

US Senator Kennedy dies: family
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US Senator Ted Kennedy, a lion of the American left and the last of the brothers who ruled US politics for years, has died of brain cancer, his family said Wednesday. He was 77.

"Edward M. Kennedy - the husband, father, grandfather, brother and uncle we loved so deeply - died late Tuesday night at home in Hyannis Port," Massachusetts, the Kennedy family said in a statement.

"We've lost the irreplaceable center of our family and joyous light in our lives, but the inspiration of his faith, optimism, and perseverance will live on in our hearts forever."

"We thank everyone who gave him care and support over this last year, and everyone who stood with him for so many years in his tireless march for progress toward justice, fairness and opportunity for all.

"He loved this country and devoted his life to serving it."

The "liberal lion" of the Senate was the youngest of the Kennedy brothers.

President John F Kennedy was assassinated in 1963.

Senator Robert Kennedy was shot dead as he campaigned for the 1968 Democratic presidential nomination.

Joe Kennedy, a pilot, died in World War Two.

Sister died earlier this month

Kennedy was diagnosed with brain cancer in 2008 and he collapsed during lunch at President Barack Obama's inauguration in January.

The death this August of his sister Eunice Shriver, founder of the Special Olympics, emphasized the passing of their generation.

A few days later, Kennedy was so sick that he could not even travel to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom from Obama, sending his children to accept the honor on his behalf instead.

Kennedy is survived by his second wife, Victoria, and his three children: Kara, Edward Kennedy Junior, and Patrick, who is a member of the House of Representatives.