

# Top Md. Republican senator resigns

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Sen. Martin G. Madden — the highest-ranking Republican in the Maryland State Senate — sent shock waves through Annapolis yesterday by announcing his resignation. He will relinquish his post at the end of the year, meaning a replacement will serve out the final year of his four-year term.

Madden, 52, has been a member of the upper chamber since 1995. Despite being in the minority party, Madden clearly was one of the Senate's most respected and powerful members.

Madden said his decision to step down stemmed from his desire to spend more time with his wife and five-year-old daughter, who started kindergarten yesterday, and to pursue an opportunity to expand his insurance agency, which he has owned for 30 years.

"There comes a time when all politicians have to make this decision," Madden told *The Daily Record*. "I actually made this decision about two years ago, but my mind did not know it until six months later."

Madden — who at one time was encouraged to run for governor by some of his fellow Republicans — said it's important to make way for a new minority leader who will be "fully engaged over the next crucial 14 months" leading up to the elections in November 2002.

Madden said legislative redistricting did not play any role in his decision.

It has been widely speculated that

Madden would be pitted against fellow Republican Christopher J. McCabe, Montgomery/Howard, in the 14th District when the new redistricting plans are finalized in the 2002 General Assembly. Madden represents the 13th District, which covers portions of Howard and Prince George's counties.

Madden said he was especially proud of his role in helping reduce the state's welfare rolls by 67 percent. More than 170,000 Marylanders have moved from welfare to self-sufficiency, he said.

Republicans yesterday were surprised by the decision, and did not know who would emerge to replace Madden in the Senate.

"That is the role of the [Howard County Republican Central Committee] to find someone to replace him," said Paul Ellington, executive director of the Maryland Republican Party. "We are going to withhold comment until we hear from them. Marty is certainly going to be missed, but we understand his commitment to his family and know that he has a business opportunity."

Louis M. Pope, chairman of the Howard County Republican Central Committee, said the group would meet in the next few days to begin seeking a successor for Madden.

"My goal is not to just find someone to fill that seat for a year, but someone who will build some momentum and be ready to run again in the next election," Pope said.

However, Madden said his legislative aide, Sandy Schrader, and Pope are among a handful of qualified Republicans that are ready to fill his vacancy.

"Until yesterday, it was not something I had thought about," Pope said. "I have not even sat down and talked to my family about it."