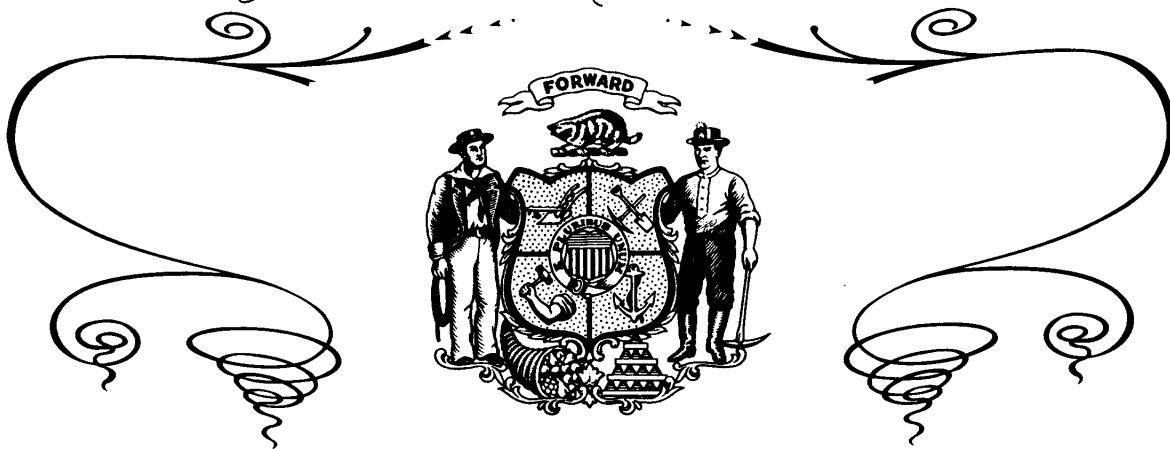


State of Wisconsin



2009 Senate Joint Resolution 74

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION

Relating to: the retirement of Russ Whitesel, Senior Staff Attorney, Legislative Council Staff, following a long and distinguished career in nonpartisan service to the Wisconsin legislature.

Whereas, Russ Whitesel was born at Camp White near Medford, Oregon, grew up in Iowa City, home to a Big Ten rival, and graduated from Northern Illinois University; and

Whereas, Russ exemplified the idealistic spirit of the 1960s, serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Turkey, where he taught English to middle schoolers and developed a budding interest in education; and

Whereas, upon earning a master's degree in public administration from Syracuse University, Russ came to Wisconsin, working for two years in the capital budget office in the Department of Administration, followed by two years in then-Central Administration at the University of Wisconsin, where he shepherded the capital project approvals necessary to establish the Green Bay and Parkside campuses; and

Whereas, soon after moving to Madison, Russ met and married his wife Liz, with whom he will celebrate 40 years of marriage this year; and

Whereas, sparked by the opportunities for public service, Russ enrolled in the University of Wisconsin Law School, graduated in January 1975, and was immediately hired at the Legislative Council by the legendary Bonnie Reese, in whose formidable footsteps he followed as an education specialist; and

Whereas, Russ diligently staffed innumerable Legislative Council study committees, crafting complex legislation in areas ranging from mediation and arbitration law and consumer protection to school finance and trade secrets; and

Whereas, Russ provided sage legal and procedural advice to countless legislative standing committees, focusing on K-12 and higher education, consumer protection, labor, and elections; and

Whereas, Russ has been a vibrant and engaged member of the council staff for over 35 years, cheerfully mentoring junior colleagues; sharing his considerable institutional wisdom; organizing noon-hour book group discussions; expounding on the intricacies of fantasy baseball; and regaling his co-workers (and anyone else who would listen) with his twin parables of "The Floating Opera" and "Everything Relates"; and

Whereas, Russ has served as the council's goodwill ambassador, nurturing relationships with legislators and staffers on both sides of the aisle; leading pre-session orientation for new legislators; fostering good relations with the judicial and executive branches; and hosting international delegations visiting the state capitol; and

Whereas, Russ' commitment to public service has extended well beyond the office, to his work for the State Bar of Wisconsin, as a member of the Public Records Board, and on the capital campaign for Madison's Sequoia Branch Library; and

Whereas, Russ' compassion for his fellow human beings was exemplified when he volunteered for duty as a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, traveling to New Orleans for a month to assist with disaster relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina; and

Whereas, Russ epitomizes what it means to be a good citizen of the community and the world; and

Whereas, Russ' upbeat attitude, insider savvy, and willingness to assist will be greatly missed by all who worked with him; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That the members of the Wisconsin legislature honor and commend Russ Whitesel for his 35 years of devoted service to the Wisconsin legislature and wish him many fruitful, active, and enjoyable years in retirement; and, be it further

Resolved, That the senate chief clerk shall provide copies of this joint resolution to Russ and his wife, Liz, and their daughters, Leah and Emily.

Representative Michael J. Sheridan
Speaker of the Assembly

Senator Fred A. Risser
President of the Senate

Date

Robert J. Marchant
Senate Chief Clerk