

House Concurrent Resolution 32

Sponsored by Representatives HOLVEY, KOTEK, Senator PROZANSKI; Representatives LIVELY, NATHANSON, Senators BEYER, COURTNEY

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

In memoriam: Former Speaker of the House of Representatives and state Senator Grattan Kerans, 1941-2019.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1
2 Whereas Grattan Kerans was born in Washington, D.C., on January 2, 1941, to Edwin Grattan
3 Kerans, a renowned dentist, and Anne Kelley Kerans, a lawyer and Democratic Party activist; and

4 Whereas from an early age, Grattan Kerans was motivated by the idea of public service, having
5 been inspired by his grandfather, Eugene Grattan Kerans, who served in several prominent positions
6 in the administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt; and

7 Whereas after high school, Grattan Kerans attended Montgomery College in Maryland and
8 worked in a variety of jobs; and

9 Whereas in 1963, Grattan Kerans was making salt water taffy on the boardwalk in Ocean City,
10 Maryland, when he met his future wife, Janet Holsclaw, and in 1965 they were married; and

11 Whereas in 1969, Grattan and Janet Kerans moved to Oregon to attend the University of
12 Oregon; and

13 Whereas Grattan Kerans majored in political science at the University of Oregon and he served
14 as editor of the campus newspaper, the *Daily Emerald*; and

15 Whereas Grattan Kerans held several other jobs as a journalist, and he remained an ardent
16 supporter of freedom of the press throughout his career; and

17 Whereas Grattan Kerans was drawn to public service, and he began working as a staff member
18 on task forces for Oregon's Legislative Assembly; and

19 Whereas in 1974, Grattan Kerans was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives as a
20 Democrat representing Eugene (then District 39), and he served five terms in the House; and

21 Whereas in 1977, Grattan Kerans was named Majority Whip, in 1979 and 1981 he was elected
22 Majority Leader and in 1983 he was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

23 Whereas Grattan Kerans resigned his House seat to run for State Treasurer, but he was de-
24 feated in the 1984 general election; and

25 Whereas Grattan Kerans continued his career of public service by representing the City of
26 Eugene as a lobbyist, serving as an aide to U.S. Representative Jim Weaver, working on various
27 political campaigns and participating in Democratic National Committee activities; and

28 Whereas in 1986, Grattan Kerans was elected to the Oregon Senate from Lane County, and he
29 served there for seven years, chairing the Committee on Labor and the Committee on Ethics,
30 Elections and Campaign Finance Reform; and

31 Whereas Grattan Kerans was a commanding committee chairman who was committed to devel-

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 oping sound public policy and protecting the public's right to testify; and

2 Whereas Grattan Kerans focused on advancing the rights and dignity of workers, whether they
3 were injured, unemployed, whistleblowers, victims of discrimination, seeking to be paid a fair wage
4 or wanting time off work to have a baby or care for an ill family member; and

5 Whereas many Oregon labor laws passed during Grattan Kerans's tenure became models for
6 legislation in other states and the federal government; and

7 Whereas Grattan Kerans was dedicated to protecting Oregon's environment by restricting field
8 burning, preserving watersheds, safeguarding drinking water, banning ozone-depleting chemicals and
9 cleaning up Superfund sites; and

10 Whereas Grattan Kerans worked to expand the rights of utility ratepayers, consumers, home-
11 owners and renters; and

12 Whereas Grattan Kerans championed voting rights, including same-day voter registration in
13 1975, ensuring the integrity of the state's elections, advocating for campaign finance reform, pro-
14 tecting ballot access and safeguarding the people's initiative powers; and

15 Whereas Grattan Kerans was committed to public higher education and dedicated to academic
16 excellence; and

17 Whereas Grattan Kerans passionately pushed for well-funded social and senior services pro-
18 grams, and he protected Oregon Project Independence, which provides assistance to senior citizens
19 and persons with disabilities so that they can continue living independently in their own homes; and

20 Whereas Grattan Kerans was renowned for his great sense of humor and he was an outstanding
21 orator, a gifted political and legislative strategist and an artful advocate; and

22 Whereas Grattan Kerans was a great statesman who respected the legislative process, the press,
23 staff members and those elected to serve; and

24 Whereas after leaving public office, Grattan Kerans decided to pursue his other passion, higher
25 education, by serving the Oregon State System of Higher Education (now the Oregon University
26 System) as its government relations director from 1993 to 2004; and

27 Whereas Grattan Kerans passed away on January 16, 2019; and

28 Whereas Grattan Kerans is survived by his wife, Janet Raye Holsclaw Kerans, son, Tim Kerans,
29 daughter-in-law, Khiota Therrien, granddaughter, Mabel, sister, Mary-Ann Jackson, and brother-in-
30 law, Dwight Jackson; and

31 Whereas Grattan Kerans mentored many who followed him into public service and inspired
32 countless others in the fight for social and economic justice; and

33 Whereas Grattan Kerans will be remembered for his decades of dedicated public service to the
34 City of Eugene, Lane County and the State of Oregon and for leaving a legacy of laws protecting
35 the people and environment of this state; now, therefore,

36 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

37 That we, the members of the Eightieth Legislative Assembly, honor the life and accomplishments
38 of Grattan Kerans and express our gratitude for his contributions to the people of this state; and
39 be it further

40 Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be presented to the family of Grattan Kerans as
41 an expression of our sympathy and condolences.