Senate Joint Resolution 31

Sponsored by Senator GORDLY (at the request of Suzie Pepper Henry)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced.**

Honors musical legacy of Oregon jazz artist and composer Jim Pepper.

Directs that copy of resolution be delivered to Oregon Historical Society, National Museum of the American Indian and Leroy Vinnegar Jazz Institute for inclusion in permanent collections.

Encourages creation and endowment of Jim Pepper Chair at Portland State University.

JOINT RESOLUTION

Whereas the 2005 Portland Jazz Festival paid tribute to the musical legacy of Jim Pepper, a true son of Oregon, with a concert dedicated to the late Native American saxophonist and jazz legend; and

Whereas workshops, panel discussions, performers and audiences at the festival recalled how Jim Pepper, born to Gilbert and Floy Pepper in Salem on June 18, 1941, blazed a unique trail across the musical horizon with his innovative synthesis of Native American song, the harmonic structures of modern jazz and the rhythms of Africa, South America and the Caribbean; and

Whereas Jim Pepper performed throughout the United States, Europe and Africa, played with such jazz giants as Ornette Coleman, Don Cherry, Colin Wolcott, Larry Coryell and Mel Waldron; and

Whereas Jim Pepper also collaborated with many Oregon musicians, including Gordon Lee, Tom Grant, Leroy Vinnegar, Nancy King, Caren Knight-Pepper, Obo Addy, David Friesen, Dan Balmer, Glenn Moore, Ron Steen, Sonny King, Dennis Springer, Mel Brown, Nick Gefroh, Marianne Mayfield, Ralph Black, Lee Reinoehl, Carlton Jackson and many others; and

Whereas Jim Pepper's 1971 crossover hit "Witchi Tai To," based on a Native American Church peyote chant taught to him by his grandfather, earned him a spot on both the jazz and Top 40 radio charts and continues to be widely popular among national and international performers and recording artists to this day; and

Whereas Jim Pepper's remarkable career was marked by more than 50 recordings as bandleader, featured artist and composer, including "Pepper's Pow Wow," "Comin' and Goin'" and "Remembrance"; and

Whereas Jim Pepper's symphony "Four Winds" was performed by the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra in New York and by the Cologne Symphony Orchestra in Germany; and

Whereas Jim Pepper served as musical director for "Night of the First Americans," a Native American self-awareness benefit concert at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. in 1980; and

Whereas Jim Pepper toured Africa with Don Cherry as part of a United States-Africa cultural exchange program; and

Whereas Jim Pepper succumbed to lymphoid cancer in February 1992 in Portland, Oregon, at

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

age 50; and

Whereas Jim Pepper was honored posthumously in 1999 with the Lifetime Musical Achievement Award by the First Americans in the Arts and was inducted into the Indian Hall of Fame in 1998 and the Native American Music Awards Hall of Fame in 2000; and

Whereas "Pepper's Pow Wow," the 1996 award-winning documentary of his life produced and directed by Sandra Osawa and Yasu Osawa, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, was broadcast on PBS in 1997 and 1999 and has since been presented to enthusiastic audiences at the Amiens Film Festival, the Margaret Mead Film Festival, the Native American Film and Video Festival, the Red Earth Film and Video Festival and the Portland Jazz Festival; and

Whereas the Leroy Vinnegar Jazz Institute and the Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission named Jim Pepper "Jazz Artist of the Year" and presented the Bill McClendon Award for Excellence in Jazz to his mother at the 2005 Portland Jazz Festival; and

Whereas Jim Pepper's music continues to be performed and recorded in countries throughout the world, including Germany, where a performance of "Witchi Tai To" by the WDR Radio Orchestra and the Remembrance Band, arranged and conducted by Gunther Schuller, was recorded; and

Whereas Jim Pepper's life and music harmonized distinct cultures and served as a poetic example for all indigenous people, "walking in three worlds with one spirit"; and

Whereas Jim Pepper is survived by his mother, Floy Pepper, his sister, Suzanne Henry of Portland, his nephews, Jim Pepper Henry and Jesse Laird Henry, and his grandnephew, Jackson Laird Henry; and

Whereas Floy Pepper said during her acceptance of her son's First Americans in the Arts award in 1999, "Jim Pepper was a member of the Kaw Indian Nation known as 'The Wind People' from his father. From me, his mother, he was a member of the Creek Indian Nation known as 'The People of the Waters.' It's no wonder his music was so strong and powerful--with the wind to carry his music to the four directions of the Earth. And as long as the grass shall grow and the waters flow--which is forever--may his spirit remain alive for time immemorial"; now, therefore,

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

(1) The members of the Seventy-third Legislative Assembly honor the extraordinary accomplishments and musical legacy of Oregon native son Jim Pepper and direct that a copy of this resolution be delivered to the Oregon Historical Society for inclusion in its permanent collection.

(2) The members of the Seventy-third Legislative Assembly direct that a copy of this resolution be delivered to the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., for inclusion in its permanent collection.

(3) The members of the Seventy-third Legislative Assembly direct that a copy of this resolution be delivered to the Leroy Vinnegar Jazz Institute at Portland State University for inclusion in its permanent collection and encourage the creation and endowment of a Jim Pepper (hUnga-che-eda "Flying Eagle") Chair at the university to further the study of Native American music and its relationship to jazz.