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Wexler, Stephen (1975): News Article 01

John Mathews

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Key Senate Education Aide Dies in Motorcycle Crash

By John Mathews
Washington Star Staff Writer

Stephen J. Wexler, 40, chief counsel for the last six years of a key Senate education subcommittee, was killed Saturday when his motorcycle collided with a car in Annapolis. He lived in Annapolis on Harness Creek Road.

Annapolis police said Wexler was thrown about 10 feet through the air when his motorcycle and another vehicle collided head-on in an intersection about 4 p.m.

Wexler, police said, was dead on arrival at Anne Arundel General Hospital. Police said Joseph E. Rawlings, 39, of Annapolis, driver of the other vehicle, has been charged with manslaughter and driving while intoxicated and is free on \$2,500 bond.

DURING HIS career as chief counsel of the education subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, Wexler had a critical role in shaping revisions of the basic federal aid program for local schools, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as well as legislation affecting higher education and vocational education.

As the key aide to Sen. Claiborne Pell, D-R.I., the subcommittee chairman, Wexler considered a major accomplishment of recent years the establishment under the 1972 Education Amendment of the Basic Education Opportunity Grant Program.

The program, which Wexler developed, provides federal scholarships for college and other post secondary education for students from low income families.

Pell said in a statement that Wexler was "a valued legislative aide and adviser on whom I relied very much



STEPHEN J. WEXLER
Senate panel's counsel

... In his seven years as counsel to the subcommittee on education his contribution to education legislation enacted in those years was immense.

"EVERY ACTION of the subcommittee bore his stamp. He was intensely devoted to improving the quality of education at all levels across our nation and to insuring that quality education was made available to every citizen."

Prior to becoming chief counsel of the education subcommittee in 1969, Wexler was for three years associate general counsel of the Senate Labor Committee's subcommittees on railroad retirement and arts and the humanities.

He helped form the legislation which created the National Foundation of the Arts and the National Foundation of the Humanities.

A short, young-looking man with a sharp wit and intellect, Wexler was widely known on Capitol Hill and in education circles here.

Before becoming a Hill committee staff member, Wexler from 1963 to 1964 was assistant general coun-

sel for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

FOR THE NEXT two years he was in private practice here and a consultant for the Department of Labor.

Wexler was born in Providence, R.I., attended public schools there and in 1956 received a B.S. degree from the University of Rhode Island. He received his law degree from Georgetown University Law Center in 1962 and was a member of the D.C. Bar Association. He was in the Army from 1958 to 1960.

He leaves his wife, Elizabeth Maiden, and a son, Adam, both at the home; his mother, Ann E. Wexler of Providence, and a sister, Mrs. Arnold Fellman, of Cranston, R.I.

Services will be held tomorrow in Providence. The family suggests that expressions of sympathy be in the form of contributions to the Heart Fund.

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