

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Be Adopted
Vote:	9 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Barnhart, Berger, Dembrow, Hicks, Holvey, Hoyle, Jenson, Kennemer, Garrett
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Erin Seiler, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: In memoriam: Tom Whelan, 1948 – 2012.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Contributions of Tom Whelan as legislator, public servant and citizen advocate
- History of Whelan family's public service
- Service as firefighter and as mentor to new firefighters
- Commitment to passage of fire-safe cigarette legislation
- Mr. Whelan's humor, perspective on life, and perseverance

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: Thomas Edward Whelan, a lifelong Oregonian, died on March 9, 2012 in his Portland home from complications of diabetes. Mr. Whelan represented Salem as a state legislator from 1996 to 1998. He had a 30-year career in public service, working in state government, on city boards, as a Salem Fire Captain, and as a Portland citizen representative to the Fire and Police Disability and Retirement Board. He served as Vice-President of the Public Employees Retirement System Board and on the City of Portland Fire Bureau Budget Committee.

Among Mr. Whelan's many achievements was his successful pursuit, as a citizen advocate, of Oregon's "fire-safe cigarette" law, which was enacted in 2007. As a lobbyist for the Oregon State Firefighters Council for four years, Mr. Whelan served on the steering committee of several ballot measure campaigns, lobbied for fire safety legislation, and helped to improve retirement benefits for Oregon's firefighters. He served as his union's Vice-President and contract negotiator in the 1990's, and helped to open a new fire station in South Salem. In the 1970's, prior to his firefighting career, Mr. Whelan became the youngest-ever real estate broker in Oregon - a feat that led him to his first position in public service, as the Assistant Education Director of the Oregon Department of Commerce's Real Estate Division.

Mr. Whelan was a Yeats Scholar and English major at Willamette University, where he also played on the Bearcats' football team, winning a second-place finish in national competition. An occasional writer, he penned the children's story "Rudy," about a cat he rescued from a tree, and which he read to students at Marysville School in Portland as a volunteer for "Read Across America." Mr. Whelan struggled with alcoholism in his own life and used his experience to help others overcome their addictions with his loving intervention and support. He also dealt with the consequences of diabetes and died suddenly of heart failure related to his diabetes on March 9, 2012, at the age of 63. Mr. Whelan is survived by many family members and countless friends.

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