

Marion Barry, D.C.'s 'Mayor for Life,' Dead at 78

By Avis Thomas-Lester and Ruben Castaneda
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D.C. Council member Marion S. Barry, the venerable former four-time mayor and civil rights activist, died early Sunday at the District's United Medical Center, just hours after he was discharged from Howard University Hospital. He was 78.

His death was announced in a statement from his fam-

however, Barry fell ill and was taken to UMC, where he died. He had survived prostate cancer, but battled diabetes and other ailments. He had been hospitalized several times this year.

Barry spokeswoman LaToya Foster told News Channel 8 that Barry collapsed after returning home Saturday.

"He had a driver. He had gotten out of the automobile and he was walking towards the door and from what I was told he just kind of collapsed and was nonresponsive at that point," Foster said.



Barry loved ones.

"Marion was not just a colleague, but also was a friend with whom I shared many fond moments about governing the city," Gray said in the statement. "He loved the District of Columbia and so many Washingtonians loved him."

Gray will work with Barry's family and the D.C.

in a statement. "While his history of accomplishments began decades prior to his entry onto the D.C. political scene representing the [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee] in the 1960s, even today, he remains the city's favorite politician and truly loved by most, and many across the nation. I'll remember him for his capacity to turn the

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ily. Barry was admitted Thursday to Howard University Hospital after complaining of feeling ill, his spokeswoman said. He was released Saturday and felt well enough to go out to eat. Later in the evening,

She said Cora Masters Barry rushed to Barry's home and was with him when he was taken by ambulance to UMC in Southeast. The Rev. Willie Wilson, pastor of Union Temple Baptist Church,



joined Cora Masters Barry by Barry's side. Barry was pronounced dead at 1:46 a.m.

Mayor Vincent C. Gray expressed sadness after learning of the passing of the Ward 8 council member. In a statement, Gray said he spoke with Cora Masters Barry and told her that his prayers were with her, his son, Christopher, and other

Gray will work with Barry's family and the D.C. Council to plan official ceremonies worthy of a true statesman of the District of Columbia

Council to plan official ceremonies worthy of a true statesman of the District of Columbia. Acquaintances said Barry had been looking forward to his annual turkey giveaway on Nov. 25. The event is expected to go on as planned at Union Temple.

Council member Anita Bonds called Barry "a political genius, community outreach expert, champion of the over-looked and the left-out."

"He was a warm compassionate human being and proud public servant who was the only D.C. politician with coattails," Bonds said

[other] cheek, forgive and move forward no matter the adversity. He was a remarkable, powerful, proud leader of people that will be hard to forget."

She said Barry's contributions to the city will not leave with his physical presence.

"As his passing is mourned, we can be comforted in knowing that his legacy and love for the District will continue through the renaissance of D.C., which he began, and the millions of lives he touched," she said.

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