

Charles R. Weaver Sr., former state representative, dies at 60

By Pat Pheifer
Staff Writer

Charles R. Weaver Sr., 60, a leader in the Minnesota House of Representatives from 1966 to 1974 who wrote and championed the state's metropolitan fiscal disparities law, died of cancer Thursday at his home in Anoka.

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"Charlie Weaver was the architect of visionary legislation and bipartisan, sound public policy," said Sen. Dave Durenberger, R-Minn. in a prepared statement. "He will be missed as a close friend, a fishing and golf nut and one of the state's great leaders."

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Weaver, a Republican, introduced the complex tax-base-sharing bill in 1969. It passed in the House but got stuck in the Senate Tax Committee. It passed in the 1971 session.

The law was designed to ease competition between metropolitan-area cit-

ies for business and industrial development. Under it, 40 percent of the annual increase in a city's commercial and industrial tax base goes into a pool that is distributed to cities according to population and need.

The law "forced community leaders to take a metropolitan look at growth, at planning, at economic needs [and] at the funding of our schools, instead of just a parochial look," said former Gov. Wendell Anderson. "Charlie was clearly way out ahead of his time. He was one of the few legislators who could have gotten the thing through. Charlie was a Republican; I'm a Democrat. Together we were able to get the support to pass it. It was because of the great respect legislators had for him that brought it about."

The fiscal disparities law was the first of its kind in the country. Weaver traveled from state to state explaining it and testified at recent legisla-

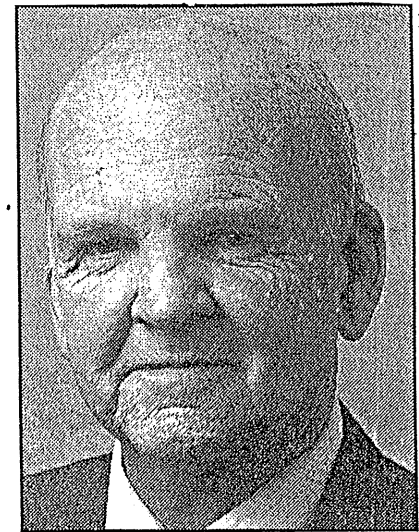
tive hearings against efforts to repeal it.

He also had a hand in statewide changes in funding for education, changes in municipal financing and tax increases that have become known as the "Minnesota Miracle."

Gov. Arne Carlson said Weaver's death was "an extraordinary loss to his wonderful family, to the state and to Anoka County, all of which Chuck Weaver loved and served throughout a remarkable life. He will be sorely missed by everyone who has a stake in good government."

Weaver was instrumental in the creation of the Metropolitan Council. He was appointed to it when he retired from the Legislature in 1974, and became chairman in 1979. He held that position until 1982.

"He was not a nuts-and-bolts, detail-oriented administrator," said his son



Charles R. Weaver Sr. wrote and championed the state's metropolitan fiscal disparities law.

Rep. Charlie Weaver Jr., of Anoka. "His strength on the council that he was most proud of was [that] during his tenure the council really came into its own as a policymaker and really was the leader in the develop-

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Weaver/ He's remembered as an 'architect of visionary legislation'

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ment of the metro area, sewers, roads, airports."

Gov. Rudy Perpich appointed Weaver to a tax study commission in 1983. Weaver also served on Carlson's tax advisory committee. He had been chairman of the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission for the past year.

Weaver, the second youngest of eight children, was born in Anoka and reared in a tradition of public service and the notion of giving something back to the community. His father was a contractor and built roads in Anoka and northern Hennepin counties; his mother, a homemaker, was one of the first women members of the school board and a leader in the

League of Women Voters, the PTA and other organizations.

"He always had a lot of spunk," his son said. "When he was growing up he would occasionally try to get away with things. He was constantly amazed at his mother's ability to track him down. He kept that sense of fun throughout his life. He never took himself too seriously. That was one of his charms."

Weaver graduated from Anoka High School in 1949 and was attending the University of Minnesota when he joined the Army. According to a family story, he was supposed to be a tank mechanic, but when the Army found out he had no mechanical ability whatsoever, he became a life-guard.

He completed his degree at the university after the Korean War and graduated from the William Mitchell College of Law. He started the Weaver, Talle and Herrick law firm in Anoka and was the first president of the Anoka County Bar Association.

Weaver was defeated in his first attempt for a seat in the state Senate in 1962. He was elected to the House in 1966. At one time he was assistant House minority leader.

He continued his law career between sessions and after he was appointed to the Metropolitan Council, but left it temporarily when he became chairman of the council, a fulltime job. When he left the council in 1982 he joined the law firm of Holmes and Graven; later he joined Larkin, Hoffman, Daley and Lindgren.

As one of the firm's top lobbyists, he represented the Anoka-Hennepin School District, Anoka County and the Minnesota State High School League.

When he had a free moment, Weaver escaped to the golf course or to his cabin near Aitkin, Minn. Despite the rapid pace of his political and legal career, he was a devoted husband and father, his son said.

"The most fun he had was with his family and with a fishing rod," Charlie Weaver Jr. said. "When I was in high school he came to every single one of our school events. He never was one who would miss a play or band concert or even the lowliest tennis game. For banquets at the end of the year, Dad would make a hot dish. He really was devoted to his

family."

Weaver is also survived by his wife, Diane; two other sons, Thomas, of St. Louis Park, and Andrew, of Lake St. Croix Beach; daughters Nancy Webster, of New Brighton, and Susan Weaver, of Eau Claire, Wis.; stepsons David and Derrick Johnson, both of Anoka; a brother, John, of Anoka, and sisters Ruth Kyle, of Mississippi; Marge Pauley, of Anoka, and Betty Petty, of Coon Rapids. His first wife, Ethelyn (Sis), died in 1973.

Services will be held at 1 p.m. Monday at Zion Lutheran Church, 4th and Adams Sts., Anoka. Visitation will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. Sunday at the Thurston-Lindberg Funeral Home, Anoka. Memorials to the HealthOne Mercy Hospice in Coon Rapids are suggested.