

Remembering Jerry Kleczka, a True Public Servant

Written by WisDems Press
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Former Congressman Kleczka dedicated his life to serving his community, even after his 35 years in elected office.

MADISON - Over the weekend we received the news that former United States Representative Gerald 'Jerry' Kleczka, a Wisconsin Democrat representing the 4th Congressional District from 1984 to 2005, had passed away.

In addition to his two decades in Congress, Rep. [Kleczka](#) also served in the state Assembly and Senate, where he was Assistant Majority Leader and Chair of the Joint Finance Committee.

His career centered around tirelessly helping his constituents and community in Milwaukee, with a steadfast focus on national and state policy designed to better the lives of the poor, the disadvantaged and the elderly. After leaving elected office, Rep. Kleczka continued his public service in many nonprofit and community groups including the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and America's Black Holocaust Museum.

In honoring Rep. Kleczka's career in Congress upon his announced retirement, former Senator Russ Feingold read a [tribute](#) into the Congressional Record, highlighting Kleczka's work banning "drive-thru" baby deliveries and protecting seniors living in public housing, as well as fighting for Social Security and affordable health care as a member of the Committee on Ways and Means. "Jerry has embodied Wisconsin's progressive tradition during his 35 years of public service," said Feingold. "The son of a factory worker, Jerry always stayed true to the hardworking Wisconsin families who counted on him to fight for them in Congress."

Congresswoman Gwen Moore honored her predecessor shortly after he left Congress in 2005, reading a [tribute](#) into the Congressional Record, calling him "a champion of the causes of working men and women" and "a spirited and tenacious advocate."

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"Congressman Jerry Kleczka was the embodiment of a truly dedicated public servant who is loved and will be missed by so many," said Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Martha Lanning. "He focused his time and energy on his community. And for people whose voices are too often ignored, he will always be remembered as a true advocate and dedicated friend."