

# Gerald Mullin, ex-utility head, dies

Gerald T. Mullin, a longtime state legislator and 10-year president of Minnegasco, died early Wednesday at a Minneapolis hospital. He was 82.

Mullin became president of Minnegasco, then known as the Minneapolis Gas Co., in 1957 and was at the forefront of a 14-year fight against public utility regulation in Minnesota that ended in 1974 with the creation of the state Public Utilities Commission.

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He was a product of Democratic north Minneapolis, spending 27 years in the Minnesota Senate, and was a powerful political figure through the late 1950s. However, he was never considered part of the inner circle of state senators who for many years tightly controlled the workings of that body.

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However, Mullin was usually aligned with conservative Republicans and DFLers, who formed a majority in the senate during that era, and was long at odds with the liberal members of his own party.

Mullin was considered the University of Minnesota's principal budgetary ally in the Legislature and was credited with an important role in the school's rapid growth of the 1940s and 1950s.

He was given the university's first Regents Award in 1957.

"He was regarded as the university's spokesman. He handled all their appropriations," said former state Sen. Gordon Rosenmeier, also regarded as a political heavyweight during his 30-year legislative career.

Mullin also took a leading role in passing major social and welfare legislation, including the Fair Employment Practices Act.

But more recently he was known for his reign at Minnegasco, with which he was associated for 40 years before leaving in 1970.

He had served as counsel to the company for more than 20 years while in the state Legislature and, after resigning as president in 1967, served on its board of directors.

Brainerd Clarkson, who fought for public utility regulation as a lobbyist for Northern States Power Co, described Mullin as an excellent legislator and a fair opponent.

Survivors include his wife, Ruth, Minneapolis; two daughters, Mrs. John Gratzek, Athens, Ga., and Mrs. Earl Manley, Brussels, Belgium; two sons, Dr. Gerald Mullin Jr., Edina, and James Mullin, Minneapolis; two brothers, W.E. Mullin, Minneapolis, and D.A. Mullin, and a sister, Grace Finnegan, Minneapolis.

Reviewal will be at the Malone Funeral Home, 1300 Lowry Av. N., at 7 p.m. Friday. Burial will follow a mass at St. Austin Catholic Church, 4050 Upton Av. N., at 10 a.m. on Saturday.