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Fena, Jack Richard

Iron Range native and 20th Century lawmaker, died Friday, June 4, at the Benedictine Health Center in Duluth. He was 86. A first generation Italian American raised on the Mesabi Iron Range, he was born in Hibbing, Minnesota, on December 23, 1923. He graduated from Hibbing High School and then from Notre Dame University before departing for military service in the U.S. Navy during World War II. After the war, he returned to Hibbing and worked for his father's business, the California Wine House. He married Kathleen Marie Kaim and completed his law degree at Notre Dame University. In 1952, Mr. Fena went into private law practice in Hibbing and launched a career in the legal profession as an attorney, legislator and judge. He was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives in 1958 where he served six terms. Retiring from the legislature in 1973, he accepted a position as Assistant St. Louis County Attorney. In 1977, he was appointed as the first Minnesota Tax Court judge by then Governor Rudy Perpich. In addition to his parents, John and Ursalina, he was preceded in death by his stepmother, Prena DelGrande Fena; and his sister, Joanne Fena. Jack Fena is survived by his wife, Kay, as well as five sons, six daughters, a sister and a brother: Lynn Fena (Jerry Bakke) of Duluth; James Fena (Sandy) of Hibbing; Susan Fena (Lee Holte) and Sally Fena of Duluth; Peter Fena of St. Peter; Margaret (Bill) Coldwell of Excelsior; Chris (Julie) Fena of Oak Park Heights; Bartholomew Fena of Duluth; Mary Ann Fena of St. Paul; Andrew (Libby) Fena of Duluth; Marianna Nelson Cheatham of Minneapolis. His sister Marilyn (James) Johnson of Cold Spring and his brother John (Debbie) Fena of Side Lake; 13 grandchildren. Visitation will be Wednesday from 10 am until the 12 Noon funeral service at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Hibbing. Arrangements are being handled by Dougherty Funeral Home in Hibbing.