

Former US Senator Eagleton dies

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

ST. LOUIS - Former United States Senator Thomas F. Eagleton died this morning at St. Mary's hospital in Richmond Heights, Missouri. He was 77 years old. Senator Eagleton had been in declining health for several years. The cause of death was a combination of heart, respiratory and other problems that overwhelmed his weakened system.

Former US Senator Thomas F. Eagleton died today at the age of 77. Thomas F. Eagleton was born in St. Louis on September 4, 1929, the second son of prominent attorney Mark D. Eagleton and Zitta Swanson Eagleton. He was raised near Tower Grove Park. Eagleton was educated at Saint Louis Country Day School, Amherst College, Harvard Law School and Oxford University. He served in the United States Navy. In 1956, Eagleton was elected Circuit Attorney of the city of St. Louis at the age of 27. He was elected Attorney General of Missouri in 1960 (the youngest person ever to hold that office); Lieutenant Governor of Missouri in 1964; and United States Senator from Missouri in 1968. He was 39 years old at the time of his election to the Senate. He was re-elected to the Senate in 1974 and 1980. In 1986 he declined to seek re-election. In the Senate, Eagleton was one of the principal sponsors of the Clean Air Act of 1970 and the Clean Water Act of 1972, the bills that are generally regarded as the foundation of modern environmental protection. On May 15, 1973, Senator Eagleton successfully offered an amendment to a defense appropriations bill to cut off funding for the bombing of Cambodia, effectively ending America's involvement in the Vietnam War. Eagleton subsequently described the passage of this amendment as the proudest moment of his career. In the area of education, Senator Eagleton was a principal Senate proponent of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to improve educational opportunities for children with disabilities. He was a co-author of the bill that created Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (now known as "Pell Grants") for college students. He was a principal Senate proponent of the creation of the National Institute on Aging. Senator Eagleton's legislative legacy in Missouri includes the designation of eight federally-protected wilderness areas in southern Missouri. He joined with Senator Jack Danforth (R-MO) to advocate successfully for these designations. Following his retirement from the Senate Eagleton returned to St. Louis to teach, work on a variety of civic issues and practice law. He joined the law firm of Thompson & Mitchell (now Thompson Coburn), with which he remained associated until his death. From 1987 until 1999 he was University Professor of Public Affairs at Washington University in St. Louis. In 2006 he taught a course on "The Presidency and the Constitution" at the Saint Louis University School of Law. He also taught at Webster University in St. Louis and Rockhurst College (now Rockhurst University) in Kansas City. He wrote commentaries for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and other newspapers and provided political commentary on KSDK-TV. In 1991 Senator Eagleton joined the board of the Truman Library in Independence and led a successful effort to raise new funds and revitalize the library. In 1993, President Bill Clinton appointed Senator Eagleton to the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. As chairman of FANS Inc. Senator Eagleton led the successful civic effort to relocate the Los Angeles Rams football team to St. Louis in 1995. He remained politically active on behalf of many candidates and issues. In 2006 he was active in the campaign for Amendment 2 to the Missouri Constitution to protect stem cell research. Senator Eagleton was a passionate collector of Expressionist and contemporary German art. He delighted in sharing this passion with the public through loans and gifts to various art museums. Senator Eagleton was the author of three books: *War and Presidential Power: A Chronicle of Congressional Surrender*, published in 1974; *Issues in Business and Government*, published in 1991; and (as co-author with former St. Louis School Superintendent William Kottmeyer) an updated version of the secondary school textbook *Our Constitution and What It Means*, published in 1987. At the time of his death, Senator Eagleton was working on a personal memoir of his career in public service. Senator Eagleton was the recipient of numerous awards, honors and honorary degrees throughout his career. In September, 2000, the new federal courthouse in St. Louis was named the Thomas F. Eagleton United States Courthouse in his honor. Senator Eagleton is survived by his wife of 51 years, Barbara; by his two children, Terence and Christy; by three grandchildren; and by his younger brother, Kevin Eagleton. Senator Eagleton's older brother, Mark D. Eagleton, M.D., died in 1985. In accordance with his wishes, Senator Eagleton's body has been donated to the Washington University School of Medicine for medical research. Plans for a memorial service are pending and will be announced shortly. It was Senator Eagleton's wish that memorial contributions in lieu of flowers be directed either to Catholic Charities of St. Louis or to

the Democratic National Committee in Washington, DC.

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