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## Miller Looks to New Blood to Shore Up His Senate Support

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The defeat of Baltimore Sen. Barbara A. Hoffman in the Sept. 10 Democratic primary has already opened a big hole in the leadership of the Maryland Senate.

After 20 years in office, Hoffman resigned her post effective immediately, forcing Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. (D-Prince George's, Calvert) to appoint "a committee" of people, Miller said, to replace her on numerous boards and commissions, including one studying the state's tax structure.

Of four standing committees in the Senate, three have now lost their chairmen. Earlier this year, Finance Committee Chairman Thomas L. Bromwell (D-Baltimore County) resigned to take a state job. And Education and Environmental Affairs Committee Chairman Clarence W. Blount (D-Baltimore) retired at 80.

Hoffman, who chairs the powerful Budget and Taxation Committee, had also been considering retirement. But she chose to run for reelection in a newly drawn district whose population is nearly 71 percent black.

In the primary, voters preferred her opponent, Del. Lisa A. Gladden (D-Baltimore), a promising freshman who had the support of Blount, Del. Howard P. Rawlings (D-Baltimore) and other black leaders. Gladden beat Hoffman 50 percent to 43 percent, with the rest casting their votes for former delegate Frank Boston.

Hoffman's defeat is a heavy loss for Miller, who counted her as a close ally and who had worked aggressively for her campaign behind the scenes. But Miller said he expects to have a good relationship with Gladden as well.

"She's a very articulate attorney, a public defender, and her views and mine coincide on a host of issues," Miller said.

The last man standing as chairman of a Senate committee is Walter M. Baker (D-Cecil), chairman of Judicial Proceedings. But Baker faces a tough fight against Republican millionaire environmentalist E.J. Pipkin on Nov. 5.

Regardless of the outcome in that race, Miller will return to Annapolis in January to a Senate filled with few old friends and many new faces, a situation that offers both opportunity and peril, according to legislative observers.

The potential peril: The new folks may not be interested in reelecting Maryland's longest-serving Senate president to yet another term.

Depending on the outcome of several general election fights, the Senate's Democratic caucus could include as many as 13 women compared with the current seven. Among them would be such staunch liberals as Gladden, Del. Verna Jones (Baltimore), who beat incumbent Sen. Clarence Mitchell IV in last week's primary, and Del. Sharon Grosfeld (Montgomery), who is replacing Sen. Christopher Van Hollen Jr., the Democratic nominee for U.S. Congress in the Montgomery County district now held by Republican Constance A. Morella. None of the three legislative candidates face Republican opponents.

Miller is already much more conservative than many members of the Democratic caucus; the addition of more liberals "could spell real trouble for Mike," said one longtime Senate observer.

On the other hand, in the past, much of the discontent with Miller's leadership has been focused on his inability to reward up-and-coming senators with leadership positions. With most or all of his committee chairmen gone, Miller suddenly has an array of juicy plums to offer hungry Senate-climbers.

Miller seems well aware of the possibilities and is already planning for January.

"This is the first large turnover in the Senate since 1994, and it will offer a real opportunity for young members to step up and show what they're made of and be heard from right away," Miller said.