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Senate Minority Chief to Resign

Surprised GOP to Choose New Leader Before '02 Session

By PAUL SCHWARTZMAN
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The minority leader of the Maryland Senate said yesterday that he will resign at the end of December, an announcement that surprised colleagues and the state's top Republican party officials.

Sen. Martin G. Madden (R-Howard), a moderate who has held the Senate post for three years, said he wants to spend more time focusing on his insurance business and family.

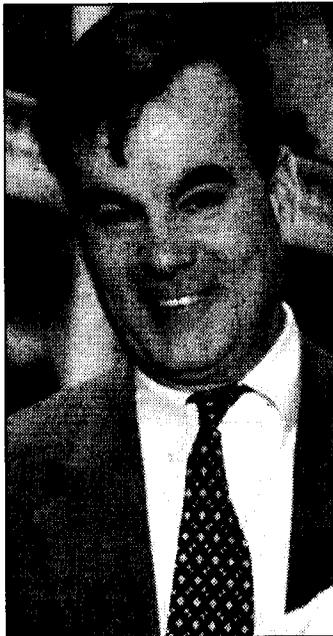
"I feel strongly that the Republican Senate caucus deserves a minority leader who can be fully engaged," Madden said.

Madden, 52, who will step aside a year before his term ends, said he is timing his departure to give Republicans a chance to find a leader who can devote full attention to promoting GOP candidates in next year's elections.

"It's important that the Republicans have someone to lead them into the next administration," he said.

Madden told Michael S. Steele, the state GOP chairman, of his decision in a Sunday night phone call. "When I woke up yesterday, the last thing I expected was for the minority leader to call and say he was resigning," Steele said. "The party is disappointed—it took us by surprise."

Madden's resignation will require the GOP's 13-member Senate caucus to choose his replace-



FILE PHOTO

Sen. Martin G. Madden (R-Howard), a moderate, said he wants to spend more time with his family and on his insurance business.

ment in time for the legislative session, which starts in January. Sen. J. Lowell Stoltzfus (R-Somerset), the Senate minority whip, who is also viewed as a moderate, said he is interested in assuming the post.

Madden, who said Stoltzfus would probably be the "consensus choice" to take over his role, said he expects the Republican Senate caucus to remain moderate in tone.

"The philosophical balance

will stay the same," he said.

Madden's departure also means that the Republican Central Committees in Prince George's and Howard counties—the senator's district is split between the two—will recommend to Gov. Parris N. Glendening (D) a replacement for the Senate seat.

Among the potential candidates is Sandra Schrader, a Madden aide whose husband, Dennis, ran for county executive in Howard County.

The Maryland General Assembly is one of the most politically lopsided legislatures in the country, with Democrats holding 106 of the 141 seats in the House and 34 of 47 in the Senate.

Madden, who was elected to the Senate seven years ago, is generally well-regarded by members of both parties.

He cited among his accomplishments his work in helping to reform the state's welfare system.

Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. said Democrats as well as Republicans will be sad to see Madden leave.

"He was part of the glue that held the Senate fabric together. He had the ability to reach across the aisle to reach a compromise," Miller said. "Unfortunately for the Republicans, Marty Madden has become a mastodon in the party."

Staff writer Matthew Mosk contributed to this report.