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**Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith
issues statement on passing of Vera Katz**



Today Portland mourns the loss of Vera Katz.

As the first woman to become Speaker of the House here in Oregon she was an inspiration to those daring to take new paths. As the three-time Mayor of Portland she helped to create the civic engagement culture that defines the Portland of today.

Her fight to transform this city is one of her legacies. From the Pearl District to the South Waterfront, her vision changed the face of this city. While we work to find a balance between development and the needs of all Portlanders, her efforts to change the City for the better shouldn't be ignored.

She helped to forge the path forward for women and people of color. Her storied civil rights record is likely the result of her family's own persecution. As a child her family fled the Nazis by crossing over the Pyrenees Mountains by foot. This legacy of strength in the face of adversity stayed with her throughout her career and has been a source of inspiration for me.

She will be remembered for being tough and resilient, and for setting a high bar for women in elected office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Loretta Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L" and a long, sweeping underline.

Commissioner Loretta Smith
District 2, Multnomah County Commission

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