

Hogan appoints long-serving delegate, a former Republican leader, to regulatory commission



Maryland state Del. Anthony O'Donnell, left, a Calvert County Republican, addresses colleagues, including Del. Michael Vaughn, standing at right, a Prince George's County Democrat, on the last day of the state's legislative session. (Steve Ruark / AP)

By **Scott Dance and Michael Dresser** · **Contact Reporters**
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Gov. Larry Hogan has named Del. Anthony O'Donnell, a former Baltimore Gas and Electric Co. worker who for years was a key Republican voice of opposition in the General Assembly, to the Maryland Public Service Commission.

O'Donnell, 55, is Hogan's third appointment to the five member panel. O'Donnell replaces Anne Hoskins, whom former Gov. Martin O'Malley tapped to fill a partial term in 2013.

The commission is responsible for setting gas and electric utility rates, and it also regulates telephone and water utilities, taxicabs and other common carriers.

O'Donnell was officially appointed last week, but will not assume his role until later this summer. His background differs from the other members of the commission, who are primarily lawyers or former bureaucrats who worked in regulatory or environmental policy.

Hogan spokesman Matthew A. Clark said O'Donnell has "got great expertise. We thought he was the best candidate for the job."

O'Donnell, who must resign his post in the legislature to take the job, said he's looking forward to the change after 22 years in the House of Delegates, including seven as minority leader.

"I look at it as continuing my public service, simply in a different venue," he said.

The state Senate must confirm O'Donnell's appointment when the General Assembly reconvenes next year.

The staunchly conservative Republican from Calvert County said his legislative career was heavily focused on energy issues, pointing to the presence of two power plants in his Southern Maryland district in addition to the Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant.

O'Donnell spent 15 years working at that plant before leaving BGE in 2002. He said he started in nuclear maintenance and worked his way up to director of emergency preparedness. He's also a Navy veteran.

O'Donnell is not an attorney but noted that it is not a prerequisite of the job.

"It might be an advantage to have a different perspective," he said.

Baltimore Sun reporter Erin Cox contributed to this article.

sdance@baltsun.com

mdresser@baltsun.com

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