

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 99-4630, by Representatives Grant, G. Chandler, Mastin, Kagi, Lantz, Hankins, D. Schmidt, Thomas, Dunn, Conway and Pflug

WHEREAS, It is the policy of the Washington state legislature to recognize and honor the contributions of individuals who reflect standards of excellence that enhance the well-being and quality of life of the people of Washington state; and

WHEREAS, Many esteemed Washingtonians who came before us, including Senators Warren Magnuson and Henry "Scoop" Jackson, had the vision to see the critical role hydroelectric power would play in the successful development of Washington state, and the Columbia and Snake River dams were built as the result of conscious decisions by these giants in our state and national history; and

WHEREAS, They recognized that the dams were the Pacific Northwest's chief economic asset as producers of inexpensive kilowatts, and they worked closely with the Bonneville Power Association that managed the dams providing most of our region's electricity and fueling our economy; and

WHEREAS, They understood the populist impulses of our state and region and joined the great tradition of the "public power democrats" who promoted public works projects, including hydroelectric dams on the mighty Columbia River, and through their committed efforts, affordable hydroelectric power became an inextricable part of Washington's and the Pacific Northwest's psyche and economy; and

WHEREAS, They labored to ensure that adequate hydroelectric power was easily available to attract new industry, to generate family wage jobs, to assist farmers in modernizing their operations and increasing production, and to help local utility districts form and have inexpensive power delivered to them, and other positive benefits, such as: Enhanced barge traffic, which greatly assists the transportation of farm products to market; increased recreational opportunities, such as boating, fishing, and other water-related activities; and communities protected from untold damage from severe flooding; and

WHEREAS, As a result of their foresight, hydroelectric power linked the aluminum mills of Spokane with the pulp mills of Grays Harbor, with the vineyards of Yakima Valley, with the bomb factories of Hanford, all essential components of our diverse culture and traditions; and

WHEREAS, They left us a legacy of clean, accessible, and inexpensive hydroelectric power, improved water quality, improved air quality, and a history of economic growth and prosperity by their commendable efforts to pursue dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers; and

WHEREAS, There are ongoing efforts to breach dams on Northwest rivers with the potential of costing hundreds of millions of dollars and detrimentally impacting jobs, electric power, irrigation, navigation, recreation, existing infrastructures, property values, and the social and economic well-being of all our citizens; and

WHEREAS, These efforts to breach dams in our region are not supported by any member of Washington state's congressional delegation or other Northwest congressional delegations; and

WHEREAS, Governor Locke has publicly stated that he does not support the breaching of dams and cannot imagine any argument convincing him to support the dams being torn down; and

WHEREAS, Governor Locke has clearly indicated that he does not support the United States Army Corps of Engineers' proposed plans to breach dams in Washington state; and

WHEREAS, Governor Locke recognizes the benefits of promoting rural economic development and the need to pursue policies that will enhance rural economic development; and

WHEREAS, Governor Locke has recognized the tremendous negative impacts breaching dams would have on the economic vitality of Washington state, especially on Eastern Washington, and has publicly stated, "The benefits clearly do not outweigh the costs";

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the contributions of all those whose key roles in ensuring the installation and operation of the hydroelectric producing dams have so enhanced the well-being and quality of life of all the citizens of the state of Washington, and of Governor Locke and all the other elected officials, both Democrat and Republican, at all levels of government who have also worked hard to ensure the ongoing success of hydroelectric producing dams and the prosperity they provide our citizens.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
Resolution 4630 adopted by the House of Representatives
February 17, 1999.