



## MIRS Capitol Capsule

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# Richard Headlee Dead At 74

Richard HEADLEE, a former gubernatorial candidate and architect of the Headlee amendment, died today at his Cedar Hills, Utah, home. He was 74.

Headlee began a successful business career with the Burroughs Corporation, serving as the President and CEO of several corporations, including Morback Industries in Winn, which went from a small Michigan business to a national manufacturing company.

His political career began in 1964 when former Gov. George ROMNEY appointed him to organize Christmas in Vietnam for servicemen and women from Michigan services overseas. He went on to become Romney's campaign manager.

In 1978, he organized and led the successful effort to amend the state Constitution to limit the state's ability to pass along unfunded mandates to the local governments. The amendment is popularly known as the Headlee Amendment. Four years later, he ran for governor and won the Republican primary, defeating former Lt. Gov. James BRICKLEY and current Oakland County Executive Brooks PATTERSON. He later lost to former Gov. James BLANCHARD in the general election.

"He was clearly a seminal figure in Michigan politics," said Senate Majority Leader Ken SIKKEMA (R-Wyoming). "Whether you agreed or

disagreed with him, there's no question on his influence on the direction of the state."

Mackinac Center President Lawrence REED called him a "giant of Michigan's political history." Reed was an acquaintance of Headlee's and served on the Headlee Amendment Blue Ribbon Commission, whose report in 1994 documented the success of the Headlee Amendment's first 15 years.

"Every state citizen who believes in limited, responsible and accountable government mourns the loss of a genuine hero," Reed said. "Dick Headlee was a man of character - honest, dependable and committed to the highest standards of speech and conduct.

"He didn't run for governor because he wanted to be 'in charge' or because he craved the limelight," Reed said. "He was a living example of the ancient republican ideal - the citizen who sets down his plow to put right what is wrong and serve his community."

Headlee was the father of nine children, eight of whom survive him. Also surviving Headlee are his wife, Mary, 51 grandchildren and 19 great grand children. The family requests that any donations in memory of Headlee be made to Mothers Without Borders ([www.motherswithoutborders.org](http://www.motherswithoutborders.org)), an organization that provides support to "orphaned and vulnerable children" of the world.