

Miller to Lead Southern Legislative Conference

By LORI MONTGOMERY
and DANIEL LEDUC
Washington Post Staff Writers

Last week, **Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr.** ascended to yet another throne on the national stage. At a 3,000-person dinner in Savannah, Ga., Maryland's longest-serving state Senate president was sworn in as chairman of the Southern Legislative Conference.

The conference is a regional arm of the Council of State Governments, which this week welcomed Maryland Gov. **Parris N. Glendening** (D) as its new chairman during a meeting in Lexington, Ky.

Both organizations were formed to give state officials a forum for sharing ideas to solve common problems and to promote the sovereignty of states. The council represents all 50 states, while the Southern Legislative Conference represents 16 states from Maryland to Texas.

Maryland is a relative progressive among the Southern bunch. The group this year honored two Maryland innovations—Glendening's smart growth policies and a plan to create an e-marketplace, said Miller (D-Prince George's). But more often, he said, "A lot of our ideas, they reject out of hand."