

This copy is for your personal, noncommercial use only. You can order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers, please [click here](#) or use the "Reprints" tool that appears next to any article. Visit www.nytimes.com for samples and additional information. [Order a reprint of this article now.](#) »

March 31, 1981

William J. O'Brien, Is Dead at 72;

Ex-Connecticut House Speaker

PORTLAND, Conn., March 30 (AP) -William J. O'Brien, former Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives, died Friday after a brief illness. He was 72 years old.

Mr. O'Brien, elected in 1952, was the first Democratic Speaker of the House in 83 years and the first from Middlesex County in 106 years. After his service in the General Assembly ended in 1959, he served on the State Liquor Control Commission from 1961 to 1973 and headed the commission for four years.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth Patterson O'Brien; two sons, Peter M. of Middletown, David O. of Portland; a daughter, Mrs. Robert Curtin of Portland, and two brothers, Richard J. of Higganum and John D. of Glastonbury.

Funeral services will be held Wednesday at 9 P.M. at the Caughlin Funeral Home, 491 High Street, Middletown. A mass will be said at St. Mary's Church in Portland at 2 P.M. Wednesday.
