# Former State Senator Samuel Aanestad dead at 71

**Jennifer NoblesStaff Writer**

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Samuel Aanestad, a physician, surgeon, and former Republican senator has died at the age of 71.

Aanestad served in the California state senate from 2002 to 2010, and was a California State Assemblyman in the 3rd district from 1998-2002. He ran for Lieutenant Governor of California in 2010, and in 2012, sought election to the U.S. House of Representatives.

A well-known oral surgeon in Nevada County, Aanestad served as the Vice-Chief of Surgery at Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital.

Current representative for the 4th district of California, Tom McClintock, was a colleague and close friend of Aanestad's.

"Sam Aanestad was one of the most sincere, sensible, genuine and honest people I have ever met and his passing is a loss that will never be filled in the life of anyone who knew him," McClintock said in a statement. "It was my honor for several years to have been his seat mate in both the Assembly and the Senate. He often agonized over votes because he truly wanted to do right by his constituents and his conscience and he always did."

A staunch supporter of local youth athletics, Aanestad welcomed and paid tribute to the Nevada Union High School football team in a special Senate ceremony in 2010.

"My hat's off to the Nevada Union High School team and all of the supporters and parents who came to the State Capitol today," Aanestad said at the event. "This is a special program that helps instill the hard work ethic and leadership needed for success at a young age."

Local attorney Barry Pruett, a friend of the Aanestad family, said, "He was a great guy, just a solid individual and solid community member. He was an honest politician which you don't see much of nowadays."

Aanestad and his wife Susan are parents to three grown children and grandparents to multiple grandchildren.

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