

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO.4717, by Representatives Chopp, DeBolt, Ahern, Alexander, Anderson, Appleton, Armstrong, Bailey, Barlow, Blake, Campbell, Chandler, Chase, Clibborn, Cody, Condotta, Conway, Crouse, Darneille, Dickerson, Dunn, Dunshee, Eddy, Eickmeyer, Ericks, Ericksen, Flannigan, Fromhold, Goodman, Grant, Green, Haigh, Hailey, Haler, Hankins, Hasegawa, Herrera, Hinkle, Hudgins, Hunt, Hunter, Hurst, Jarrett, Kagi, Kelley, Kenney, Kessler, Kirby, Kretz, Kristiansen, Lantz, Lias, Linville, Loomis, McCoy, McCune, McDonald, McIntire, Miloscia, Moeller, Morrell, Morris, Nelson, Newhouse, O'Brien, Orcutt, Ormsby, Pearson, Pedersen, Pettigrew, Priest, Quall, Roach, Roberts, Rodne, Rolfes, Ross, Santos, Schindler, Schmick, Schual-Berke, Seaquist, Sells, Simpson, Skinner, Smith, Springer, Sullivan, Sump, Takko, Upthegrove, VanDeWege, Wallace, Walsh, Warnick, Williams, and Wood

WHEREAS, Representative Helen Sommers has honorably and distinguishably served the people of the 36th Legislative District for 36 years; and

WHEREAS, Representative Helen Sommers has led with wisdom, grace, and dignity, and taught lesser souls such as ourselves the way, we kneel in reverence and deep appreciation; and

WHEREAS, Helen's past is just as interesting as her present; as a very young woman, she had the courage to leave her home in New Jersey to go live and work in Venezuela; and

WHEREAS, Helen Sommers can just as easily contrast alternative state pension funding methodologies as she can different geological eras -- in Spanish or English, no less; and

WHEREAS, Many generations of Washington students owe a debt of gratitude to Helen for her unwavering belief in the benefits of a good education; and

WHEREAS, Over her many years in the Legislature, various members have used many varying terms when describing their relationship with Helen including trepidation, intimidation, fear, love, but most often respect; and

WHEREAS, Helen has, when faced with being blamed for many things throughout her illustrious career, merely shrugged it off with the comment, "What's another stripe to a tiger"; and

WHEREAS, Woe be to the staff person who handed Helen a document without the pages numbered; and

WHEREAS, Helen, pound for pound, packs more power than any other person on campus--yet she remains a font of common sense; and

WHEREAS, Although the intricacies of pension law confound many public policy experts, her persistent dedication to the sometimes obscure principles of pension funding has ensured a stable, well-funded pension system for the taxpayers and public employees of the state; and

WHEREAS, Helen saw to the nutritional needs of her fellow appropriations committee members by pulling endless bags and boxes of Trader Joe's snacks out of her bottom drawer, thereby theoretically eliminating our need for a real dinner break; and

WHEREAS, The greatest joy for some members of her committee was to see her smile and watch her laugh at some of the worst jokes from the minority party; and

WHEREAS, Helen Sommers is the inspirational compost-turning champion of the 36th District; and

WHEREAS, Helen Sommers would never approve of a resolution honoring Helen Sommers; and

WHEREAS, Helen Sommers would ask that this resolution briefly conclude its remarks as there are a lot more bills to get through on today's agenda; and

WHEREAS, Helen has decided that 36 years of legislating is quite enough, thank you; and

WHEREAS, The Washington State Legislature will not be the same without her;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives celebrate and commemorate the distinguished legislative, professional, and, most of all, personal career of Washington State Representative Helen Sommers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives to Washington State Representative Helen Sommers.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
Resolution 4717 adopted by the House of Representatives
March 13, 2008

Barbara Baker, Chief Clerk