

# Senate Concurrent Resolution 10

Sponsored by Senator WAGNER, Representative FAHEY, Senators JAMA, BONHAM, Representatives BOWMAN, DRAZAN; Senators ANDERSON, BROADMAN, CAMPOS, FREDERICK, GELSER BLOUIN, GOLDEN, LIEBER, MCLANE, MEEK, NASH, PHAM K, PROZANSKI, STARR, TAYLOR, THATCHER, WEBER, WOODS, Representatives BOICE, BREESE-IVERSON, FRAGALA, GAMBA, GOMBERG, GRAYBER, JAVADI, MANNIX, MARSH, MCDONALD, MCINTIRE, NATHANSON, NELSON, NGUYEN H, NOSSE, PHAM H, SCHARF, SMITH G, VALDERRAMA (Presession filed.)

## 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**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: Honors the life and memory of Peter Courtney. (Flesch Readability Score: 61.2).  
In memoriam: Senate President Peter Courtney, 1943-2024.

## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1  
2       Whereas Peter Courtney was born June 18, 1943, in Philadelphia and passed away on July 16,  
3 2024, at his home in Salem; and

4       Whereas while he often called himself by his full name, Peter Michael Coleman Courtney, he  
5 insisted that everyone else call him Peter; and

6       Whereas Peter was proud to say that he was raised in West "By God" Virginia, where he played  
7 multiple sports in high school, earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of  
8 Rhode Island, and a juris doctorate from the Boston University School of Law; and

9       Whereas Peter came to Oregon in July 1969 as a law clerk for Judge William S. Fort of the  
10 newly formed Oregon Court of Appeals, and lived for two years in a room at the Salem YMCA and  
11 became a huge supporter of the Y and its programs; and

12       Whereas Peter and his wife Margie Brenden were married for 48 years; and

13       Whereas Peter and Margie raised three sons-Peter, Sean and Adam-in their north Salem home  
14 along the Willamette River; and

15       Whereas Peter was grandfather to Brayden, Harper, Emersyn, Zaylie, Noah, Avila, Jasper and  
16 Blaise, who was born after Peter's passing; and

17       Whereas Peter loved animals, especially his dachshunds, Yoda and Dilly; and

18       Whereas Peter's first political office was that of Salem City Councilor from 1974 to 1980, and  
19 Peter was subsequently elected in 1980 to seven terms in the Oregon House of Representatives,  
20 serving as House Democratic leader for eight years; and

21       Whereas Peter was elected to the Senate in 1998, serving six terms, and was elected by his  
22 Senate peers as President of the Senate in 2003; and

23       Whereas Peter was the longest-serving legislator and longest-tenured President of the Senate in  
24 Oregon's history, leading the chamber for a record 20 years; and

25       Whereas Peter was a servant leader who brought out the best in his colleagues and celebrated  
26 their accomplishments; and

27       Whereas while Peter was a proud lifelong Democrat, he staunchly promoted bipartisan cooper-  
28 ation in the Senate and often spoke of cooperation, respecting other viewpoints and the power of

**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 compromise; and

2 Whereas Peter was known as a gifted orator and delivered countless inspiring speeches as a  
3 legislator, as President of the Senate, as a professor and as a friend and family member; and

4 Whereas Peter was a champion for children, animal rights, earthquake preparedness, victims'  
5 rights and services, and mental health, and he sponsored more than two hundred bills that became  
6 law, including Oregon's first vote-by-mail legislation in 1981; and

7 Whereas Peter's legislative efforts led to earthquake improvements to more than 450 critical  
8 public buildings, including schools, fire stations, hospitals, 911 call centers and the Oregon State  
9 Capitol building; and

10 Whereas Peter was a driving force in the construction of a new state mental health hospital in  
11 Oregon, which opened in 2013; and

12 Whereas at Peter's urging a memorial was created adjacent to the hospital to honor the more  
13 than 3,500 patients whose cremains were stored in copper canisters on the site; and

14 Whereas the hospital and surrounding grounds were dedicated as the Peter Courtney Salem  
15 Campus of the Oregon State Hospital; and

16 Whereas Peter worked for 30 years as an administrator and instructor at Western Oregon Uni-  
17 versity and was a champion of both education and physical fitness; and

18 Whereas Western Oregon University dedicated the Peter Courtney Health and Wellness Center  
19 in Peter's honor in 2015; and

20 Whereas Peter regularly exercised in the Salem YMCA spin classes and secured state funding  
21 to help pay for the construction of a new YMCA facility on the same downtown Salem site where  
22 he once lived; and

23 Whereas the new veterans' housing apartment building at the Y is named Courtney Place; and

24 Whereas Peter coached basketball at the Salem Boys and Girls Club where he enthusiastically  
25 believed in the children's potential to win at sports and in life; and

26 Whereas Peter loved and was beloved in his adopted hometown of Salem; and

27 Whereas the City of Salem named the bridge linking Riverfront Park and Minto-Brown Island  
28 Park the Peter Courtney Minto Island Bridge; and

29 Whereas Peter loved sports, the Oregon State Fair, the Oregon state flag and Oregon high  
30 school mascots; and

31 Whereas Peter ran in the iconic Hood to Coast Relay 20 times, including in 2010 just 13 months  
32 after undergoing hip replacement surgery, and appeared in the 2011 documentary *Running*  
33 *Forward: Conquering Oregon's Hood to Coast Relay*; and

34 Whereas Peter enjoyed spending time with his family camping on the Snake and Metolius rivers,  
35 visiting the Oregon coast and watching his sons play sports, attend college and become fathers; and

36 Whereas Peter both loved the excitement of jet skiing on the Willamette River and calm and  
37 peaceful moments enjoying coffee and cinnamon rolls with Margie; and

38 Whereas at every point over his six decades as an Oregon public servant, Peter lived up to his  
39 slogan "Here to Serve. Nobody Works Harder."; and

40 Whereas Peter dedicated his life in service to Oregon, often referring to his beloved state as  
41 "Oregon, My Oregon"; now, therefore,

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

43 That we, the members of the Eighty-third Legislative Assembly, declare that Senate President  
44 Peter Courtney will forever be remembered as a dedicated and fearless leader for Oregon; and be  
45 it further

1       Resolved, That Peter Courtney's work ethic and bipartisan spirit will forever be upheld as an  
2 aspiration for members of the Legislative Assembly; and be it further

3       Resolved, That Peter Courtney's compassion and concern for the people of Oregon will forever  
4 be seen as a model for a life of public service and for what can be achieved in service to the public;  
5 and be it further

6       Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be presented to the family of Peter Courtney as  
7 an expression of our immense admiration and profound gratitude.

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