



PETER COURTNEY
President of the Senate

Senate Rules Committee

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Senator Ted Ferrioli, Vice Chair
Senator Lee Beyer
Senator Brian Boquist
Senator Ginny Burdick

*TESTIMONY BY SENATOR PETER COURTNEY
SUPPORTING SB 942
APRIL 9, 2015*

Chair Diane Rosenbaum, Vice Chair Ted Ferrioli, members of the Senate Committee on Rules, thank you for hearing my testimony today.

My name is Peter Courtney. I am a State Senator. I live in NE Salem.

I've come before you today to support Senate Bill 942. This measure would hold Oregon Health Authority to the same contracting codes as other state agencies.

Many people here today will talk about Chief Joseph and Abigail Scott Duniway, and why they are best suited to represent Oregon in the National Statuary Hall in DC. I will agree with them, and believe these two Oregonians will serve us well in our Nation's Capitol. What I'd like to tell you about is the process by which the Statuary Hall Study Commission came to this recommendation.

In 1864, Congress passed a bill that asked each state to donate two statues of "worthy" individuals to the U.S. Capitol to create the National Statuary Hall Collection, to be housed in the former House Chambers.

It began with Rhode Island contributing the first statue in 1870. Oregon was the last state to contribute its first statue in 1953, and New Mexico was the last state to donate its second statue in 2005.

In 2000, Congress passed new legislation stating that, "Any State may request the Joint Committee on the Library of Congress to approve the replacement of a statue the State has provided for display in Statuary Hall"

Six states, Alabama, Arizona, California, Iowa, Kansas, and Michigan, have already replaced one of their statues. Legislatures of two more states, Ohio and Kansas (to replace its second statue), have also passed legislation to make a change in coming years.

The commission held public meetings and took input through their website. They heard from thousands of Oregonians- according to their records (letter).

In December, 2014, the Committee made an interim report recommending that both statues currently in the National Statuary Hall be brought home to Oregon.

Working with Oregon scholars and historians, the commission narrowed the list of possible replacements down to 10 deserving Oregonians. Then, with the help of public input, they narrowed the list of 10 down to 4. These finalists were Chief Joseph, Abigail Scott Duniway, Tom McCall and Mark Hatfield.

On March 4, 2015 the commission voted to make two final recommendations:

1. That a statue memorializing Chief Joseph be installed in National Statuary Hall in place of the statue of Jason Lee, which will be brought home to a suitable place of honor in Oregon.
2. That a statue memorializing Abigail Scott Duniway be installed in National Statuary Hall in place of the statue of John McLoughlin, which will be brought home to a suitable place of honor in Oregon.

Beyond their assigned job of recommending new honorees, the Committee also looked to the future. This process gave Oregonians across the state the chance to make their voices heard about who they want representing our great state. The Committee therefore recommended that each generation be given the same opportunity, and that this process of recommending new representatives to Statuary Hall be done once every generation.

I support this goal, and hope it is something future generations follow through with. This process has engaged a whole new generation in the history of Oregon, connecting people with their state, and the generations who came before them. Jason Lee and Dr. John McLoughlin were chosen to represent our state in 1921. Their statues have been in the Hall for over 60 years. It's time to return them home to a place of honor. It is time for a new chapter in Oregon history to be showcased. And in another 50 years, I look forward to my grandson having the opportunity to make his voice heard for the next generation of Oregon honorees.