

April 17, 2015

To the House Committee on Health Care

I present to you HCR 23, honoring Ron Post, currently a constituent of mine.

In 1979 Ron Post was a successful businessman living in West Salem. One night, while watching the news he saw the horrible story of the "Killing Fields" of Cambodia and the terror of the Pol Pot Regime which was causing a mass exodus of Cambodians to Thailand.

He looked over at his teenage daughter sleeping on the sofa and said "if not for the grace of God, she could be one of them, I have to do something". Within weeks he had assembled a team of volunteer doctors, nurses and EMT's who then shortly thereafter flew to Thailand and worked in the temporary shelters for a weeks.

He thought that was the end. Next was the famine of Ethiopia. He took teams there.

Next was the Mexico City earthquake. He took teams there. At that point it became clear that a new organization needed to be founded, so he did. That is how Northwest Medical Teams (now called Medical Teams International) was founded.

Next came the earthquake in Soviet Armenia, and because of the reputation of Ron Post, the ONLY American relief agency allowed into the Soviet Union, Northwest Medical Teams was there.

In almost every tragedy, man-made or natural, Ron Post got teams there with Northwest Medical Teams. In his book "Created for Purpose" Ron Post lays out all of the stories and the reasons why he believes Northwest Medical Teams was so impactful.

Helping literally millions of people worldwide, he also started the mobile dental van program here in Oregon which grew from one van to multiple vans that still run all over the Northwest providing free emergency dental care to thousands each year.

He has since retired but never stops working. 15 years ago, he founded another organization called Mission Increase. They provide funding to nonprofit organizations then teach them how to fundraise and make themselves self-sufficient.

This man who was merely a businessman who saw a need and felt the call that "someone had to do something" demonstrates how each of us might answer that call.

I recommend HCR 23 honoring Ron Post to this committee.

Rep. Mike Nearman  
House District 23