

SCR 29 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Rules

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Meeting Dates: 5/22

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Celebrates and expresses appreciation for Dr. Edwin "Ed" Coleman and his accomplishments in academics and music and his legacy of work for justice and equality.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

BACKGROUND:

Dr. Edwin "Ed" Coleman was born in El Dorado, Arkansas, in 1932. He lived a multi-faceted life as a university professor, musician, civil rights leader, activist, veteran, father, husband, storyteller, author, Ducks fan and active member of his community. Dr. Coleman served in the United States Air Force Reserve during the Korean War and subsequently graduated from San Francisco State College with a degree in theatre. During his time in the military and in college he learned to play the acoustic bass. His passion for music and notable talent as a jazz musician afforded him the opportunity to perform professionally and share a stage with renowned musicians such as Ella Fitzgerald, the Kingston Trio and Peter, Paul and Mary.

In 1966, he moved to Eugene with his wife, Charmaine, to complete a Doctorate in theatre at the University of Oregon (UO). Dr. Coleman was hired at the UO's English department as an assistant professor in 1971, and enjoyed a career as a leader in the English department and the folklore and ethnic studies programs for over 30 years. He established the UO's African-American literature program and lead the University to create a racially diverse literature curriculum. In addition, Dr. Coleman served as a source of wisdom and support for thousands of students and instructed them "to always think twice, and always have more compassion toward others, and always do what's right, no matter how hard it is."

He was a defender of civil rights and sought to fight racial injustice with a sense of reasoned wisdom and thoughtful discourse. Dr. Coleman served on many University of Oregon committees in furtherance of that cause, including the President's Committee on Race, the Affirmative Action Search Committee and the Committee on Curriculum Integration. He also lent his service to the Lane Arts Council, Oregon Arts Foundation, Oregon Folklore Society, Circle Poetry Forum and the Northwest Journal of African and Afro-American Studies. Ed Coleman has won several awards for his work and contributions, including the Frederick Douglas Scholarship Award, the Charles E. Johnson Memorial Award, the Outstanding Faculty Award and the Most Honored Professor Award. In 1991, the City of Eugene awarded him the Martin Luther King Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Edwin "Ed" Coleman passed away at the age of 84 on January 20, 2017 and is survived by his wife Charmaine, his two sons, Edwin and Callan, and his two grandchildren.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 29 honors, celebrates and expresses appreciation for Dr. Edwin "Ed" Coleman and his accomplishments in academics and music and his legacy of work for justice and equality.