

Celebration of Life – The Honorable Elinor Z. Taylor



The Honorable Elinor Z. Taylor 89, of West Chester, PA died Tuesday July 27 at the Treasure Coast Hospice House in Stuart, Florida. She was the wife of the late William M. Taylor.

Mrs Taylor was born on April 18, 1921 in Norristown, PA, daughter of the late Harold 1. and Ruth (Rahn) Zimmerman. She was a 1939 graduate of West Chester High School. In 1943, she graduated from West Chester University, where she later received a Doctor of Public Service, honoris causa. In 1958 she earned a Master's in Education from Temple University. She also attended Columbia University and the University of Delaware.

Elinor started her career as an educator in the Ridley Park, Delaware County Schools but in 1946 she got a teaching position at West Chester Senior High School as a coach and physical education teacher. In 1955, Elinor started teaching health classes at West Chester State College and soon became an associate professor in the Health and Physical Education Department. She became particularly well known in field hockey circles and was named a National Honorary Hockey Official. Elinor became The Assistant Dean of Women in 1968, the Acting Dean of Students Affairs in 1969 and from 1970 to 1975 she was Dean of Administration. She helped found the American Association of University Women at West Chester State University.

The Honorable Elinor Z. Taylor started her political career by running for Borough Councilperson, she was the first woman to serve on the Borough Council. She was first elected to represent the 156th legislative district in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1976. With the help of friends and her natural abilities, Elinor learned to become an effective legislator and she served on the subcommittee for higher education. She was elected chairperson of the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) in 1995. And on January 23, 2003, PHEAA passed a resolution naming the largest PHEAA building the Elinor

Z. Taylor Headquarters Building. Elinor was also elected Majority caucus Secretary in 1995 and Republican Caucus Chairman in 2003. Mrs. Taylor served 30 years in the House of Representatives becoming the longest serving woman in its history. With her health deteriorating, she retired to Florida prior to the 2006 elections.

She leaves a daughter, Barbara Taylor Zarrella of Bethlehem, CT, five grandchildren Kelly Ashworth of Baton Rouge, LA; Ryan Osborn of New York, NY; Catherine, Joseph, and Jenna Zarrella all of Bethlehem, CT and two great grandchildren. A sister Ellen Z. Hines of Arizona, a nephew Eric Hines of Arizona, a niece Brenda PrQuix of Rhode Island and a niece Sarah Finnaren of West Chester, PA.