

Veteran state lawmaker Anderson dies at age 75

Special election will be called to fill seat of GOP senator from Buffalo.

By RYAN FAIRCLOTH
The Minnesota Star Tribune

State Sen. Bruce Anderson died unexpectedly on Monday at the age of 75.

The Republican was a fixture at the State Capitol, having served in the Minnesota Senate since 2013 and in the House from 1995-2012. He focused on issues such as agriculture, energy, broadband access and rural economic development, among other things.

"Bruce was a dedicated public servant, loving family man, and dear friend to many at the Capitol and in Buffalo," Republican Senate Minority Leader Mark Johnson said in a statement. "We offer our condolences and prayers for comfort for the entire Anderson family."

The family asked for privacy and will share a statement later, according to Senate Republicans.

A Navy veteran who served during the Vietnam War, Anderson chaired several veterans committees while in the House and Senate. He also served in the Minnesota Air National Guard and the U.S. Air Force Reserves.

"Senator Anderson's expertise gained through military service and background in agriculture made him a great champion for farmers, veterans and service members at the Capitol. We will have his family and friends in our hearts," Senate DFL Majority Leader Erin Murphy said in a statement.

Former GOP state Senate Majority Leader Amy Koch said on social media Monday that Anderson "changed hearts



Minnesota Senate Media Services

Bruce Anderson, left, held his state Senate seat since 2013 and served in the state House from 1995-2012. He died Monday at age 75.

and minds through hard work and lots [of] conversation."

"Senator Bruce Anderson was both my mentor in my first election, and my successor in the MN Senate. Most important he was my friend," Koch said.

Anderson was raised on a dairy farm in greater Minnesota, the oldest of eight children, according to a Senate Republican biography page. He worked in agricultural and business sales before getting into politics.

Anderson married his wife, Ruth, after his first wife died of cancer. They lived together in Buffalo, Minn., and had eight adult children and 12 grandchildren.

DFL Sen. Heather Gustafson said in a social media post that Anderson was a "thoughtful colleague."

"We'd often chat about family, weekends, and life at the Capitol," Gustafson said. "He was a good guy and always warm and gracious toward me. My thoughts and prayers

are with his family today."

Gov. Tim Walz must call a special election to fill Anderson's safely red seat. Anderson defeated his last DFL challenger by about 36 percentage points in 2022.

Walz also will have to call a special election to fill the seat of Sen. Nicole Mitchell, who was found guilty Friday of first-degree burglary and felony possession of burglary tools. The Woodbury Democrat announced Monday she will resign her seat within two weeks.

The Minnesota Senate has experienced much upheaval in the past year. A special election was held in January to fill a Minneapolis seat after Sen. Kari Dziedzic died from ovarian cancer in December. Another special election was called months later to fill the seat of GOP Sen. Justin Eichorn, who resigned after he was arrested in an underage prostitution sting.

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