

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	5 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Atkinson, Beyer, Burdick, Ferrioli, Rosenbaum
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Erin Seiler, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	2/3

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

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Legacy of Betty Roberts
- Trailblazer in Oregon politics and legal community
- Leadership and commitment to public service in Oregon
- Career as judge on Oregon Court of Appeals and Oregon Supreme Court
- Her role as “mentor-in-chief” to future generations of women lawyers

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Betty Roberts, the first woman appointed to the Oregon Supreme Court and trailblazer for women in Oregon politics, died on June 25, 2011 at the age of 88. A graduate of Portland State College in 1958, Roberts began her career in public service as an educator in the Portland metropolitan area, teaching in several high schools and Mt. Hood Community College. Roberts 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, Roberts was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives, serving two terms before being elected in 1966 to the first of two terms in the Oregon Senate.

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; she lost the general election to incumbent Bob Packwood. On September 1, 1977, Governor Straub appointed Roberts to the Oregon Court of Appeals when the court expanded from six to ten positions. Roberts was the first woman on that court, as well as the first on any appellate court in Oregon. Roberts was subsequently elected to a full six-year term in 1978 as a judge on the Oregon Court of Appeals.

Prior to completing her term on the Oregon Court of Appeals, Roberts resigned in 1982 when Governor Atiyeh appointed her as the first woman to serve on the Oregon Supreme Court. She subsequently won election to a full six-year term on the court later in 1982. In 1986, Roberts resigned her position on the court but remained committed to public service as she continued to practice law, served as senior judge, was a visiting professor in 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, advocating for equality in politics, health care, and civil rights. Her work earned her recognition from the Oregon Women Lawyers, the E. B. MacNaughton Civil Liberties Award, and the American Bar Association Margaret Brent Award from its Commission on Women in the Profession.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.