

Bromwell To Leave Md. Senate For New Job

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Maryland state Sen. Thomas L. Bromwell, the influential chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, has taken a highly paid state job that will require him to leave elective office after 22 years in Annapolis.

Bromwell, a Baltimore Democrat, was chosen yesterday to become chief executive officer of the Injured Workers Insurance Fund, a state-created, quasi-public agency that is the largest provider of workers' compensation insurance in Maryland.

State law requires Bromwell to give up his seat in the Maryland Senate, where he had been considered a leading contender to one day replace Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. (D-Prince George's). Miller, the longest-serving leader in that body's history, has no plans to step aside.

Bromwell—the flamboyant former tavern owner who rose to become one of the most colorful and powerful figures in Annapolis—yesterday called leaving the Senate “a tough decision.”

“It's hard to let go,” he said, sounding a bit glum. “But there comes a time in your life when you have to make life decisions, and this is one of the biggest I've ever made.”

“I'm not going to tell you \$147,000 a year doesn't look good,” said Bromwell, whose state salary is \$30,000. “I've got a young family and, when weighing it over, I swallowed my pride, my power, my prestige and did what I think is right for my family. And for me, I might add.”

Bromwell's departure—which officially takes place Dec. 1—will set off a scramble among Democrats for his post on the Finance Committee, one of only four standing committees in the Senate and possibly the panel with the broadest reach. The committee's portfolio includes legislation on banking, telecommunications, health care, utility deregulation, horse racing and insurance.

“In that committee, they basically decide where the money goes,” one lobbyist said.

Miller will choose Bromwell's successor on the committee. The leading contenders are Sen. Thomas McLain Middleton, a Charles County tobacco farmer; Sen. Christopher Van Hollen Jr. (Montgomery), a Washington lawyer; and Sen. Gloria G. Lawlah (Prince George's), a school administrator in the District.

Asked whom he thinks Miller will select, Bromwell said all three “are probably better qualified than I was when I took the job.”