

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO.2007-4665, by Representatives Sommers, Pettigrew, Campbell, Grant, Santos, McDermott, Cody, Ahern, Alexander, Anderson, Appleton, Armstrong, Bailey, Barlow, Blake, Buri, Chandler, Chase, Chopp, Clibborn, Condotta, Conway, Crouse, Curtis, Darneille, DeBolt, Dickerson, Dunn, Dunshee, Eddy, Eickmeyer, Ericks, Ericksen, Flannigan, Fromhold, Goodman, Green, Haigh, Hailey, Haler, Hankins, Hasegawa, Hinkle, Hudgins, Hunt, Hunter, Hurst, Jarrett, Kagi, Kelley, Kenney, Kessler, Kirby, Kretz, Kristiansen, Lantz, Linville, Lovick, McCoy, McCune, McDonald, McIntire, Miloscia, Moeller, Morrell, Morris, Newhouse, O'Brien, Orcutt, Ormsby, Pearson, Pedersen, Priest, Quall, Roach, Roberts, Rodne, Rolfes, Ross, Schindler, Schual-Berke, Seaquist, Sells, Simpson, Skinner, Springer, Strow, B. Sullivan, P. Sullivan, Sump, Takko, Upthegrove, VanDeWege, Wallace, Walsh, Warnick, Williams and Wood

WHEREAS, Former Washington State Representative and House Speaker, John L. O'Brien, who devoted over fifty years of his distinguished life to this institution and to the people of the State of Washington, passed away today; and

WHEREAS, Speaker O'Brien began serving as a member of the House of Representatives beginning in 1939 during the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt and retired after more than fifty years of service in 1993; and

WHEREAS, Speaker O'Brien served the people of his state, his district, and this assembly longer than any of the individuals who have had the privilege of serving as a member of the Washington legislature; and

WHEREAS, Speaker O'Brien served in the House of Representatives for nearly half the time that Washington has been a state; and

WHEREAS, Speaker O'Brien served twenty-six terms in service to his constituents as State Representative from the 33rd District, renumbered the 35th District and then the 37th District; and

WHEREAS, Speaker O'Brien served four terms as Speaker, nine terms as Speaker Pro Tempore, as Speaker Emeritus from 1993, as both majority and minority leader, and as a member on every major committee in the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, During those more than fifty years of service, Speaker O'Brien's leadership and parliamentary skills guided many major pieces of policy adopted in our state; and

WHEREAS, The face of state government, through every state building program during his tenure, was influenced by Speaker O'Brien's committee work; and

WHEREAS, Speaker O'Brien was responsible for many innovations and reforms in the operation of the House, a prominent example of which is the electronic roll call voting machine in the House chambers; and

WHEREAS, Speaker O'Brien was the most outstanding parliamentarian this body has ever produced, and whose command of House rules was unmatched and rarely challenged; and

WHEREAS, Speaker O'Brien was an irreplaceable source of knowledge, understanding, and lore about the legislative process in this state, and a source of many great stories about this assembly; and

WHEREAS, Speaker O'Brien was the epitome of a statesman and a shining example to the members of this assembly, one of whom, the newly elected Daniel J. Evans, reported that he was awed by Speaker O'Brien's presence, but soon came to discover his wry Irish humor and deep devotion to the legislature; and

WHEREAS, In the course of his extensive involvement with colleagues across the country, Speaker O'Brien was elected in 1968 as president of the National Conference of State Legislative Leaders and served as chair of the Washington State Legislative Council from 1955 to 1962; and

WHEREAS, On St. Patrick's Day, 1989, the House of Representatives celebrated his fifty years of public service as a legislator, honored his wife Mary O'Brien for her many contributions to the state, and renamed the House Office Building as the John L. O'Brien Building; and

WHEREAS, On St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1993, Speaker O'Brien was conferred the perpetual title of Honorary Speaker Emeritus of the Washington State House of Representatives for the honor and learning that he bestowed upon this institution; and

WHEREAS, The members of this assembly wish to recognize that Speaker O'Brien's example will forever guide their understanding of the legislative process, and to recognize the distinction and dedication with which he served;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the State of Washington celebrate the distinguished legislative, professional, and personal life of Speaker O'Brien; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution be immediately transmitted by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives to the members of the family of the Honorable John L. O'Brien, Honorary Speaker Emeritus of the House of Representatives.

I hereby certify this to be a true and correct copy of
Resolution 4665 adopted by the House of Representatives
April 22, 2007

Richard Nafziger, Chief Clerk