

Alma Stallworth, longtime Detroit lawmaker and trailblazer, dies at 87

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Detroit Free Press

LANSING — Alma G. Stallworth, a longtime state House representative from Detroit who founded the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus Foundation, died Tuesday at age 87.

A trailblazer who was the longtime chair of the House Public Utilities Committee in the days before Michigan term limits, Stallworth played a key role in creating legislation that regulates and deregulates electric and telephone companies and other utilities in Michigan.

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, Stallworth was first elected to the state House in 1970, serving first through 1974, then without interruption from 1983 through 1996. She served a final term from 2003 through 2004. She also served on the board of Detroit Public Schools after a 2005 appointment.

Stallworth's two sons, Thomas and Keith also served in the Michigan Legislature.

Thomas F. Stallworth III said on Facebook Tuesday that her death came less than a year after the death of his father.

"Mom has joined Dad, her partner of 65 years, in the arms of the Lord after living long full lives," he said. "We have truly been blessed to have them and I will rejoice in continuing to hear their voices in all that I do."

Alma Stallworth was known for her work improving foster care in Michigan and fighting child abuse. She served as president of the metro Detroit affiliate of the National Black Child Development Institute and as a board member of

the Federation of Girls Homes and the Children's Aid Society of Michigan, according to her legislative biography.

The Black Caucus Foundation works on policy issues and diversity training, among other areas, and has fellowship and internship programs for students.

In 1988, Stallworth was part of an official delegation that observed the German elections uniting east and west Berlin.

"Alma helped pave the way for Black legislators and her legacy lives on through them, including her own sons," said House Minority Leader Christine Greig, D-Farmington Hills.

"We owe her a debt of gratitude for her years of public service. I offer my deepest condolences to Alma's many loved ones and admirers."