

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	9 - 0 - 1
Yeas:	Barnhart, Berger, Beyer, Esquivel, Freeman, Garrett, Holvey, Wingard, Olson
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Kotek
Prepared By:	Cheyenne Ross, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	2/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Memorializes Betty Roberts, 1923-2011.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Admiration for Betty Roberts and her pioneering legacy

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Betty Roberts, the first woman appointed to the Oregon Supreme Court and a trailblazer for women in politics, died on June 25, 2011 at the age of 88. She graduated from Portland State College in 1958, and began her career in public service as an educator in the Portland metropolitan area, teaching in several high schools and at Mt. Hood Community College. She earned her master's degree in political science from the University of Oregon in 1962 and her law degree from the Northwestern School of Law in 1966. While attending law school in 1964, she was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives, and served two terms before being elected to the Oregon Senate in 1996, for two more terms.

In 1974, Roberts ran for governor of Oregon, losing in the Democratic primary to Robert Straub. Later that same year, she was chosen to run as the Democratic Party nominee for United States Senate following the death of Wayne Morse, but she lost the general election to incumbent Bob Packwood. On September 1, 1977, Governor Straub appointed Roberts – the first woman – to sit on the Oregon Court of Appeals when the court expanded from six to ten positions, and she was subsequently elected to a full six-year term in 1978.

In 1982, prior to completing her term on the Oregon Court of Appeals, Roberts resigned to accept an appointment from Governor Atiyeh to be the first woman to serve on the Oregon Supreme Court, where she subsequently won election to a full six-year term. She resigned in 1986, but remained committed to public service. She continued to practice law, served as a senior judge, was a visiting professor of political science at Oregon State University, and served on the state's Commission on Higher Education.

Throughout her judicial career, Betty Roberts was committed to giving women in Oregon better options. She advocated for equality in politics, health care, and civil rights, and her work earned recognition from Oregon Women Lawyers, the E. B. MacNaughton Civil Liberties Award, and the American Bar Association's Margaret Brent Award from its Commission on Women in the Profession.