

SENATE RESOLUTION

8722

By Senators Oke, Benton, Berkey, Brandland, Brown, Carlson, Deccio, Doumit, Eide, Esser, Fairley, Finkbeiner, Franklin, Fraser, Hale, Hargrove, Haugen, Hewitt, Honeyford, Horn, Jacobsen, Johnson, Kastama, Keiser, Kline, Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe, McCaslin, Morton, Mulliken, Murray, Parlette, Pflug, Poulsen, Prentice, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Schmidt, Sheahan, B. Sheldon, T. Sheldon, Shin, Spanel, Stevens, Swecker, Thibaudeau, Winsley and Zarelli

WHEREAS, During William "Willy" Edward O'Neil Jr.'s life as a son, brother, friend, community activist, conservationist, hunter, fisherman, and professional colleague, he made countless contributions to the State; and

WHEREAS, Willy O'Neil served both the State of Washington and the world of mankind through his passion for the environment, for the conservation of natural resources, and for his beliefs in the integrity of life and the well-being of all individuals; and

WHEREAS, Willy O'Neil's legacy is one of unbridled enthusiasm to serve the State of Washington with an infectious spirit of optimism that touched us all; and

WHEREAS, Willy O'Neil made numerous remarkable contributions to the State of Washington; and

WHEREAS, As an advocate for the construction industry, Willy supported infrastructure improvements that would benefit the economic vitality of the state, move people safely and more efficiently, while at the same time seeking to improve environmental awareness and ecologically sound construction practices within the industry he served; and

WHEREAS, He tirelessly worked to inform the voters of the need for a Second Tacoma Narrows Bridge and is recognized as one of the most important influences in gaining final approval by the voters for the project; and

WHEREAS, As a believer in conservation practices, Willy was instrumental in developing the Nonresidential Energy Code and designing it to be more user-friendly, and as part of the implementation package for this new code, he put together a public/private partnership to assist both the building and enforcement communities; and

WHEREAS, He also worked within the construction industry to develop model soil erosion codes which were subsequently adopted by the State Building Code Council; and

WHEREAS, As an activist for the disabled, Willy involved himself in the development of building codes nationally and within Washington under the Americans with Disabilities Act working vigorously with the disabled community to test, modify, and always improve accessibility standards for everyone in need, including accessibility to recreational, hunting, and fishing sites in federal, state, and local public grounds; and

WHEREAS, Willy spearheaded the effort to obtain certification from the United States Department of Justice of the Washington State Regulations for Barrier-Free Facilities and in 1995, under his energetic efforts, the Washington State Accessibility Code became the first Department of Justice certified building code in the United States, one of only a handful of codes to receive this certification to date; and

WHEREAS, As a devoted steward of the earth, Willy was an irreplaceable advocate for the volunteer-led small-stream salmon recovery program known as the Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups, was a major fund-raiser and manager of various projects supported by these groups, and diligently worked with legislators and multiple stakeholders to pass the Salmon Recovery Act which he believed would serve as the framework for the State's efforts to recover threatened and endangered salmon stocks; and

WHEREAS, As a hunter, sports fisherman, and avid sailor, Willy loved the outdoors and having traveled extensively, he always thought Washington State was the most pristine, adventuresome place to be; and

WHEREAS, He loved to hunt, always worked to promote the preservation of wildlife recreational centers, and as a fisherman, supported efforts to protect, recover, and enhance fish stocks of all kinds; and

WHEREAS, As a sail boat aficionado, Willy was a swashbuckler of a man who prayed for a strong wind at his back to sail the Puget Sound waters in a spirited competition of knowledge, skills, and abilities; and

WHEREAS, As a rules coordinator for the state, Willy championed citizen involvement in government, preached the importance of parliamentary procedures, and believed in full disclosure by government agencies of their practices to the people they served - the citizens of the State of Washington; and

WHEREAS, As a supporter of efficiencies in government, Willy painstakingly committed his time and energies to first, the creation, then, the implementation of the Transportation Permit Efficiency and Accountability Act, strove to optimize the limited resources available for transportation system improvements and environmental protection by working with diverse groups to establish common goals, minimize project delays, develop consistency in applying environmental standards, maximize environmental benefits through coordinated investment strategies, and by eliminating duplicative processes. His common sense approach and boundless energy in the bill's implementation led to his nickname - Mr. TPEAC; and

WHEREAS, As a musician, songwriter, and performer, Willy used his powerful voice and God-given talents in music to craft songs of hope, passion, love, and humor, permeating his singing with a central theme of social reform, with lyrics that were at the same time brilliant and naive, witty and funny, and moving and irreverent in a Dylanesque sort of way performing with passion, just as he lived his life; and

WHEREAS, As a respecter of heritage, Willy was proud of his Irish background, whose history gave him a profound sense of the many plights of human existence, and fought to remove prejudice of any kind from his life and the society he lived in, was befriended by members of the Tulalip Tribes as a youth, became an advocate for Native American causes such as Sovereignty, Treaty Rights and, most important, respect, and was a rare man of distinction who could live in many cultural communities; and

WHEREAS, As a man of faith, Willy, born into a Catholic family, devoutly pursued a life of caring for others, above himself, embraced the precepts of his church, the love of God and family, was never far from a fallen friend to assist in whatever way he could and always lit a candle for those in need, did not fear death, for he lived by God's promise of a glorious afterlife, and he will always be with us in spirit; and

WHEREAS, As a man of service, Willy O'Neil always put others first, changed the world by his actions and in so doing, changed our lives forever and will always be remembered as bright in personality, intellect, absolute optimism, and love of life, so we can now rejoice in the memory of our departed, but never forgotten friend, a bright shooting star streaking across our universe whose legacy of service remains as a living testimony to this great, wonderful, endearing "giant of a man," a friend--Willy O'Neil;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the outstanding contributions William "Willy" Edward O'Neil Jr. made to the people of Washington state and honor him for his ongoing commitment to promote the betterment of mankind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to William and Nina O'Neil, parents of William "Willy" Edward O'Neil Jr.

I, Milton H. Doumit, Jr., Secretary of the Senate,  
do hereby certify that this is a true and  
correct copy of Senate Resolution 8722,  
adopted by the Senate  
March 3, 2004

MILTON H. DOUMIT, JR.  
Secretary of the Senate