



SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 14-001

BY SENATOR(S) Steadman, Carroll, Cadman, Heath, Aguilar, Balmer, Baumgardner, Brophy, Crowder, Grantham, Guzman, Harvey, Herpin, Hill, Hodge, Jahn, Johnston, Jones, Kefalas, Kerr, King, Lambert, Lundberg, Newell, Nicholson, Renfroe, Rivera, Scheffel, Schwartz, Tochtrop, Todd, Ulibarri, Zenzinger;

also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Court, Becker, Buck, Buckner, Conti, Coram, DelGrosso, Dore, Duran, Everett, Exum, Fields, Fischer, Foote, Garcia, Gardner, Gerou, Ginal, Hamner, Holbert, Hullinghorst, Humphrey, Joshi, Kagan, Kraft-Tharp, Labuda, Landgraf, Lawrence, Lebsock, Lee, May, McCann, McLachlan, McNulty, Melton, Mitsch Bush, Moreno, Murray, Navarro, Nordberg, Peniston, Pettersen, Primavera, Rankin, Rosenthal, Ryden, Saine, Salazar, Schafer, Scott, Singer, Sonnenberg, Stephens, Swalm, Szabo, Tyler, Vigil, Waller, Williams, Wilson, Wright, Young, Ferrandino.

MEMORIALIZING FORMER SENATOR KEN GORDON.

WHEREAS, Our respected former colleague, Ken Gordon, a past member of the Colorado Senate and House of Representatives, departed this life on December 22, 2013, at the age of 63; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon was born February 6, 1950, in Detroit, Michigan, to Harold and Marion Gordon; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon attended the University of Michigan where he earned a degree in economics and political science and was president of Tau Delta Phi fraternity, and then earned his law degree at Boston University School of Law; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon worked as a public defender before starting his own law practice; and

WHEREAS, Denver Westword named Senator Gordon its "Pro Bono Attorney of the Year" in 1988 in recognition of his legal work for the less fortunate; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon taught political science and constitutional law at the University of Colorado at Denver as an adjunct professor for several years before running for the Colorado House of Representatives in 1992; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives in 1992 and served as a state representative from 1993 to 2000 before being elected to the Senate, where he served from 2001 to 2008, representing the people of Denver and Arapahoe counties in House District 9 and Senate District 35, respectively; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon served on the House committees for Agriculture Livestock and Natural Resources, State Veterans and Military Affairs, and Appropriations and served on the Senate committees for Judiciary, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Education, and Senate Services; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon also served on the Executive Committee of the Legislative Council and the Committee on Legal Services; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon was the House Assistant Minority Leader from 1997 to 1998, House Minority Leader from 1999 to 2000, Senate Assistant Minority Leader from 2003 to 2004, and Senate Majority Leader from 2005 to 2008; and

WHEREAS, While serving as a member of the General Assembly, Senator Gordon passed legislation regarding criminal justice reform, election law reform, environmental protection and conservation, and assisting persons with disabilities and autism; and

WHEREAS, During his time in the General Assembly, Senator Gordon is remembered for his bipartisan efforts, including the suggestion that Republican members be allowed to serve as vice-chairs on Democrat-controlled Senate committees; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon possessed a mastery of the legislative

rules and had tremendous respect for the rules and the integrity of the legislative process; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon once wrote: "If we abuse the rules in order to prevent the minority party members from accomplishing anything that reflects the values of their constituents, then we create a deep and bitter resentment. This resentment will come back to haunt us in myriad ways. Abuse of the rules does not show strength, it shows weakness."; and

WHEREAS, Out of deep and abiding concern for the credibility of the legislative and executive branches of Colorado government, Senator Gordon was a relentless advocate for eliminating the excessive influence of special interests in campaigns and the legislative process; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon worked hard for issues he believed in, such as organizing a 350-mile walk across Colorado in 2005 to rally support for Referendum C, which called for a temporary suspension of certain taxpayer's bill of rights provisions; and

WHEREAS, Always a dedicated public servant, Senator Gordon also ran for Secretary of State in the 2006 election; and

WHEREAS, To give constituents and the people of Colorado confidence that he was accountable to no one but his constituents and his own moral compass, in each of his eight campaigns for public office Senator Gordon rejected all campaign contributions from political action committees and only accepted campaign contributions from individual people; and

WHEREAS, After his tenure in the state legislature, Senator Gordon founded the nonprofit organization Clean Slate Now to encourage political candidates to refuse special interest money; and

WHEREAS, Senator Gordon is remembered as a dedicated public servant who championed democracy and good government; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting that we, the members of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly, pay tribute to the dedicated service of Senator Ken Gordon and express our deep regret and sorrow occasioned by his death;

now, therefore,

*Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

That, in the death of Ken Gordon, the people of the state of Colorado have lost a dedicated public servant and outstanding citizen, and that we, the members of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly, do hereby extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy to the members of his family and pay tribute to a man who served his state well and faithfully.

*Be It Further Resolved,* That copies of this Joint Memorial be sent to Senator Gordon's son Ben Gordon, daughter Windy Cook, sisters Patti Gordon and Wendy Gordon, and long-time companion Betty Lehman.

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Morgan Carroll  
PRESIDENT OF  
THE SENATE

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Mark Ferrandino  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE  
OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Cindi Markwell  
SECRETARY OF  
THE SENATE

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Marilyn Eddins  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE  
OF REPRESENTATIVES