

Enrolled

Senate Concurrent Resolution 9

Sponsored by COMMITTEE ON RULES

Whereas the late Clay Myers spent almost two decades of his remarkable life in statewide public office, tirelessly serving the people of Oregon; and

Whereas Clay Myers was once heralded as one of the living legends of a golden age of Oregon politics and public affairs by Norm Smith, a protege of Clay Myers, former Republican state legislator and the current president of the Ford Family Foundation; and

Whereas Clay Myers, a native Oregonian, born on May 27, 1927, in Portland, Oregon, began to ponder the injustices of racism when he was a young boy living in Tillamook, a town that had a "sunset law" requiring African Americans, Native Americans and other minorities to be indoors by sunset; and

Whereas at the age of 10, Clay Myers moved to Africa and spent a year in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), where, as part of the only white family for miles, he realized the ultimate futility of racism, bigotry and intolerance; and

Whereas Clay Myers returned to Oregon with a thirst for activism and politics; and

Whereas Clay Myers graduated from Benson High School in Portland, Oregon, and later attended the University of Oregon, where he led the Young Republicans and used that position to encourage more students to become actively involved in public affairs; and

Whereas Clay Myers demonstrated his commitment to voting rights as a young man, forming a coalition of the League of Women Voters, the Young Republican Federation of Oregon, the Young Democratic Clubs of Oregon and the Non-Partisan Committee for Constitutional Reapportionment, a coalition that was vital to the adoption of an amendment to the Oregon Constitution in 1952 to establish the principle of one person, one vote; and

Whereas during his days of political activism at the University of Oregon, Clay Myers met and developed lifetime friendships with former Governor Tom McCall and former Governor and United States Senator Mark Hatfield, and together they fought to remove segregation from the Republican party platform and to lead the party on civil rights; and

Whereas Clay Myers studied law at Northwestern College of Law in Portland, Oregon, and attended the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut, where he trained on the famed Danmark, one of the great tall sailing ships of the world, a ship that had come to the United States as a refugee from Nazi Germany and served the Allied cause during World War II; and

Whereas in 1964, Clay Myers left his career in the insurance industry to help run Tom McCall's campaign for Secretary of State and thereafter to be appointed Deputy Secretary of State; and

Whereas in 1967, when Tom McCall became Governor, he appointed Clay Myers as Secretary of State, a position in which Clay Myers was later elected to serve for two terms; and

Whereas during his terms as Secretary of State, State Treasurer and member of the State Land Board, Clay Myers became known for his endeavors for careful conservation, protection and use of the waters and waterways, lands and forests of the state, including the perpetual protection of public access to Oregon beaches, and joining with Governor McCall to support the nation's first statewide land use planning program, the adoption of Oregon's Bottle Bill and the creation of a statewide bikeway system; and

Whereas in 1976, Clay Myers was elected State Treasurer, an office he held for two terms, serving a total of 19 consecutive years in statewide office; and

Whereas Clay Myers' unwavering efforts to apply lofty principles to his everyday life also made him a national leader of the Episcopal Church, where he served as host to the Archbishop Desmond Tutu, 1984 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, and worked to gain equality for women and to end exclusion on the basis of sexual orientation; and

Whereas Clay Myers left Oregon politics to take the position of vice president of Morgan Guaranty Trust Company on Wall Street and returned to Oregon to retire, but for health reasons left shortly afterward for Arizona where he purchased ranchland; and

Whereas Clay Myers miraculously battled cancer for his last three years and remained extremely active up to the end; and

Whereas in October 2004, at the age of 77, this innovative and extraordinary leader died from cancer in his home in Tubac, Arizona; now, therefore,

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

That we, the members of the Seventy-third Legislative Assembly, mourn the passing of H. Clay Myers, Jr. and recognize his significant accomplishments and his outstanding career in public service, during which he put leadership and decency ahead of party and ideology; and be it further

Resolved, That Clay Myers will be remembered as a gentle but tenacious leader who cared deeply about making Oregon a more livable and just place, and whose strong faith and unwavering efforts helped make Oregon a national model; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be presented to his wife, Elizabeth Myers, his daughter, Carolyn Myers Lindberg, his son, David Hobson Myers, his grandson, Andrew Philip Myers, and his brother, Norman Myers.

Adopted by Senate June 3, 2005

Secretary of Senate

President of Senate

Adopted by House June 30, 2005

Speaker of House