

Enrolled

House Concurrent Resolution 31

Sponsored by Representatives VALDERRAMA, FRAGALA, NELSON, Senators MANNING JR, PROZANSKI; Representatives BOWMAN, FAHEY, ISADORE, NATHANSON, NGUYEN H

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker was born on May 8, 1946, at Sacred Heart Medical Center in Eugene, Oregon, and she is believed to have been the first Black child born at the hospital; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker's birth certificate was recorded as a white birth to protect her and her family from the Ku Klux Klan, which was active in Oregon at the time; and

Whereas in the late 1940s, Lyllye Reynolds-Parker's family was displaced from Eugene's first Black neighborhood, near the Willamette River, when the Ferry Street Bridge was built, forcing them to relocate to an area near what is now West 11th Avenue, where their home lacked plumbing, running water and electricity; and

Whereas the Reynolds family is recognized as one of Eugene's founding Black families, and a historical marker was placed on West 11th Avenue in 2018 to commemorate Lyllye Reynolds-Parker's parents, Sam and Mattie Reynolds, who were cofounders of St. Mark Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Eugene's oldest Black congregation; and

Whereas in 1966, Mattie Reynolds became the first Black person to run for public office in Eugene when she sought a seat on the city council, an act that deeply inspired her daughter Lyllye to engage in civic life and fight for racial justice; and

Whereas as a student at Sheldon High School in Eugene, Lyllye Reynolds-Parker was active in civil rights and social justice causes and was part of the school's first graduating class; and

Whereas when she was in the eighth grade, a school counselor told Lyllye Reynolds-Parker that her opportunities would be limited as a Black woman, discouraging her dream of becoming an attorney and instead suggesting a career in nursing, cosmetology or home economics; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker became involved in activism as a teenager, serving as vice president of the Eugene chapter of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and as a member of the Congress of Racial Equality, where she trained in nonviolent civil disobedience; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker became a hairdresser before deciding at the age of 40, as a single mother of two, to enroll at the University of Oregon (UO), where she frequently mentored her much younger classmates; and

Whereas in 1991, Lyllye Reynolds-Parker earned a bachelor's degree from UO in sociology with a minor in women's studies; and

Whereas four years after graduating from UO, Lyllye Reynolds-Parker began working as an academic advisor in the university's Office of Multicultural Academic Success, a position she described as being her passion and purpose; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker served as a legendary student advisor at UO for 17 years, from 1995 to 2012, helping first-generation students of color navigate higher education, advocating for second and third chances with the Scholastic Review Committee and fostering a sense of belonging within the UO community; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker was a mentor and source of support for countless students, including many who faced personal challenges such as mental health struggles, helping them persist with their education; and

Whereas for so many students, the mentorship Lyllye Reynolds-Parker provided lasted well beyond their time at UO; and

Whereas in 2019, UO named the Lyllye Reynolds-Parker Black Cultural Center in her honor, making her the first Black woman and first living person to have a building named after her at the university; and

Whereas of the 500 public comments submitted during the naming process for the cultural center, 84 percent advocated for naming the building after Lyllye Reynolds-Parker, reflecting her impact on students and the community; and

Whereas the UO Women's Center holds the annual Lyllye B. Parker Black, Indigenous and Women of Color Speaker Series in her honor, ensuring that her commitment to uplifting women of color continues to inspire future generations; and

Whereas in 2022, Lyllye Reynolds-Parker was honored with the Icon Award by the UO Black Alumni Network, recognizing her leadership and dedication to civil rights and education; and

Whereas in 2025, the UO Senate established the Lyllye Reynolds-Parker Award, recognizing professional staff and graduate employees who exemplified exceptional mentorship by creating a supportive, inclusive environment and encouraging students to reach their full potential; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker served on the board of the League of United Latin American Citizens in Eugene, and she was the honorary chair of its Anti-Racial Profiling Committee; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker's former students and community members came together to help her purchase her first home at the age of 75, raising more than \$76,000 to assist with the down payment in a tight housing market, a testament to the profound and lasting impact she had on those she mentored; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker lived in her home with her sister, where they each had their own space after decades of service to others, and Lyllye planned to pass the home on to the next generation as a legacy for her son and granddaughter; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker was a pillar of Eugene's movement for racial justice, working tirelessly to foster a more inclusive and equitable society; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker passed away on August 22, 2024, and the void left by her death is immeasurable; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker will continue to inspire generations to come with her words and example; and

Whereas as Lyllye Reynolds-Parker once said of the young people she felt so privileged to work with: "I just marvel at who they are and take pride in the fact that I was part of the team that paved the way for them"; and

Whereas Lyllye Reynolds-Parker will be forever remembered as a dedicated mentor, activist and civil rights leader who touched countless lives and made her community a better place; now, therefore,

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

That we, the members of the Eighty-third Legislative Assembly, honor the life and legacy of Lyllye Reynolds-Parker, and we recognize her outstanding contributions to the University of Oregon, the Eugene community and the people of the State of Oregon; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be presented to the family of Lyllye Reynolds-Parker as an expression of our sympathy and condolences.

Adopted by House April 3, 2025

Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

Julie Fahey, Speaker of House

Adopted by Senate May 14 2025

Rob Wagner, President of Senate