

# Incoming House speaker shifts leadership posts

## Baltimore area among gainers

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Lawmakers from the Baltimore area and Southern Maryland have come out as winners in a reshuffling of the Maryland House of Delegates' leadership by the incoming speaker.

Casper R. Taylor Jr., a Democrat from Cumberland, is promoting two Democrats from Baltimore County and one each from Anne Arundel County, Baltimore and Southern Maryland for major leadership roles.

Mr. Taylor also announced last week he was dumping a fellow Western Marylander, Majority Leader D. Bruce Poole, and re-creating a sixth committee abolished last year.

By no coincidence, he chose for the leadership jobs delegates who supported his bid to succeed retiring Speaker R. Clayton Mitchell Jr., a Kent County Democrat.

"I started this whole process trying to reach fair and equitable regional balance," said Mr. Taylor, a former tavern owner who is expected to be formally elected speaker next month.

He had promised to retain members of Mr. Mitchell's leadership team in exchange for their support. However, he later made an exception of Mr. Poole, whom he replaced with another lawyer, Kenneth H. Masters of Baltimore County.

Mr. Taylor said he removed Mr. Poole because he didn't believe both the speaker and the Democratic majority's floor leader should hail from the same region.

Mr. Taylor said he offered Mr. Poole the chairmanship of a second-tier committee, but Mr. Poole turned it down.

Mr. Poole said, "I made the decision, when Cas broke the commitment to me, that I may as well step away from a leadership I don't agree with and become an independent voice."

The new chairman of the Economic Matters Committee, replacing Mr. Taylor, will be Michael E. Busch, an athletics administrator from Annapolis and an early supporter of Mr. Taylor's candidacy.

The chairman and vice chairman of the new Commerce and Govern-

ment Matters Committee are, respectively, Gerald J. Curran of Baltimore and John F. Wood Jr. of Southern Maryland.

The committee will handle bills on banking, election laws, ethics, local government, procurement and transportation.

Richard Rynd of Baltimore County will become vice chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, a position that became vacant when Sheila E. Hixson of Montgomery County moved into the top job. The former chairman, Tyras S. Athey, resigned this year.

For those who are keeping score, the top House leadership posts — the six committee leaders, majority leader and speaker pro tem — will be held by two Prince George's County delegates, two from Baltimore and one each from the Eastern Shore and Anne Arundel, Montgomery and Baltimore counties.