

Submitter: Edward Wolf
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB223

I write in strong support of this measure to honor the memory of Senator Peter Courtney by installing plaques at Oregon schools that have received seismic upgrades thanks to the Seismic Rehabilitation Grants Program that the senator initiated and championed over many years.

From 2010 through 2018, I was a parent activist in Portland urging Oregon to take action to strengthen hundreds of schools never designed to withstand earthquake shaking. This advocacy could not have borne fruit without Senator Courtney's untiring efforts to create a legislative path to bond funding for costly upgrades. I did what I could to enlist public support and build momentum for the SRGP, and had the pleasure of corresponding with the senator across those years of critical growth, in which dozens of schools were made more resilient to the earthquake hazard.

My last correspondence from Senator Courtney, in April 2016, was simple: "Thank you. We are making progress . . . but still a long way to go."

These proposed plaques will remind Oregonians of the tangible progress that has been made, and inspire them to continue the journey. Senator Peter Courtney could have no better memorial than this visible acknowledgment on school buildings that will sustain the state's momentum toward resilience. Still a long way to go.