

Former Minnesota Sen. Betty Adkins dies

Former state Sen. Betty Adkins, who retired from the Legislature in 1994 after a near-fatal auto accident, died Monday. She was 67 and had suffered from Alzheimer's disease.

A DFLer from St. Michael, she served 12 years in the Senate, where she was chairwoman of the Local and Metropolitan Government Committee.



During her tenure she battled cancer and mourned her daughter and infant grandson in another auto accident.

"All of her colleagues marveled at the resilience of this slightly built woman with a perpetual smile," Senate Majority Leader Roger Moe, DFL-Erskine, said Tuesday.

A former building inspector, deputy township clerk and member of the state Board of Examiners for Nursing Home Administrators, she was elected to the Senate in 1982 and re-elected three times. She was best known for advocating the square dance as Minnesota's official folk dance.

She also drew attention with her support of a bill to allow gambling machines in bars while her family owned a bar and bowling alley in St. Michael. The measure didn't pass.

Adkins is survived by five children and 12 grandchildren. Visitation will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. Thursday and 10 to 11 a.m. Friday at the Peterson Chapel St. Michael Funeral Home. Services will be held at 11:30 a.m. Friday at St. Michael's Catholic Church.

— Conrad deFiebre