

## Bernard "Bernie" Kraft

Bernard Kraft was literally a one-man army, bringing accountability to spending habits and spending appetites of fellow legislators and administrators. Armed with volumes of facts and figures, he would forcefully labor with department heads and fellow legislators to keep spending in check.

Mr. Kraft served in this capacity over 25 years, leaving his footprint on every tax bill received in Onondaga County for over a quarter century. His long time friend and legislative chairman, William Sanford, summarized Bernie's level of service as with the following words, "I've never met anyone more dedicated to the job than Bernie. The whole county will feel the effects of his absence."

Bernie's own assessment of his service reflects his connection with the ones he served. "I love the legislature. It's in my mind. It's in my body. It's in my soul. And most of all, it's in my heart.

Only hours before he departed, Bernie shared a visual image of his life. "My life is like a mountain. I have spent all this time climbing that mountain. Now for the first time, I've stepped off the mountain, and I am resting in the meadow below, and it's peaceful. The mountain lies in a shadow, but is blanketed with lights. The lights are my many, many friends. The people I love... and look at all those lights! I realize that I am a very lucky man."

Tonight we make a small tribute to the huge light left behind, the epitome of the conscience of a totally committed conservative!