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Ex-Nevada senator Blakemore dies

ASSOCIATED PRESS (online@rgj.com)

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HAWTHORNE, Nev. (AP) — A service for former state Sen. Rick Blakemore, a leader in Nevada's "Sagebrush Rebellion" over control of public lands, is planned in late February or early March in Tonopah. Blakemore died Dec. 31 at age 85.

Blakemore, who had been in poor health following a heart attack in October, was a longtime pilot and a veteran of 12 years in the state Legislature. He had a key role in the lawmakers' "Sagebrush Rebellion" movement to assert Nevada's sovereignty over public land within its borders.

A native of Parsons, Kan., Blakemore was raised in Southern California. His Navy service during World War II included a stint as an airplane turret gunner. After the war, he worked as a pilot in North and South America for numerous clients, including the federal government.

Blakemore also worked as a bush pilot in Alaska and had his own air charter service based in Tonopah. He served in the Senate from 1972 to 1984, at one point supplanting his pay in the state's part-time "citizen Legislature" by working nights as a casino security guard.