

# Senate Concurrent Resolution 36

Sponsored by Senators THATCHER, JOHNSON, Representatives POST, NOBLE; Senator BOQUIST, Representatives MCLANE, NEARMAN

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

In memoriam: George Kenneth "Ken" Austin Jr., 1931-2019.

## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1  
2       Whereas George Kenneth "Ken" Austin Jr. was born on October 29, 1931, in Missoula, Montana,  
3 where his father was working at the time; and

4       Whereas Ken Austin's ancestors arrived in Oregon in 1859, and his family returned to Oregon  
5 when he was two years old, settling on a farm in St. Paul; and

6       Whereas Ken Austin showed curiosity and ingenuity at an early age, tinkering with old appli-  
7 ances and constructing birdhouses; and

8       Whereas in high school Ken Austin fell in love with cars, and he enjoyed racing them as well  
9 as earning spending money by doing custom repair work in a shop he built himself and called "The  
10 Rod Shop"; and

11       Whereas Ken Austin attended Oregon State College (now Oregon State University, OSU), where  
12 he brought the mascot Benny Beaver to life for the first time in 1952, sparking school spirit for  
13 generations to come; and

14       Whereas Ken and Joan Austin were married in 1953, and they raised two children together and  
15 remained a couple until Joan's death in 2013; and

16       Whereas following his college graduation, Ken Austin served with honor and distinction in the  
17 United States Air Force from 1954 to 1957; and

18       Whereas in 1964, Ken and Joan Austin co-founded the Austin Dental Equipment Company (A-  
19 dec), and the young company's first space was a leased Quonset hut in downtown Newberg, Oregon;  
20 and

21       Whereas from those modest beginnings, A-dec has grown into a business with a 50-acre campus  
22 and more than a thousand employees, and it is one of the world's largest dental chair and equipment  
23 manufacturers; and

24       Whereas A-dec has provided family-wage jobs to thousands of Oregonians; and

25       Whereas Ken Austin preferred to think of himself as an "imagineer" rather than an engineer,  
26 and he had the rare gift of shaping whatever he had at hand into whatever the job required; and

27       Whereas Ken Austin is named on 40 U.S. patents and an additional 33 patents in other nations;  
28 and

29       Whereas Ken Austin was a dedicated Oregonian, a gracious community and business leader and  
30 a selfless and magnanimous philanthropist; and

31       Whereas Ken Austin supported countless nonprofit organizations in Newberg and throughout

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 Oregon, including the Chehalem Cultural Center, the Oregon Symphony, the Portland Art Museum,  
2 the Oregon Historical Society and Volunteers of America Oregon; and

3 Whereas Ken Austin had a special place in his heart for Special Olympics athletes, and he  
4 supplied the funding necessary to stage the Special Olympics Oregon summer games in Newberg for  
5 six years, providing unforgettable experiences and joy to Oregonians with intellectual disabilities  
6 and their families; and

7 Whereas Ken Austin assisted those dealing with addiction by founding the Springbrook North-  
8 west drug and alcohol addiction treatment center; and

9 Whereas Ken Austin was a member of Rotary International for more than 50 years, and as part  
10 of that engagement he established the Rota-Dent program, which provides portable dental equipment  
11 to charitable organizations working with underserved populations around the world, bringing dental  
12 services to thousands of people who otherwise would not have access to such care; and

13 Whereas Ken Austin was a dedicated and generous supporter of learners and education at all  
14 levels, including Newberg area schools, George Fox University and his beloved alma mater, OSU;  
15 and

16 Whereas Ken and Joan Austin contributed significantly to the construction of Austin Hall, the  
17 state-of-the-art facility that houses the OSU College of Business; and

18 Whereas Ken and Joan Austin were instrumental in establishing OSU's Austin Family Business  
19 Program, which has helped hundreds of Oregon family businesses to succeed, as well as OSU's  
20 Austin Entrepreneurship Program (now Innovation Nation), which is one of the largest such pro-  
21 grams in the United States and has enabled many young Oregonians to become the state's next  
22 generation of innovative and successful entrepreneurs; and

23 Whereas Ken and Joan Austin transformed the hospitality economy of Yamhill County through  
24 the construction of the Allison Inn & Spa in 2009; and

25 Whereas Ken and Joan Austin received numerous honors throughout their lives, including the  
26 Vollum Award for Lifetime Philanthropic Achievement from the Oregon and Southwest Washington  
27 Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals; and

28 Whereas in 1999, Ken Austin was elected to the National Academy of Engineering; and

29 Whereas in 2000, OSU honored Ken Austin with its E.B. Lemon Distinguished Alumni Award;  
30 and

31 Whereas Ken Austin served as president of Oregon 4-H and served as chair of the American  
32 Dental Trade Association; and

33 Whereas the Austin Family Foundation continues Ken and Joan Austin's work by supporting  
34 education and improving access to addiction and mental health services in Newberg and Yamhill  
35 County; and

36 Whereas Ken Austin passed away on May 1, 2019, at the age of 87; and

37 Whereas Ken Austin will forever be remembered as a passionate inventor, the owner of a global  
38 business, a generous philanthropist, a noted civic leader, a champion for young people and the less  
39 fortunate and an inspiration to all Oregonians; and

40 Whereas Ken Austin was born into a pioneering Oregon family and was himself a pioneer,  
41 blazing a trail that touched countless lives and left an indelible imprint on Oregon State University,  
42 the City of Newberg, Yamhill County and the State of Oregon; now, therefore,

43 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

44 That we, the members of the Eightieth Legislative Assembly, honor the life and extraordinary  
45 accomplishments of George Kenneth "Ken" Austin Jr., and we recognize and honor his contributions

1 to the people of this state; and be it further

2 Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be presented to the family of Ken Austin as an  
3 expression of our sympathy and condolences.

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