

March 14, 2025



Good morning, Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Boham and Members of the Committee,

My name is Melanie Doolin, and I am here today in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 10 and to recognize the unwavering support Senator Peter Courtney brought to Oregon Corrections Enterprises (OCE) throughout his tenure in the Oregon Legislature.

Senator Courtney's leadership was instrumental in strengthening OCE's mission to provide adults in custody (AICs) with meaningful work and training opportunities. His commitment to rehabilitation through skill-building helped ensure that individuals reentering society had a better chance at success.

His support was not just in words but in action. During the 2008 renovation of the Capitol's House and Senate floors, Senator Courtney visited multiple times to witness the craftsmanship of the AICs in the Furniture Factory. When the project was completed, he personally hand-signed Certificates of Appreciation for every AIC involved—an act of recognition still spoken about in our shops today.

In 2021, when a 150-year-old tree fell during the ice storm, Senator Courtney was adamant about preserving its legacy. He ensured that nameplates were crafted from the wood for every member of the House and Senate. Additionally, OCE created a Prison Blues guitar from the tree, which we had the honor of presenting to him in July 2023. Which will now be reside in the Capitol.

At that presentation, Senator Courtney reflected on another cherished piece—his black walnut table, made by OCE. He described it as “a magnificent table, an extraordinary table—when you say you need everyone at the table to get things done, that is the table to do it at.” Though he couldn't take it with him upon retirement, he ensured it found a meaningful home, where it now sits at Silver Falls State Park.

His admiration for the talents within OCE was evident. One AIC in the Furniture Factory recalled, “*Senator Courtney would stand in awe, watching the CNC machines as AICs programmed them to cut intricate designs. He was always amazed by the skills developed within these walls and never passed up an opportunity to say, ‘Thank you.’*”

Senator Courtney's deep understanding of the transformative power of work and education made him a true champion for second chances. His legacy will live on in the lives of those who gained skills, confidence, and a renewed sense of purpose through OCE.

On behalf of all who have benefited from his advocacy, I extend my deepest gratitude. His dedication has not only changed lives but has also helped make Oregon a leader in correctional rehabilitation.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 10.

Sincerely,

Melanie Doolin

Melanie Doolin
OCE Administrator