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Ritter seeks input

Wants public to weigh in on Salazar's replacement

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Gov. Bill Ritter said yesterday he will move quickly, deliberately and thoughtfully to select a replacement for U.S. Sen. Ken Salazar, D-Colo., who was nominated by President-elect Barack Obama on Wednesday to serve as the nation's Interior secretary.

In the coming days, the governor will consult with Coloradans throughout the state on the decision. Ritter's office has established an e-mail address that people can use to send their views and comments about who they think the next senator should be: ussenate.comments@state.co.us.

"I will act as quickly as possible to name a successor for Sen. Salazar," Ritter said. "I take this responsibility seriously, and my most important requirement is to pick the person who can best serve all the people of Colorado in the U.S. Senate."

Local organizations weigh in

The New Agenda, a nonpartisan women's rights organization, is calling on Ritter to appoint a woman to fill the senate seat. Currently, Colorado has the second highest level of representation of women in the state legislature with 36 percent. Only Vermont ranks higher with 38.3 percent and South Carolina is last with 8.8 percent, according to the Center for American Women and Politics.

"Gov. Ritter has an important obligation to the women of Colorado and America," stated Amy Siskind, co-founder of The New Agenda. "We are optimistic that he will move us forward on behalf of a state with a rich history of women leaders. The New Agenda has recommended candidates including Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo., former state Senate President Joan Fitzgerald and Lt. Gov. Barbara O'Brien.

ProgressNowAction, a local nonprofit organization, released the initial results of an online poll in which 5,000 people voted. The top five candidates, listed in order by most votes received are: Colorado Speaker of the House Andrew Romanoff, D-Denver; DeGette; Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper; Rep. Ed Perlmutter, D-Colo.; and Ken Salazar's brother, Rep. John Salazar, D-Colo.

Web information

For more information on The New Agenda, visit www.thenewagenda.net. For more information on the online poll conducted by ProgressNowAction, visit www.progressnowaction.org.

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