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Long-time GOP state Sen. Bob Rankin resigns



By Megan Verlee and Bente Birkeland · Dec. 1, 2022, 3:38 pm

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2021.

Republican state sen. Bob Rankin of Carbondale, a longtime fixture on the powerful Joint Budget Committee, is leaving the legislature.

“I have informed the Secretary of the Senate my intention to resign from the Colorado State Senate effective January 10th,” Rankin, 80, said in a statement announcing his move.

“After proudly serving this state for the past 10 years, I have made the decision to move forward with the next chapter of my life.”

The new legislative session convenes on Jan 9. The resignation comes midway through Rankin’s four-year term. This means his seat will be filled by a vacancy committee made up of Republican Party members in his district. Senate Republican leaders will pick his replacement on the budget committee.

Rankin was first elected to the state House in 2012 and served eight years there before being term-limited. During that time he was appointed to the Joint Budget Committee, a position he has used to advocate for funding in rural parts of the state.

In 2019 he was appointed to represent Senate District 8, which at the time covered Summit County and the northwestern corner of the state. In 2020 he won a full four-year term to the seat.

During his tenure, Rankin was known for crossing the aisle and being a strong advocate for rural Colorado. He generally tried to take a more moderate approach to governing.

And he weathered the historic ups and downs of budgeting in the pandemic. The economic shutdown **forced the state to cut more than \$3 billion** in spending, a painful exercise that was quickly followed by an influx of billions of additional dollars thanks to state and federal stimulus packages.

“First, the cuts of last year, and there's this amazing restoration,” **Rankin reflected in 2021.** “You could write a book about it.”

represents the 3rd congressional district on the State Board of Education, has also worked in his legislative office.

In a statement, Democratic Gov. Jared Polis thanked Rankin for his public service and said he enjoyed working with him on a host of issues from lowering property taxes to increasing capacity for search and rescue operations.

“Senator Rankin’s commitment to bipartisanship and fiscal responsibility is a model for all of us, and his steady hand on the Joint Budget Committee will be missed,” Polis said.

Incoming Democratic House Speaker Julie McCluskie previously worked with Rankin on the JBC and said she would miss the “abundance of kindness” he brought to the Capitol every day.

“His dedication and steadfast commitment to always putting Coloradans and good public policy ahead of politics has made our state a better place for everyone,” she said.

The 2020 redistricting process reshuffled Rankin’s district. The new borders put his home in the 5th district, which has only a slight — three-point — Republican tilt, based on recent elections. On Jan. 9, Rankin will officially be sworn in to represent his new district. On Jan. 10 he’ll resign, and it will be a GOP vacancy committee from that district that will pick a replacement to fill out the final two years of his term.

Other current and former colleagues also released tributes upon the news of his resignation.

“We are all incredibly grateful for Senator Rankin’s service to this state,” state Senate Minority Leader John Cooke said in a statement. “His grit, integrity, and honesty is something every member of the General Assembly can aspire to.”

Former Senate President Kevin Grantham tweeted that Rankin left behind big shoes to fill, calling him “One of the most knowledgeable rep/sens in the building.”

Democratic Attorney General Phil Weiser tweeted, “This is a loss for Colorado. Senator Rankin is a gem and a true public servant.”

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Senate Republicans, during which one of their members [switched his party affiliation to Democratic](#) and [the party lost two seats](#) in the November election.

When the new legislature convenes in January, Republicans will hold less than a third of the seats in both chambers, the smallest Republican minority in state history.

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