

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

REQUEST TO AWARD HONORARY DEGREE
HONORARY DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS DEGREE
AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Action Requested: Consider recommending approval to the Board of Iowa State University's request to award an honorary doctor of humane letters degree to the Honorable Robert D. Ray at Fall 2006 Commencement.

Executive Summary: Iowa State University wishes to recognize Governor Ray for an extraordinary career of leadership and public service. His life and work exemplify the type of public service and creative pursuits that is at the core of a land-grant institution.

Background:

- ◇ Governor Ray earned his B.A. (1952) and J.D. (1954) from Drake University. He practiced law in Des Moines for 14 years before embarking on his political career.
- ◇ Mr. Ray served as Governor of Iowa for an unprecedented five terms, from 1969 to 1983. His accomplishments as Governor include the following:
 - ☑ Creating the Iowa Department of Environmental Quality;
 - ☑ Creating the Commission on the Status of Women;
 - ☑ Creating the Iowa Tuition Grant program;
 - ☑ Enacting the "bottle bill;"
 - ☑ Lowering the voting age from 21 to 19; and
 - ☑ Advancing diversity in Iowa through such efforts as the resettlement program for refugees from Southeast Asia.
- ◇ After leaving the governorship in 1983, Governor Ray served as chief executive of Life Investors (now AEGON Inc.) and Blue Cross and Blue Shield; chairman of the Board of Trustees and President of Drake University; interim mayor of Des Moines; and volunteer leader on a number of organizations to improve health care and quality of life in Iowa and in the nation.
- ◇ Governor Ray served on the U.S. Surgeon General's Task Force on Mental Health; the Carter Center's Mental Health Advisory Board; the Advisory Committee on Rural Health for the Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Congress; and the President's Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality of the Health Care Industry. He currently serves as co-chair of the National Leadership Coalition on Health Care.
- ◇ Governor Ray served as chair of the Iowa Sesquicentennial Commission and currently chairs the Institute of Character Development and the Environmental Protection Board.
- ◇ He was instrumental in founding the Peace Institute, the Sister States organization, and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation.
- ◇ Governor Ray has received numerous awards for his public service, including National Volunteer Award and the Iowa Award, Iowa's highest award to a citizen.