities, The Evergreen State College, and community  
3 colleges in addition to their other duties prescribed by law shall  
4 have the power and authority to establish programs for  
5 intercollegiate athletic competition. Such competition may include  
6 participation as a member of an athletic conference or conferences,  
7 in accordance with conference rules.

8       (2) The governing boards of the University of Washington and  
9 Washington State University must jointly participate in the same  
10 athletic conference. The governing boards of the University of  
11 Washington and Washington State University may jointly recommend  
12 participation in a different athletic conference, subject to approval  
13 by the legislature.

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