

Public Testimony in Support of Senate Resolution 3

Presented by Steve Burrows

May 7, 2025

Senate President Wagner, Chair Jama, Vice Chair Bonham and other members of the Senate Rules Committee. For the record, my name is Steve Burrows and I am a resident of Lake Oswego. I am joined today by my wife, Gordana, as well as Cindy Terry, the wife of the person to be venerated in Senate Resolution 3.

I wish to start by expressing my sincerest gratitude to Senate President Wagner and his Legislative Assistant, McKenzie Worthington, for their time and involvement to both listen to my original motivation for this bill and for their efforts to breathe life into it. Without them, SR3 would not be possible.

Several years ago, I started encouraging the government of our great state to develop a program to pay tribute to very special Oregonians whose outstanding accomplishments warranted official recognition and appreciation, especially those who have already been honored on the national and international stage. The culmination of that effort is this bill to formally honor Dr. Mark Terry, a very special person.

Dr. Terry's name and reputation are well-known throughout the world. Here is an astonishing list of his major career achievements.

- He is the inventor of the Silicon Artificial Iris and was awarded a patent for this device in 2001
- He is the inventor of no fewer than 12 revolutionary and specialized ophthalmological surgical instruments. 11 of those are currently manufactured by Bausch and Lomb
- He is a pioneer in the development of Endothelial Keratoplasty surgery (since 1999) and is the founder of the Endothelial Keratoplasty Group
- He has been the medical Director of the VisionGift Eye Bank (which was formerly known as the Lions Eye Bank of Oregon) and is now Medical Director Emeritus, having been involved with this organization for 35 years. Involvement included management, but also inspection and certification of donor tissue
- He has received over 10 international awards, with 3 exceptional ones being the Paton Award, which is only awarded to 1 person per year; the Claes Dohlman Award, which has never been given to anyone outside of Harvard or Johns Hopkins; and probably his most meaningful award, the Future Vision Foundation award. That last one was given to him for his

lifetime of innovative approaches to eye disease and critical discoveries in eye care

- He was instrumental in the development of specialized packaging for the shipment of donor eye tissue, to ensure it would not degrade by heat, cold or severe vibration for at least 7 days. They even dropped tested the packaging from a second story building and it worked.
- He's been invited to give over 60 international presentations in 25 different countries
- He's authored 130 scientific research publications
- He's contributed to 36 book chapters of various editors
- He's been invited to contribute to 9 editorials in peer-reviewed publications
- He's contributed to the creation of 9 different educational videotapes
- Over a period of 42 years, he - or one of his team - have presented at ARVO conferences every year. ARVO is the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology
- He's obtained 24 research grants
- He was elected to membership in the prestigious American Ophthalmological Society (known as AOS) in 2007. To be elected to AOS, one has to submit a scholarly thesis, not all of which are selected. Upon acceptance, that thesis is published in a peer-reviewed journal before membership is granted. An interesting side note is that AOS was established during the Civil War back in 1864 and is a self-funded organization
- After graduating magna cum laude from Yale for his undergraduate studies and then St. Louis University School of Medicine for his post graduate medical education, Dr. Terry joined the U.S. Navy and was an eye surgeon at the Oakland Naval Regional Medical Center in Oakland, California
- Lastly, I am attempting to get him nominated for a Nobel Prize. If this happens, he will only be the second Ophthalmologist in the history of the Nobel Prize to receive it. The first was over 114 years ago, so in my opinion, an award of this kind is long overdue.

Dr. Terry is currently Director of Cornea Services at Devers Eye Institute in Portland. Given his reputation, doctors and students from around the world come to work with him as Fellows for a year, to learn and understand his revolutionary tools and procedures. He continues to see patients and carry on with his research.

Finally, let me describe Dr. Terry's most memorable surgery. In 2017, an 18-month old baby named Paxton was brought to his clinic, because numerous other eye doctors could not diagnose what his problem was, let alone agree to what was needed to fix him. Dr. Terry discovered the baby had a very rare eye condition,

where the backs of his corneas were defective and caused painful corneal blisters and severe light sensitivity. Paxton would constantly keep his eyes closed to avoid the pain. As a father with his own special needs son, Dr. Terry felt particularly committed to helping this child. He went ahead with a specialized surgery he had earlier developed in his lab – called endothelial transplantation – with the result of Paxton regaining normal eyesight.

It is my sincerest hope that after hearing all his major lifetime achievements, you will pass SR3 for Dr. Terry. In so doing, you will be honoring a very special Oregonian, who merits much-deserved local recognition as someone who has worked tirelessly and selflessly for the betterment of humanity and our citizens. ***He is a true treasure in our state.*** Thank you for your time and consideration today.