



2005 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 55

December 7, 2005 - Introduced by Senators RISSER, HANSEN, BRESKE, COGGS, MILLER, GROTHMAN, DARLING, ELLIS, LAZICH, ROESSLER, OLSEN and LASSA, cosponsored by Representatives GARD, BLACK, CULLEN, GRONEMUS, MOLEPSKE, KREUSER, SCHNEIDER, BERCEAU, GRIGSBY, GUNDERSON, POCAN, YOUNG, BOYLE, AINSWORTH, ALBERS, BALLWEG, BIES, FREESE, HAHN, JESKEWITZ, HINES, HUEBSCH, HUNDERTMARK, JENSEN, KERKMAN, KESSLER, KRAWCZYK, KREIBICH, LEHMAN, LEMAHIEU, MCCORMICK, MONTGOMERY, MUSSER, NASS, OTT, OWENS, SHERIDAN, STONE, TOWNSEND, TRAVIS, TURNER, UNDERHEIM, VOS and M. WILLIAMS. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1 **Relating to:** the life and public service of Dr. H. Rupert Theobald.

2 Whereas, Dr. H. Rupert Theobald was born in Berlin, Germany, on March 12,
3 1930, and died in Madison on November 9, 2005; and

4 Whereas, after an extensive education in Germany, Dr. Theobald came to
5 Wisconsin in 1950 to study journalism; and

6 Whereas, a variety of circumstances most fortuitous for the people of Wisconsin
7 led Rupert Theobald to accept a position as research associate with the Legislative
8 Reference Library in 1957, beginning his long devotion to representative
9 government in theory and practice; and

10 Whereas, Rupert Theobald advanced professionally, becoming research
11 coordinator in 1960 and Chief of the Legislative Reference Bureau in 1964, while
12 continuing his formal education, receiving his master's degree in political science in
13 1960 and his doctorate in political science in 1971; and

14 Whereas, Dr. Theobald's 30-year tenure as chief of the LRB was distinguished
15 not just by length, but by breadth of accomplishment, during which he was the

1 legislature’s resident expert on computer automation, parliamentary procedure, and
2 redistricting, as well as the institutional memory of the legislative branch; and

3 Whereas, his counsel was sought by members of both parties and he was known
4 as a wise and honorable source of information and advice; and

5 Whereas, his role was seen as that of the chief engineer of the machinery of state
6 government, ensuring that the deliberative process functioned smoothly for those
7 entrusted with its operation; and

8 Whereas, Rupert Theobald was called the “keeper of precedent,” the
9 “gatekeeper for the Constitution,” and the “alter ego for the leader” by those he
10 served, powerful testimony to the admiration and respect with which he was held;
11 and

12 Whereas, Dr. Theobald became the first recipient of the Council of State
13 Government’s Charles McCarthy Award in 1986, named for his LRB predecessor,
14 like Dr. Theobald an innovator and pioneer in legislative service; and

15 Whereas, upon retirement Dr. Theobald received the unusual distinction of
16 being honored by the Wisconsin Supreme Court for his service to state government,
17 and by the Wisconsin legislature which directed that a plaque bearing his likeness
18 be installed in the assembly chamber, and that the Legislative Reference Bureau
19 Library be named in his honor; and

20 Whereas, more than awards or honors, Dr. Theobald’s public service was
21 characterized by integrity, dedication, nonpartisanship, and an unparalleled work
22 ethic; now, therefore, be it

23 ***Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That*** the Wisconsin
24 legislature mourns the passing of Dr. H. Rupert Theobald, one of the unforgettable

1 figures of the legislature, and salutes his legacy of hard work, performed with
2 confidence, warmth and good humor; and

3 ***Be it further resolved, That*** the senate chief clerk shall provide copies of this
4 joint resolution to Dr. Theobald's widow, Jean, and his children Michael Theobald,
5 Peter Theobald, and Marlies Ganellen.

6 (END)