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Subject: : Frist appoints Emily Reynolds as Secretary of Senate
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SUBJECT:: Frist appoints Emily Reynolds as Secretary of Senate
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Senate's Top Sergeant

Incoming Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) has asked retired Army Maj. Gen. Alfonso Lenhardt to stay on as Senate sergeant of arms. Lenhardt is the Senate's first African American sergeant at arms.

Among those on tap for top positions in Frist's leadership office are chief of staff Emily Reynolds as secretary of the Senate, Mitch Bainwol, who worked under Frist at the Republican senatorial campaign committee, as chief of staff, and longtime Lott staffer David J. Schiappa as secretary of the GOP majority.

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Frist Puts His Team in Place

January 6, 2003

By Mark Preston,
Roll Call Staff

Lott Lands at Rules Panel

Seeking to soften the blow from his ouster as Majority Leader, GOP leaders will give Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) the chairmanship of the Rules and Administration Committee.

Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.), who was in line to head the Rules panel in the 108th Congress, has agreed to step aside to allow Lott to retain some institutional power, several Republican sources said. Senate GOP leaders are scheduled to meet today to conduct a broader conversation about committee chairmanships, including Lott's appointment.

"It makes sense for the outgoing Republican leader to have a seat at the committee table," said a senior Senate GOP source.

Lott resigned his post on Dec. 20 under heavy pressure from Democrats and some Republicans over his comments that appeared to praise retiring Sen. Strom Thurmond's (R-S.C.) 1948 segregationist presidential platform. Lott made the comments at Thurmond's 100th birthday party.

Lott ranks seventh in seniority among Republicans on the Rules panel, but the six Senators ahead of him either chair more powerful committees or serve in the leadership. Santorum is the chairman of the Republican Conference, the third-ranking position on the GOP leadership team.

As Rules chairman, Lott would be charged with overseeing the internal workings of the Senate, with responsibilities ranging from doling out office space to handling contested elections. While Rules is powerful within the institution, it does not have the stature of influential committees such as Commerce, Science, and Transportation; and Finance. Lott sits on both of those panels.

News that Lott will chair the Rules panel came as his successor, incoming Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.), put the finishing touches on his own team of leadership aides.

The Tennessee Republican is relying on a combination of trusted aides, Capitol Hill veterans and a handful of holdovers from Lott's staff to help him navigate the treacherous legislative waters in the new Congress.

Frist has tapped Mitch Bainwol, the executive director of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, to be his chief of staff. Frist served as chairman of the NRSC in the recent midterm election, and the Frist-Bainwol team was widely credited with helping Republicans take back the Senate majority.

"The challenges of 2003 are large but manageable," said Bainwol. "We are working hard to quickly assemble a team of top-flight senior staff to help the new leader.

"We will also be relying very heavily on the other leaders on the team and their very seasoned staff operations," Bainwol added.

Frist's leadership aides will move into S-230, Lott's leadership suite, on Tuesday morning. Lott's leadership aides will be paid through Jan. 31, sources said.

But some of Lott's staffers will remain, including William Hoagland, Senate Republicans' budget wizard. Hoagland most recently served as the GOP staff director for the Budget Committee and was set to join Lott's staff in the 108th Congress. Frist asked Hoagland to join his office after he was elected to succeed Lott on Dec. 23. Hoagland will be responsible for overseeing appropriations and budget matters. Senate veteran David Schiappa, who served as secretary to the minority under Lott's reign, will remain as secretary to the majority.

Following tradition, Frist has named a trusted ally to one of the two top Senate patronage positions. Emily Reynolds, chief of staff in Frist's personal office, will succeed Jeri Thomson as Secretary of Senate. Longtime Lott aide Susan Wells was in line for the job, but she instead is likely to become the new staff director at Rules.

Replacing Reynolds as chief of staff in Frist's personal office will be former Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Howard Liebengood, who held that post under then-Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker (R-Tenn.).

It is not clear who will become the next Senate Sergeant-at-Arms, but it will not be former Lott aide Robbie Maxwell, who had been tapped for the job by the Mississippian. Frist is conducting a search to replace Sergeant-at-Arms Alfonso Lenhardt, who has agreed to remain in the post until a successor is named.

To serve as his top aide on national security matters, Frist has turned to Steve Biegun, the former staff director of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who currently serves as the executive secretary of the National Security Council.

And Bainwol is not the only top NRSC aide Frist has hired. Alex Vogel, the NRSC general counsel, and NRSC communications director Ginny Wolfe will play similar roles in Frist's leadership office.

In addition, Libby Jarvis, retiring Sen. Fred Thompson's (R-Tenn.) legislative director, will work on domestic policy issues, and Dean Rosen, the minority staff director of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions subcommittee on public health, will be Frist's top health-care aide.

Bainwol also said several people, including Senate GOP leadership aide Lee Johnson, are aiding Frist in the transition.

The full Senate Republican Conference will meet Wednesday to discuss the upcoming legislative agenda and Lott's ascension to Rules chairman.

"We are looking forward to the conference on January 8, to begin laying out the Senate Republican agenda," Bainwol said.

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