

TRIBUTE TO MARY MACCORNACK FORSYTHE (Senate - October 19, 1990)

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Mr. DURENBERGER. Mr. President, when the Minnesota State Legislature gavel into session in 1991, it will be missing one of its most valued assets. Mary Forsythe, the Independent-Republican representative of House District 42B covering most of the city of Edina, is retired after nearly two decades in the Minnesota House of Representatives.

Mary MacCornack Forsythe, a doctor's daughter originally from Whitehall, WI, is a long time resident of Edina. She holds a bachelor of music degree from St. Olaf College and has received the college's Distinguished Alumnus Award.

After graduation, Mary taught public school music in Virgwa, WI, and in her hometown of Whitehall. In 1942, she married fellow St. Olaf graduate, Robert A. Forsythe, currently a Hennepin County district judge. Following World War II, the Forsythes moved to the Twin Cities while Bob attended the University of Minnesota Law School. The Forsythes lived in Washington, DC, while Bob served as Assistant Secretary for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in the Eisenhower administration and Mary served as a member of the Sub-Cabinet Wives' Club. The Forsythes returned to the Twin Cities and moved to Edina in 1962.

Mary Forsythe has been a strong leader for the Independent-Republican Party in Minnesota for nearly 30 years. When Mary was first elected in 1972, she was the first woman to represent her district in suburban Minneapolis. At that time, there was one woman in the Minnesota House of Representatives. Four other women were elected along with Mary Forsythe to the House of Representatives. Mary has been soundly reelected with more than 80 percent of the vote in each of her eight subsequent election campaigns.

During her career in the Minnesota State Legislature, Mary has earned the respect of members from both political parties. While serving in the majority during the 1985-86 session, she chaired the powerful House Appropriations Committee. She was the first woman in the history of the Minnesota House to chair a major committee. Mary authored and was responsible for Minnesota's mandatory seatbelt law. She sponsored legislation for the handicapped in Minnesota, providing funding for people who adopt hard-to-adopt children. She was instrumental in the construction of the maximum security facility at Oak

Park Heights and the new women's prison at Shakopee. The education wing of the new Shakopee Prison building is dedicated to Mary Forsythe.

Mary has been active in the community in many ways. She has served as a member of the board of directors of the Fairview Hospital corporate board. She has been a member of the board of directors of Fairview Riverside Hospital. She has been a member of the board of directors of the Guthrie Theatre and a leader of both the girl scouts and the cub scouts.

She and her family have been long-time members of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church at 41st and Lyndale in Minneapolis. Mary has been a columnist for the Lutheran newsletter.

Mary and Robert Forsythe have five children: Robert Jr., Polly, Jean, Ann, and Joan; and 10 grandchildren: Jon Forsythe, Kerstin Forsythe, Ann Lindholm, Carl Peterson, Matthew Peterson, Keri Johnson, Kristin Johnson, Erin Smith, Andrea Smith, and Laura Smith.

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