

Jeffords named citizen of the year

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Sen. James Jeffords has been selected as the Vermont Chamber of Commerce's Citizen of the Year, the chamber announced Monday.

"Senator Jeffords has devoted his entire career to serving Vermonters and their communities," said Chamber President Duane Marsh. "His nearly 40 years of service to Vermont makes him a very deserving recipient of this award."

Jeffords, who will receive the award at a fall banquet, announced earlier this year that he is retiring from the Senate when his term expires next year.

"I am humbled by this honor," he said in a statement.

Jeffords has held public office in the state since the 1960s, serving as a state senator, attorney general, member of the U.S. House and, since 1989, a member of the Senate.

He won national attention in 2001 when he declared the Republican Party had grown too conservative for him and he became an independent, a move that gave Democrats control of the Senate.