

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 723

Honoring the life of Dirk Arthur Kempthorne, former United States Senator
for the State of Idaho.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 11, 2026

Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. RISCH, Mr. THUNE, Mr. SCHUMER, Ms. ALSOBROOKS, Mr. ARMSTRONG, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BANKS, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. BUDD, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. DAINES, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. ERNST, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GALLEG0, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HAGERTY, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HAWLEY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. HUSTED, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. JUSTICE, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KELLY, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KIM, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEE, Mr. LUJÁN, Ms. LUMMIS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. MCCORMICK, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. MOODY, Mr. MORAN, Mr. MORENO, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. RICKETTS, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SCHMITT, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHEEHY, Ms. SLOTKIN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WARNOCK, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Honoring the life of Dirk Arthur Kempthorne, former United
States Senator for the State of Idaho.

Whereas Dirk Kempthorne was born on October 29, 1951, in San Diego, California and raised in San Bernardino, California, where he graduated from San Geronimo High School in 1970, before moving to his long-time home, Idaho;

Whereas, in 1975, Dirk Kempthorne graduated from the University of Idaho, in Moscow, Idaho, with a degree in political science and served as the student body president of the University;

Whereas, in 1977, Dirk Kempthorne married Patricia Galvin atop Moscow Mountain;

Whereas Dirk Kempthorne was elected as Mayor of Boise in 1985;

Whereas, with his steady, locally driven leadership, Dirk Kempthorne led Idaho's capital city through a transformation period, in which Boise experienced unprecedented job growth and the revitalization of infrastructure and commerce, and which led to the construction of many of the Boise landmarks residents and visitors know today, including the Grove Plaza, Boise Centre, and the Wells Fargo Building;

Whereas Dirk Kempthorne carried his approach to leadership to the United States Senate, when he was elected in 1992 to serve a single, but consequential, term;

Whereas, during Dirk Kempthorne's tenure in the Senate, he—

- (1) was recognized by the Majority Leader at the time, Bob Dole, as “one of the Senate's rising young stars”;

- (2) advocated for Idaho and the West on several key committees, including the Committee on Armed Services,

the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and the Committee on Environment and Public Works;

(3) authored and voted for several important pieces of legislation, including the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.), which provided much-needed relief for State and local governments burdened by Federal regulations; and

(4) led in writing the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996 (Public Law 104–741; 110 Stat. 1613), a bipartisan effort the Senate passed unanimously and President Bill Clinton signed into law that gave local communities and water systems the flexibility to meet local needs while protecting public health, which was emblematic of Dirk’s unique ability to build consensus and deliver real results;

Whereas, in 1998, Dirk Kempthorne returned to his home State and was elected the 30th governor of Idaho;

Whereas Governor Kempthorne built upon the strong foundation set by his predecessor and mentor, Phil Batt, and guided Idaho into the era of prosperity and resilience that residents enjoy today;

Whereas Governor Kempthorne balanced States’ rights and proven, community-based solutions and prioritized the responsible stewardship of Idaho’s natural resources, including by establishing the Department of Environmental Quality and Office of Species Conservation, which developed wolf and grizzly bear management plans;

Whereas Governor Kempthorne also championed the historic Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEE) bond program, which provided unprecedented funding for long-overdue transportation improvements across the State;

Whereas Governor Kempthorne implemented numerous economic development and education efforts, including an initiative focused on ensuring every Idaho child could read at grade level by the third grade;

Whereas Dirk Kempthorne led Idahoans through the economic recession of the early 2000s and the aftermath of 9/11 with steadiness and compassion;

Whereas Dirk Kempthorne was confirmed as the 49th United States Secretary of the Interior under President George W. Bush on May 26, 2006;

Whereas, as Secretary of the Interior, Dirk Kempthorne brought Idaho's common sense and shared values to the executive branch, as he spearheaded the Department's work to ensure America's public lands were preserved and managed wisely, balancing conservation with the needs of the communities that depended on them;

Whereas, as he had done throughout his life, Dirk Kempthorne prioritized collaboration and local input, particularly when it came to forest health, species management, and wildfire prevention, and his dedication to the outdoors continued to his last day, through his support for the World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise and The Peregrine Fund;

Whereas Dirk Kempthorne was guided by the belief that cooperation, not confrontation, should be the hallmark of conservation efforts;

Whereas Dirk Kempthorne's steadfast advocacy for the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States was another core pillar of his leadership;

Whereas, most recently, Dirk Kempthorne had devoted his talents to initiatives supporting the families of

servicemembers, including Operation Military Blessings, and the commissioning of the USS Idaho;

Whereas Dirk Kempthorne’s leadership on the USS Idaho Commissioning Committee helped to ensure the success of the ship and to raise enough to provide scholarships to every crew member and their family for the life of the ship;

Whereas Dirk Kempthorne’s incredible legacy will live on in the heart of the USS Idaho, as its engine room is named in his honor and bears a plaque that reads, “The Honorable Dirk A. Kempthorne, A Driving Force for the Great State of Idaho, Whose Legacy Endures, Above and Below the Waves”;and

Whereas Idahoans owe a debt of gratitude to Dirk Kempthorne for a lifetime spent shaping what he called the “43rd star in the galaxy of states that make up the greatest nation in the world”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) the Senate—

3 (A) has heard with profound sorrow and
4 deep regret the announcement of the death of
5 Dirk Kempthorne, former Member of the Sen-
6 ate;

7 (B) mourns the loss of Dirk Kempthorne
8 and prays for his loved ones, including his chil-
9 dren Heather and Jeff, and his wife of nearly
10 50 years, Patricia;

1 (C) remembers Dirk Kempthorne as a
2 friend, a dedicated public servant, and an advo-
3 cate for Idaho, veterans, the great outdoors,
4 and more;

5 (D) directs the Secretary of the Senate—

6 (i) to communicate this resolution to
7 the House of Representatives; and

8 (ii) to transmit an enrolled copy of
9 this resolution to the family of Dirk Kemp-
10 thorne; and

11 (2) when the Senate adjourns today, it stands
12 adjourned as a further mark of respect to the mem-
13 ory of the late Dirk Kempthorne.

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