

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2017-4625, by Representative Wilcox

1 WHEREAS, Ed Bergh was born in Queens, New York, on February 26,
2 1952; and

3 WHEREAS, Ed and his family lived in several places throughout the
4 United States before settling in Bellevue, Washington; and

5 WHEREAS, Ed attended and graduated from Newport High School and
6 went on to earn a political science degree from Western Washington
7 University, graduating in 1973; and

8 WHEREAS, Ed began his teaching career at Yelm High School in
9 1974, where he taught Current World History, Current World Problems,
10 and American Government; and

11 WHEREAS, Soon thereafter, Ed met and fell in love with a young
12 Evergreen College student named Melissa, who moved in next door to
13 him; and

14 WHEREAS, Ed and Melissa were married within a year of dating; and

15 WHEREAS, Ed continued teaching grades 9-12 for 42 years until his
16 retirement in November 2016; and

17 WHEREAS, Ed was always overwhelmingly identified by Yelm High
18 School's graduating seniors as the teacher who had the greatest
19 impact on their lives due to his passion, creativity, commitment to
20 excellence, tough standards, and their own personal growth; and

21 WHEREAS, Ed insisted on his students educating themselves on a
22 subject before examining the pros and cons of a particular policy
23 choice; and

1 WHEREAS, Ed had credibility with his students, not only due to
2 his depth of knowledge, but because of his ability to be a neutral
3 moderator, allowing each side to express themselves, only intervening
4 to clarify and direct; and

5 WHEREAS, Ed often referred to a study revealing that students who
6 discussed political issues in high school were more likely to be
7 voters, and always kept a stack of voter registration cards in his
8 class; and

9 WHEREAS, Ed's students studied apartheid in South Africa, the
10 unrest in Central America, the Iranian Revolution and ensuing hostage
11 crisis, the nuclear arms race, the Israeli-Palestinian dispute,
12 physician-assisted suicide, energy policy, Haiti, the death penalty,
13 the U.S. budget, the Clinton impeachment, education reform, sexual
14 harassment, Supreme Court nominations and court decisions, Watergate,
15 and every presidential administration since Gerald Ford; and

16 WHEREAS, Ed had his classes follow the Washington State
17 Legislature, debating and voting on bills before the governing body;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, Ed often brought guests into the classroom to speak to
20 his students, including school administrators, state legislators,
21 U.S. representatives, and refugees from Bosnia and the civil war in
22 El Salvador; and

23 WHEREAS, Ed believed personal contact between decision-makers and
24 students helped make politics more personal, allowing students to
25 assert themselves by asking questions and offering opinions; and

26 WHEREAS, Ed modeled parts of the civil life: Knowledge,
27 discussion, and decision in a spirit of cordiality, and his students
28 learned that disagreement was inevitable and to be tolerant of the
29 opinions of others; and

30 WHEREAS, In 1994, Ed received the Barbara Thomas Scholarship for
31 Innovative Teachers from the Washington State School Directors'
32 Association; and

33 WHEREAS, In 2009, Ed received National Board Certification for
34 excellence in teaching; in 2012, he was named Washington State
35 Legislative Civic Educator of the Year; and in 2014, he was named
36 National History Teacher of the Year by the Gilder Lehrman Institute
37 of American History; and

1 WHEREAS, Ed infused his work with infectious joy and humor,
2 extraordinary patience, and courage and enthusiasm; and

3 WHEREAS, Ed dedicated his life and career to the small town of
4 Yelm and to two-and-a-half generations of children; and

5 WHEREAS, Every student, parent, colleague, and friend who knew Ed
6 are grateful for his steadfast dedication to his students and
7 community, and deeply mourn his passing;

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State House
9 of Representatives honor Ed Bergh's distinguished career of public
10 school service and the lasting impact he left on his students and the
11 community he served and loved.

12
13 I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
14 Resolution 4625 adopted by the House of Representatives
15 March 10, 2017

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Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk