

Enrolled

House Concurrent Resolution 6

Sponsored by Representative GOMBERG; Representative MOORE-GREEN (Pre-session filed.)

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons, a self-described “poet with a paintbrush,” was born in Portland, Oregon, on December 18, 1943, to Millard and Virginia Gibbons; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons was proud to be a native-born Oregonian whose family is deeply rooted in the state—his mother’s descendants having arrived in Oregon by covered wagon in 1865 and his father’s family having arrived later in the 19th century; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons began painting with oils while still in elementary school, and he attended Benson Polytechnic High School in Portland, Oregon; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons, at the age of 16, became the youngest person invited to join the Oregon Society of Artists; and

Whereas after graduating from high school and serving a three-year tour in the United States Air Force, Michael A. Gibbons invested in a small manufacturing firm and worked as a designer of specialty automotive parts; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons, at the age of 25, left his job in Portland and relocated to the Oregon Coast to pursue painting full time; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons’ oil paintings of the Oregon coast and surrounding areas established his reputation for depicting the natural world with deep sensitivity and reverence; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons became intimately familiar with the hills, meadows, estuaries and wildlife of the Yaquina River region, and his paintings show a penchant for the interplay of light and colors; and

Whereas although Michael A. Gibbons’ most meaningful art was created in and around the community he called home, he visited many other places to gain additional inspiration, including Washington, California, Arizona, Florida, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, England, Scotland, Ireland, France and Mexico; and

Whereas the ocean was a constant source of inspiration for Michael A. Gibbons, and his seascapes are among his most vital works; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons’ work was featured in dozens of exhibitions in the United States and Europe, including the recent “Yaquina Exhibition” at the LaSells Stewart Center at Oregon State University and the Chehalem Cultural Center in Newberg, Oregon; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons married the former Judith “Judy” Mortenson in 1988, and their partnership transcended life, love and art to become a true union of soul and spirit; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons was a longtime resident and civic leader in Toledo, Oregon, and he was always intrigued by the town’s history and setting amid the naturally beautiful Yaquina River region, seeing Toledo as a place where art can flourish; and

Whereas Michael A. and Judy Gibbons’ tireless promotion of Toledo as a creative hub led to the creation of the Art Walk on Labor Day, which in 2018 celebrated 25 years of showcasing the work of artists who depict the area’s natural beauty; and

Whereas with his own hands, Michael A. Gibbons restored the neglected complex of structures on Northeast Alder Street that became the focal point of Toledo’s unique artistic community; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons saved “The Vicarage,” next door to St. John’s Episcopal Church, from dereliction in the 1980s, and it became the Gibbons’ home and gallery; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons’ studio in Toledo was built in 1887 as a Methodist church and later was used as a funeral home before he acquired it in 1992; and

Whereas the two-story building that now houses the Yaquina River Museum of Art, which Michael A. and Judy Gibbons founded in 2002, also dates from 1887; and

Whereas with his fondness for machinery, Michael A. Gibbons became proficient at painting industrial scenes, especially factories and ports, and he was commissioned by Gunderson Marine in Portland to depict the company's barges and railcar facilities; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons also painted the Georgia-Pacific containerboard mill on the Yaquina River in Toledo, and his 1985 painting of the mill proved so popular that a framed print of it is given to retiring mill employees; and

Whereas two of Michael A. Gibbons' original oil paintings, "Arnold Creek Estuary" and "Don Gray Country," are on display in the Governor's official residence in Salem, Oregon; and

Whereas the late United States Senator Mark Hatfield said of Michael A. Gibbons: "This man has taken a land we all know and love and given it back to us in a form we can understand"; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons was a signature member of the Oil Painters of America and the Laguna Plein Air Painters Association, and he also was a member of the Allied Artists of America, the Copley Society of Art and Christians in the Visual Arts; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons was a member of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Newport, Oregon, and the Knights of Columbus; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons died on July 2, 2020, at his home in Toledo; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons was honored with a U.S. Air Force flag ceremony and buried at Toledo's historic pioneer cemetery; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons is survived by his wife Judy Gibbons, four stepchildren, Vicky Ross, Michael Ross, Randy Ross and Stephen Ross, a sister, Laurie Gibbons, a niece, nephew, seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren; and

Whereas Michael A. Gibbons was a remarkable painter and a proud Oregonian, and he will forever be remembered for his rich artistic and cultural legacy; now, therefore,

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

That we, the members of the Eighty-first Legislative Assembly, honor and celebrate the life of Michael A. Gibbons, and we express our gratitude for his artistic and civic contributions to the people of this state; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be presented to the family of Michael A. Gibbons as an expression of our sympathy and condolences.

Adopted by House April 27, 2021

Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Adopted by Senate June 8, 2021

Peter Courtney, President of Senate