

**REMARKS OF LEN BERGSTEIN
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT**

March 18, 2021

Chair Beyer, Vice-Chair Findley and members of the committee.

For the record, I am Len Bergstein, honored to be here today to say a few words about the exceptional life of my long-time friend and client, Marty Myers.

I started working with Marty over 20 years ago, when the future success of Threemile Canyon Farms was just a twinkle in his eye. Marty looked at the 90,000 acres of Morrow County land [*the size of the city limits of Portland*] and saw something special.

In the 60s, Governor Hatfield and President Jack Kennedy set aside the “Space Age Industrial Park” with a vision of creating the country’s western space center [a mirror of what was to become Cape Kennedy] ...Kennedy was assassinated in Texas and President Johnson picked up the project and re-located it to Houston...so Tom Hanks never got to utter the immortal phrase from Apollo 13: “Boardman we have a problem”!

Marty started to consolidate potato farm leases and soon approached the State to purchase the land and that’s where our friendship started – Marty was a creative problem solver and he converted seven nasty lawsuits over water and species protection into a Global settlement that gave Certainty to his business and his Tribal/environmental plaintiffs. Marty sweetened the deal by donating 23,000 adjacent acres of precious Columbia Basin habitat to the Nature Conservancy [and paid for its upkeep in perpetuity].

Marty applied innovative thinking and new technologies to his traditional Oregon agricultural values – he invested in a wi-fi system to run precision irrigation...and he equipped field workers with hand-held computers to record, trace and report the inputs on each acre for consumer review.

The next step was even more audacious – when Tillamook Creamery announced in the Sunday Oregonian it was seeking a new location [*potentially out of Oregon*] for its cheese plant...Marty jumped in his car and camped out at Tillamook headquarters until he could make a deal Tillamook couldn’t refuse – they built their new cheese plant in the Port of Boardman in exchange for Marty’s promise to have a herd of 5,000 cows ready to be milked when the Tillamook plant opened – resulting in the growth and prosperity of one of Oregon’s iconic businesses.

The dairy was the missing puzzle piece in Marty’s business model – a closed looped system made best-practice harmony, so that the crop farming and dairy reinforced each other and eliminated waste.

But Marty wasn't done innovating...he expanded organic farming...he built wind turbines to reduce his carbon footprint and developed a state-of-the-art methane digester to improve air quality...he provided leadership in animal welfare [and hired international experts to keep him honest] ...creating technology-driven systems that improved the life of each milking cow. In addition, Marty focused like a laser on workplace and workforce issues – providing leadership in wages and employee benefits, hiring practices, and elevating Hispanic working families and women to non-traditional farm leadership roles...and signing a labor agreement with the United Farm Workers that has stood the test of time.

But wait, there's more: when Senators Dembrow and Hansell developed a neighbor-to-neighbor exchange, Marty was first to volunteer tours and insights about how agriculture was a bridge between urban and rural communities.

So, SCR 16 is a recognition of a remarkable Oregonian and visionary business leader...and so much more.

When you pass public policies to make Oregon better, you hope that there are business and civic leaders who will reach out and meet you in meaningful public/private partnerships. What I have seen for 20 years is that everything you asked Marty to deliver, he did. And so it's fitting and proper that you recognize and celebrate the Oregon values that Marty Myers lived by in his work and life by passing SCR 16.

Thank you.

Up next you will hear from several others that have offered comments in support of this recognition.

Now I'd like to turn it over to Anne Myers...