



2011 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 50

November 23, 2011 - Introduced by Senators DARLING, TAYLOR, LAZICH, COWLES, LASSA, WANGGAARD, JAUCH, GALLOWAY, S. COGGS, T. CULLEN, KEDZIE, S. FITZGERALD, CARPENTER, GROTHMAN, WIRCH, ERPENBACH, OLSEN, C. LARSON, HARSDFORF, ELLIS, HOLPERIN, VINEHOUT, SHILLING, LASEE, SCHULTZ, RISSER, KING, VUKMIR and MILLER, cosponsored by Representatives KAUFERT, SUDER, POCAN, BERNIER, VAN ROY, ZIEGELBAUER, MILROY, LOUDENBECK, GRIGSBY, KNODL, VRUWINK, HEBL, TRANEL, SINICKI, LEMAHIEU, TOLES, STRACHOTA, NASS, KERKMAN, HULSEY, KUGLITSCH, FARROW, PRIDEMORE, JACQUE, ROYS, WILLIAMS, BALLWEG, RIPP, THIESFELDT, PETRYK, SPANBAUER, BERNARD SCHABER, BEWLEY, JORGENSEN, MEYER, MOLEPSKE JR, TURNER, KESTELL, STEINEKE, MASON, STROEBEL, D. CULLEN, STASKUNAS, E. COGGS, KLEEFISCH, C. TAYLOR, KESSLER, KRUG, PASCH, BERCEAU, AUGUST and CLARK. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1 **Relating to:** the life and public service of Dick Wheeler.

2 Whereas, Dick Wheeler, the dean of the State Capitol press corps, passed away
3 on November 11, 2011; and

4 Whereas, Dick Wheeler is survived by his daughter Gwyn Guenther,
5 son-in-law Trevor Guenther, granddaughters Camille and Tabitha, and his
6 longtime companion Diane Harmelink; and

7 Whereas, Dick, who was originally from Pennsylvania, previously worked for
8 United Press International and Scripps Howard in Michigan and Ohio, covering
9 stories such as the shootings at Kent State in 1970 and the Hough race riots in
10 Cleveland; and

11 Whereas, in 1972, Dick arrived in Madison, Wisconsin, and began working for
12 the Gongwer News Service; and

13 Whereas, also in 1972, Dick Wheeler created the famous government reporting
14 service for Capitol insiders, government officials, and lobbyists that bore his name,
15 “The Wheeler Report”; and

1 Whereas, The Wheeler Report originally began as a newsletter detailing the
2 activities of the legislature and state government, which was mailed to subscribers
3 daily; and

4 Whereas, The Wheeler Report progressed from a mailed newsletter, to a faxed
5 newsletter, and finally led to the creation of a Web site in 1998; and

6 Whereas, today, the wheelereport.com is a popular Web site that links stories
7 and allows viewers to track the daily actions of the Wisconsin legislature; and

8 Whereas, The Wheeler Report was truly a family business run by Dick, his
9 daughter Gwyn, his son-in-law Trevor, and his longtime companion Diane; and

10 Whereas, Dick will not be forgotten for the role he played in securing a State
11 Capitol room, centrally located between the senate and assembly chambers,
12 designated for use by press covering the workings of the state's elected officials in the
13 1998 budget; and

14 Whereas, Dick was an invaluable resource to his fellow Capitol press reporters
15 and served as the president of the Wisconsin Capitol Correspondents Association
16 before stepping down in 2010; and

17 Whereas, Dick's impressive knowledge of state government and the inner
18 workings of the legislature will be missed by all; and

19 Whereas, Dick, seen frequently arriving at 5:30 a.m., was known for his
20 dedication in covering legislative activity, particularly that of the Joint Finance
21 Committee, well into the night; and

22 Whereas, the Wisconsin Capitol Correspondents Association voted
23 unanimously to request that the press room be named in Dick's honor; and

1 Whereas, the familiar smell of pipe tobacco wafting through the portico of the
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard entrance to the Capitol will fade, but never be
3 forgotten; now, therefore, be it

4 ***Resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That*** the Wisconsin
5 legislature commends the life and dedicated service of Dick Wheeler, expresses its
6 sorrow at his death, and extends its condolences to his family, friends, and all those
7 who were touched by his work; and, be it further

8 ***Resolved, That*** in recognition of his many years of distinguished service to the
9 legislature and the people of Wisconsin, Room 235 SW in the Capitol shall be known
10 as the Dick Wheeler Capitol Press Room; and, be it further

11 ***Resolved, That*** the senate chief clerk shall provide a copy of this joint
12 resolution to Mr. Wheeler's daughter and family.

13

(END)