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May 28, 2015

Senate Committee on Rules
Senator Diane Rosenbaum, Chair
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon

Testimony in support of SCR 17

Thank you for hearing SCR 17, a resolution honoring Hector MacPherson Jr.

Everyone who loves Oregon owes tribute to Hector Macpherson Jr., who, as noted in obituaries and honors across the state, passed away on March 21, 2015.

Though Henry Richmond was eulogizing a different member of that generation of farmers, he wrote words that apply equally to Hector:

“Only farmers who owned and worked the land had the credibility to argue effectively for conservation. More important, only the farmers of obvious personal integrity, who quietly spoke up for conservation from a position of principle and conviction, could provide the strength of leadership to turn things the right way in a legislative hearing or LCDC meeting.”

So often guests who visit Oregon remark on the farmland that dominates the Willamette Valley landscape—praising both its personality and its economy. As a pioneer legislator who helped lead the movement for rational land use policy in Oregon, and as the person most closely associated with defending world-class farmland, Hector changed the path of development by reminding us what should not be lost to subdivision.

Many in a new generation of Oregon leaders didn't know Hector. And those to come won't. But in reading of the heroes that walked with Governor Tom McCall in the long list of books—*Fire at Eden's Gate*, *The Unquiet Revolution*, *Planning Paradise*—that describe that era, one insight rings true. As often as we quote McCall about heroes, the character, principle, and passion of the women and men who led this movement stands out. Ultimately, they were people no different than you and me, no different than the rising generation of leaders who must see how closely issues of not just farming, but housing, transportation, equity, and climate are tied to the ways we value land. These leaders were fathers, mothers, daughters, sons, brothers, and sisters who led their fellows to a better future.

The resolution before you recognizes Oregon's “innovative system of land use planning, implemented through enactment of Senate Bill 100 under Hector Macpherson's leadership.” It recognizes that Hector's work “provided critical protection for farmlands and forestlands and established statewide planning goals to guide the orderly, efficient and environmentally sensitive development of Oregon's landscape,” and that his work “distinguished this state as a leader in smart growth and has resulted in more livable neighborhoods with easy access to parks, schools, libraries, stores and other amenities.”

The greatest honor we can pay to Hector is to continue his work. In his words, “a new generation of leaders must find a way to balance the need for public and private gain that is acceptable to the majority.”

Together we carry his legacy and his work forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Miner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jason Miner
1000 Friends of Oregon