

Submitter: Matt Keating

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SCR10

Honoring the Life and Career of Peter Michael Coleman Courtney, Oregon's 55th Senate President

Resolution Submitted by: Matt Keating, Eugene City Councilor, 2021-present & DNC Member, 2016-2024

Passed at Democratic Party of Oregon's Q3 State Central Committee meeting, 9/22/24, Eugene

WHEREAS, Peter Michael Coleman Courtney was born on June 18, 1943, in Philadelphia, PA, to William and Constance Courtney; and

WHEREAS, Peter, as he was known, earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from University of Rhode Island; and a Doctor of Jurisprudence from Boston University's School of Law; and

WHEREAS, Peter came to Oregon in July 1969, to clerk for Judge William S. Fort of the newly formed Oregon Court of Appeals; and

WHEREAS, Peter married Margie Brenden in 1976; the couple raised three sons – Peter, Sean, and Adam – in their north Salem home along the Willamette River; and

WHEREAS, Peter's first political office was that of Salem City Councilor (1974-1980); he was subsequently elected to represent Marion and Polk County in Oregon's House of Representatives in 1980, serving as House Democratic leader for eight years; and

WHEREAS, Peter is the longest serving legislator and longest tenured Senate President (20 years) in Oregon's history; and

WHEREAS, Peter was a proud lifelong Democrat who deeply valued bipartisanship. In his two decades as Senate President, the institution benefited greatly from his celebration of compromise and cooperation with colleagues across the aisle; and

WHEREAS Peter was a stalwart champion for children, animal rights, earthquake preparedness, and destigmatizing mental health; and

WHEREAS, Peter sponsored more than 200 bills which became law, including Oregon's first vote-by-mail legislation in 1981; and

WHEREAS, Peter's legacy lives on in the naming of four facilities in the Salem-Keizer area after Oregon's 55th Senate President: Courtney Place Veterans Housing at the Salem YMCA, the Peter Courtney Health & Wellness Center at Western Oregon University, the Peter Courtney Minto Island Bridge in Salem's Riverfront Park, and the Peter Courtney Salem Campus of the Oregon State Hospital; and

WHEREAS, Peter put family first. He enjoyed camping with family on the Snake and Metolius rivers; visiting the Oregon Coast; and watching his sons play sports, attend college, and become fathers; and

WHEREAS, Peter Michael Coleman Courtney passed away on July 16, 2024, at the age of 81;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party of Oregon and Democratic National Committee honors Peter Michael Coleman Courtney for his invaluable contributions to our country, the State of Oregon, and the Democratic Party; we offer our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.

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