



**SENATOR GINNY BURDICK  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

**Testimony for SCR6: William E. Connor memorial (1921 – 2009)**

Good afternoon Madam Chair, members of the committee. For the record I am Senator Ginny Burdick. I represent Senate District 18, which includes SW Portland and Tigard.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to testify before this Committee regarding an outstanding Oregonian and constituent, Dr. William E. Connor (09/14/21 to 10/25/09). He was a friend who I admired for his leadership on efforts to repeal the death penalty in Oregon. However, I thought it would be appropriate to outline some of his professional accomplishments in the area of nutrition that have benefitted millions of people around the world, and possibly a number of people in this room.

His medical accomplishments were numerous. He published over 400 academic articles and was still writing and publishing up to his death, with a number of articles published posthumously. He wrote three best-selling cookbooks with his wife, Sonja Connor, including “The New American Diet” that changed the way America looked at the relationship between healthy eating and disease. Many people now take for granted that eating healthier and having a balanced diet will prevent high cholesterol and fat in the blood, but Dr. Connor’s work was at the cutting edge of nutrition. He was one of the leading voices to promote a low-fat, high fiber diet in order to combat heart disease. His study of omega-3 fatty acids has led directly to recommendations that people with a high risk of heart disease eat fish twice a week. In fact, his research connecting the positive effect of omega-3 fatty acids in infants directly influenced the composition of infant formula. OHSU, where he practiced from 1975 until his death in 2009, has established William E. Connor Nutrition Research Symposium, where nutrition researchers and students share their work in the fields of lipid, sterol, and nutrition research.

He was a truly remarkable man whose passion for healthy living was as infectious as it was inspiring.

Thank you.

