

## Obituaries

# Ray Wolcott, state legislator from 1966-74, dies at 83

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Ray (Spike) Wolcott, 83, a former state legislator who represented the Lake Nokomis area of south Minneapolis from 1966 to 1974, died Wednesday in Escondido, Calif.

He had a heart attack Tuesday evening, said his wife, Margaret. They moved to California in 1978, a year after Wolcott he retired from the legal department of Investors Diversified Services Inc. in Minneapolis.

Wolcott was born in Nebraska and moved to Minneapolis with his family when he was a boy. He graduated from Washburn High School in Minneapolis in 1930 and from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1937.

He worked for the Minnesota Department of

Taxation for two years, then as associate counsel of the Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington, D.C., for six years.

After a few years in private practice he was chief legal counsel for Honeywell's aeronautical division from 1950 to 1959. Then he worked for Chance Vought Aircraft in Dallas until he joined IDS in 1962.

Wolcott had headed the Republicans' Neighbor-to-Neighbor Fund drive in Minneapolis' 12th Ward, and, in 1965, when no Conservative candidate stepped forward to run for the state House of Representatives, he was chosen.

Until a law change in the early 1970s, the Minnesota Legislature was officially nonpartisan. Republican legislators belonged to the Conservative caucus and DFLers belonged to

the Liberal caucus.

Wolcott represented the old District 61B for four two-year terms. He was the last Republican elected to represent the district, said Dennis Schulstad, the current City Council member for that area.

"When he was campaigning he would knock on every door in the ward, and at least half of the people would know him," Schulstad said. "When he'd walk up to the door they'd say, 'Hi, Spike. How ya doing?' People liked him as an individual even if they disagreed with his political party."

Wolcott's best-known work as a legislator was adding a renter-credit rebate to the sales tax law, said Lyall Schwarzkopf, who served with him in the Legislature from 1966 to 1971.

He also brought his vast knowledge of investment and insurance law to the Legislature, Schwarzkopf said.

"He was well liked by legislators of any political party," he said. "He got along with everybody pretty well."

Wolcott did not to run for reelection in 1974, saying his job at IDS "makes it impossible for me to continue service in the Legislature."

He retired from IDS in 1977. He enjoyed golfing.

Besides his wife, he is survived by sons Ray Jr., of Leawood, Kan., and John, of Fountain Valley, Calif.; four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. Private services will be held in California.