SENATE RESOLUTION

8648

By Senators Keiser and King

WHEREAS, Vickie Kennedy began her 50-plus year career with the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) in 1971 as an eager file clerk; and

WHEREAS, Vickie received her first accolades when her supervisor stated in her first evaluation that she had an excellent attitude and showed a lot of initiative by looking for better ways to do her job and improve her performance; and

WHEREAS, Vickie devoted her entire career to L&I, holding numerous positions, including secretary, editorial assistant, claims adjudicator, supervisor, program manager, assistant director for legislative and governmental affairs, and assistant director for insurance services; and

WHEREAS, Vickie has often referred to herself as a "workers' compensation policy geek"; and

WHEREAS, Many of Vickie's colleagues and staff have heard her proclaim that leading the workers' compensation system since 2013 has been her "dream job" because she was driven to make a difference for injured workers; and

WHEREAS, Vickie was always known for recognizing others for their accomplishments, especially at Public Service Recognition Week events for her staff where she was famous for photobombing; and

WHEREAS, Vickie was known as the unofficial ringleader for L&I Seahawks fans, bringing hundreds together for group photos on Blue Fridays in the agency's rotunda; and

WHEREAS, Vickie will be remembered for signing staff birthday cards with personalized "Roses are Red" poems; and

WHEREAS, Vickie received the 2016 Governor's Award for Leadership in Management for helping injured workers return to meaningful work rather than a life of disability, which helped reduce the rate of long-term disability from workplace injuries by more than nearly 15 percent; and

WHEREAS, Vickie was awarded the 2017 Joe Dear Agent of Change Award presented by L&I Director Joel Sacks for her outstanding leadership, commitment to public service, and making a difference; and

WHEREAS, Vickie sits on the Board of Directors for the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC) and also chairs its Work Disability Prevention and Return to Work Committee; and

WHEREAS, Vickie received the international Frances Perkins President's Award in 2021 from the IAIABC for demonstrating commitment and achievement in advancing workers' compensation systems throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, Vickie received the Comp Laude award in 2021 from workcompcentral.com for being a thought leader and embodying the Comp Laude mission: To change the narrative of the workers' compensation industry to a more positive dialogue; and

WHEREAS, Vickie's visionary approach to helping injured workers heal and return to work has helped them lead meaningful and productive lives while reducing the number of long-term disabled cases, cutting premium costs for workers and employers, and saving the workers' compensation system more than a billion dollars; and

WHEREAS, Vickie has become a national leader in reducing work disability by demonstrating the effectiveness of engaging workers in a return-to-work mindset early in the claim process and making it easier for workers to return to work; and

WHEREAS, Vickie led a team that has helped more than one million injured workers during her time as assistant director; and

WHEREAS, Vickie is the single most trusted voice with L&I's leadership and staff across the agency, external stakeholders, and legislators on workers' compensation policy and approaches to improve Washington's system for employers and injured workers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate express its deepest gratitude for more than 50 years of service and sacrifice that Vickie Kennedy has given to both L&I and the State of Washington; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to Vickie Kennedy.