

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Do Pass
Vote:	6 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Boone, Huffman, Matthews, Parrish, Esquivel, Witt
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Jill Petty, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	4/26

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Designates February 24 of each year as Edward Dickinson Baker Day in Oregon.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Baker City and Baker County are his namesakes
- Abraham Lincoln's close friend
- Exceptional orator
- Baker's service as United States Senator from Oregon

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Edward Dickinson Baker was born in London, England on February 24, 1811. After emigrating with his family in 1816, Baker spent time in Pennsylvania and Indiana, finally settling in Illinois in 1826. While he received some formal schooling, Baker was largely self-educated, passing his law examination at the age of 19. In 1832, Baker enlisted to fight in the Black Hawk War. He rapidly rose in rank, eventually attaining the rank of Major by the end of the war. After the war, he returned to Illinois to practice law in Springfield. During that time, he became close friends with another Illinois lawyer, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln and Baker would often engage in friendly debates and were at times political rivals. Their friendship never faltered, however, and Lincoln named one of his sons after Baker.

Baker served in the state House and Senate, as well as Congress, but in 1846 he resigned his seat in Congress to serve as a Colonel in the Mexican-American War. After he returned from that war, Baker was, once again, elected to represent Illinois in Congress, but chose to serve only one term. In 1852, Baker and his family moved to California. During his time in California, he was recruited by the fledgling government in Oregon to move to Oregon to run for the United States Senate. He did so, and was eventually elected to serve as a U.S. Senator from Oregon. While traveling to the nation's Capitol to assume his seat, Baker learned that his close friend, Abraham Lincoln, had been elected President of the United States.

Baker was a staunch supporter of the Union and used his considerable oratorical skills to speak against slavery and the rebellion of the South. He chose to return to military service to fight for the Union while still serving in the Senate. In 1861, while commanding a brigade near Ball's Bluff, Virginia, Senator Baker was killed by Confederate troops. Baker is interred at National Military Cemetery at The Presidio in San Francisco.

Senate Bill 809 honors patriot and former Oregon Senator Edward Dickinson Baker, for whom Baker County and Baker City, Oregon are named.

4/29/2011 2:42:00 PM

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.