

John J. Nimrod 1922-2009

## Vet became state senator

Chicago native served in WW II, Korea and led Assyrian group

By Trevor Jensen | Tribune reporter

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John J. Nimrod was an early advocate of solar power and worked to revise the Illinois mental health code during 10 years as a Republican state senator representing the north and northwest suburbs. He also was active in the Assyrian community.

Mr. Nimrod, 86, of [Glenview](#) died of natural causes Sunday, Jan. 4, in Glenbrook Hospital, said his son Joseph.

Mr. Nimrod got his start in politics under the wing of former Gov. Richard Ogilvie. Mr. Nimrod was an administrative assistant to Ogilvie when he was [Cook County Board](#) president, and then assistant director of Ogilvie's successful 1968 campaign for governor.

Also in the 1960s, he was a Republican committeeman and Niles Township supervisor, and vied unsuccessfully for an open congressional seat.

In 1972, he was elected to the state Senate, where he remained until he was defeated in a [GOP](#) primary by Bob Kustra in 1982. He tried, unsuccessfully, to retain his seat as an independent.

During his tenure as senator, he sponsored bills to change the state's worker's compensation rules, revise the state mental health code and encourage the use of solar power.

Mr. Nimrod's parents were Assyrian Christians who came to Chicago from what is now Iran with their three children and settled in the Lincoln Park neighborhood on the North Side. Mr. Nimrod, who was born in Chicago, graduated from Lake View High School and then started at [Northwestern University](#) before [World War II](#) intervened.

He was in the Army in Europe during World War II, then returned to the service during the Korean War, serving in Korea before his discharge as a captain.

With a degree in mechanical engineering from Northwestern University in 1950, Mr. Nimrod worked for Fisher Body and then later started a fiberglass plant in Chicago that built molds for swimming pools.

After leaving public office, Mr. Nimrod worked in real estate marketing.

He also was a leader in the Assyrian community. He chaired the general assembly of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization in the Hague, Netherlands. In 1999, he took over as president of the Assyrian Universal Alliance Foundation in Chicago, the AUA's charitable arm, from his sister, Helen James Schwarten.

"He was involved in helping all the Assyrians all over the world, especially those that were refugees," said Homer Ashurian, general director of the foundation.

Survivors also include his wife, Dorothy; another son, [John Joseph](#); two daughters, Lizbeth Nimrod and Naomi Dickinson; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Services are being planned.