

McCollum, Ellison mourn the passing of Jim Oberstar

Written by
Monday, 05 May 2014 15:44



Congresswoman Betty McCollum and Congressman Keith Ellison issued statements mourning the death of former Minnesota Congressman James L. Oberstar, 79, who represented Minnesota's 8th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1975 to 2011.

"I am deeply saddened by Jim's passing. Jim Oberstar was a friend, a mentor, and a public servant of epic stature. Throughout his career Jim's commitment to improving America's transportation system saved thousands of lives, kept millions of Americans on the job, and strengthened Minnesota's and our nation's economy. Most of all, Jim Oberstar was a truly wonderful man who was filled with joy and compassion," McCollum said. "I wish to extend my sincere condolences to Jim's wife, Jean, his children, grandchildren, and all of his former staff, especially Bill Richard, Congressman Oberstar's long-time friend and chief of staff."

Ellison said, "During his over thirty years of service to our state, Jim always put Minnesotans first. He was a public servant above all else. He had a gifted mind and an uncanny memory that helped him master a number of languages, including Haitian Creole. Jim's passion for helping people get from one place to another safely was contagious and his vision for Minnesota's future will live on as the projects he fought for as chairman of the Transportation Committee are completed.

"Jim was a great friend who helped me find my feet after I was elected in 2006. My deepest condolences to his family, his wife Jean, their children and grandchildren. His spirit, ideas and energy will be deeply missed."

Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations Committee. She is Democratic Co-Chair of the Congressional Native American Caucus. Ellison is co-chair of the Democratic Progressive Caucus and serves on the House Financial Services Committee and the House Democratic Steering Committee.