



## Oregon State Archives

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## GOVERNOR ROBERT W. STRAUB ADMINISTRATION

January 13, 1975 to January 8, 1979

### Biographical Note

Governor Straub, a Democrat, began his political career in 1954 as a member of the Lane County Board of Commissioners. Later he served as a state senator from Lane County from 1959 to 1963. Soon after he was elected to the Oregon State Senate, Straub became identified as an enthusiastic proponent of natural resource management and conservation. Straub had voiced his concern about increases in air and water pollution early in his political career. He was well known for his favorable stance on the Oregon Beach Bill, defining Oregon beaches as public domain, and the Willamette Greenway Plan, making the Willamette River accessible to the public while making the river as pollution free as possible. Both of these bills were considered to be landmark environmental packages. Straub's anti-pollution legislation added to his reputation as a supporter of a green Oregon.



Straub was elected state treasurer in 1964 and served two terms. During his tenure as state treasurer, Straub earned a reputation of being fiscally conservative. Straub became governor in 1975, winning by the largest margin ever recorded in an Oregon gubernatorial election.

Governor Straub was instrumental in increasing direct property tax relief, utility rate relief for senior citizens, and strengthening land use laws and energy laws. Straub reorganized the Department of Human Resources to improve management of the wide variety of social and health services in the State and appointed more women, handicapped, and minorities to head state agencies and division than any previous Oregon governor. Basic school support was increased and rehabilitation and employment of the handicapped was expanded during his administration. To diversify and expand Oregon's economy Straub successfully recruited nonpolluting, labor intensive industries.

Straub was born in San Francisco, California on May 6, 1920. He earned both his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees in Business Administration at Dartmouth College. Straub and his wife Pat were married in 1944 and had five children. After an unsuccessful bid in 1978 for a second term as Oregon governor, he retired from public service and lived in Salem, Oregon.

In the late-1990s, Straub publicly announced his Alzheimer's Disease diagnosis in order to raise awareness of the disease. He died on November 27, 2002 in Springfield, Oregon from complications related to Alzheimer's Disease at the age of 82.