

**Testimony in Support of SCR 10**  
**Honoring the Memory and Service of Senate President Peter Courtney**

March 17, 2025

*(An Irish Holiday Celebrating the Great Saint Patrick)*

Submitted by Pat McCormick  
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Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham and members of the committee,

My name is Pat McCormick and I served as Chief of Staff to House Speaker Hardy Myers in the 1979 and 1981 legislative sessions. At the time, our family lived in Keizer and our children attended St. Vincent school in North Salem. At a school parents club meeting one evening, a Salem City Council member was a guest speaker explaining street changes the City planned that would affect where parents pick up their kids from school. I was impressed that Councilman Courtney would proactively reach out to constituents to inform them of the change and how to accommodate it.

Peter lived in the same legislative district where I lived. The incumbent freshman legislator in our district was ineffective and his behavior was, shall we say, injudicious. He was Republican but lacked support among his colleagues. I asked my boss, Speaker Myers, if I could meet with Peter to urge him to run against the incumbent in the 1980 legislative race. Hardy agreed.

After my lunch with Peter, it was clear that he knew a lot about running an effective campaign, and he was clearly aware that the incumbent was vulnerable. When I introduced Peter to Hardy, it opened the door to a great friendship and mentorship. Peter's idiosyncratic style was much different than Hardy's unruffled reserve. But the two shared a steadfast love and respect for the institution.

It was my great honor to have worked with three leaders whom I consider institutionalists who guided and protected Oregon's legislative process. They understood and respected Oregon's unique lawmaking institution and the people who collectively make it work for the benefit of our state's citizens.

My first job at the legislature was as chief of staff to House Majority Leader Les AuCoin in 1973. After his election to Congress in 1974, I joined his congressional staff. I returned to Salem to work with Hardy for his two sessions as Speaker.

Working with them was a great honor, but I'm equally grateful to have had the privilege of seeing Oregon's longest service lawmaker – and longest serving Senate President – at the dawn of his remarkable career in the Oregon Legislature.

Peter broke new ground in the Capitol, literally and figurately. It is fitting to see him recognized for his service with this resolution. As Oregonians, we are blessed that he transplanted here, made this his home and made Oregon a better state.

Thank you. I urge your passage of SCR 10.