

Ex-Delegate To Be Given Md. Job

Despite Accusation, Schaefer Backs Arnick

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Maryland Gov. William Donald Schaefer said yesterday he will give a state job to former delegate John S. Arnick, who lost a judicial appointment this year when a public furor arose over his alleged vulgar and sexist comments to two female lobbyists.

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Schaefer, who said he would specify the job in a couple of days, made it clear that he appreciated Arnick's loyalty and legislative work over the years.

"I'm going to stick with him, give him a job, and he'll do a good job," Schaefer said. "He said some things that he shouldn't have said. But I want to ask all of you, . . . any of you here that's perfect?"

Arnick, a Democrat from Dundalk, rose to majority leader and Judiciary Committee chairman during his two decades in the House of Delegates. Early this year, Schaefer named him to a District Court judgeship in Baltimore County, the sort of career-capping appointment often sought by legislative leaders.

Arnick, a lawyer, gave up his House seat to serve as a judge, an appointment that required state Senate confirmation. Such confirmations usually are routine, but Arnick's nomination ignited a political firestorm when Takoma Park lawyer Judith A. Wolfer testified before a Senate committee. She said Arnick had used vulgar and demeaning language in an Annapolis restaurant when she and a female state official lobbied him on a bill to combat domestic violence.

Many lawmakers initially closed ranks around their former colleague. But Arnick had to withdraw his nomination when senators were flooded with complaints from citizens about his alleged comments, which he neither fully acknowledged nor refuted.

Yesterday, Schaefer said the furor over Arnick's comments had unfairly overshadowed his accomplishments.

"Nowadays we're so worried over what people say and what people do," Schaefer said. "If we'd spend more time on being constructive . . . and stop a little bit of worrying about whether there's a slur here or somebody said something there, I think we'd be better off."

Schaefer said Arnick had helped him on the very legislation that had prompted the discussion with Wolfer. "He was the one who passed the legislation when I asked him, 'I need a hand on that legislation for discrimination,'" the governor said. "And he said, 'Yes, I'll help.'"

Arnick could not be reached for comment yesterday. The Baltimore Sun, which reported Schaefer's in-

tention to hire Arnick yesterday, quoted Arnick as saying there were "a couple of things" he would like to do in the state government.

Schaefer said Arnick's new job will not require Senate confirmation.

Sen. Mary H. Boergers (D-Montgomery), who had asked for a delay in Arnick's judicial confirmation, said yesterday that his new state job should be "appropriate to his skills, and not political patronage."

"My biggest concern is that citizens are going to react to this as a continuation of political patronage going to people not on the basis that they're the best person for the job," Boergers said. "This may be another demonstration that it's not what you know, but who you know."

State Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. (D-Prince George's) said yesterday, "I think John Arnick is an exceptionally well-qualified person. He's a very talented lawyer, he was a fine legislator. . . . He should not be punished forever for his extremely poor choice of words."

A state senator who spoke on condition of anonymity said Schaefer recently had floated the idea of naming Arnick to a state hearing examiner's job, which would have required Senate confirmation. When Senate leaders sent word that another bitter confirmation battle was likely, the governor decided to give Arnick a job that would not require legislative approval, the source said.