



MichiganWomenForward



Kathleen Wilbur

(1953 -)

Inducted: 2007 Locale: Okemos Era: Contemporary
Area(s) of Achievement: Education, Government

The first woman in Michigan history to lead three different state government departments, Kathleen Wilbur championed the cause of making state services more streamlined and customer-focused. As director of the former Department of Consumer and Industry Services from 1996 to 2002, Wilbur oversaw the licensing of more than 1.5 million entities and individuals in Michigan. She also led the former departments of Licensing and Regulation, and Commerce.

Wilbur launched the Governor's Quality Care Awards program to provide much-needed recognition for those who care for Michigan's most vulnerable populations in licensed childcare homes and centers, before- and after-school programs, nursing homes, hospices, homes of the aging, and adult foster care facilities. To safeguard consumers, Wilbur worked to create the Office of Financial and Insurance Services, which restructured the Insurance Bureau and the Financial Institutions Bureau to ensure information sharing and cross training among risk managers, monitors, and enforcement officers.

As a Michigan State University trustee (1985 to 1991) and as vice president for governmental relations and public affairs for Central Michigan University since 2002, Wilbur has long fought for higher education financing equity. Wilbur has also been a key force in engaging the state's 15 public universities to employ a team approach to funding issues.

Well known for her longtime commitment to public service, higher education, and advocacy for Michigan's most vulnerable, Wilbur also is praised for her integrity, kindness, and humor as she sets an example for the people of Michigan.