

## TOWNNEWS

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### Roby already making impact

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Kim N. Price Publisher |

Freshman Congresswoman-elect Martha Roby has hit the ground running in Washington after being named to the new transition team for incoming members of Congress.

Roby defeated incumbent Democrat Bobby Bright in a seat that had been targeted two years ago after the election of The House Republican Congressional Committee spent hundreds of thousands in many races, including Roby's to knock incumbent. Combine that with a frustrated electorate and you got a red tidal wave on Election Day that catapulted a bunch of congressmen and women into Washington.

Roby will learn quickly in Washington or she'll be eaten alive by the political wolves that roam those hallowed grounds to her getting appointed to the House Agriculture Committee, which is very important to the 2nd District, and the military committee, with the military installations in the district.

Roby made a good decision with her selection of Stephen Boyd as her new chief of staff. Boyd most recently worked as communications director for U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions of Alabama.

That gives her a seasoned Hill staffer to help her weave through the halls of Congress, which is the toughest part of getting mainstream in Congress. Boyd knows the committee process as well. He served as the key Republican spokesperson for the Judiciary Committee on a number of high profile issues, including the Senate confirmation proceedings for two Supreme Court justices.

Prior to his role as Sessions' communications guy, Boyd worked as legislative counsel on Sessions' staff, handling issues for the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources focusing on legal and policy matters related to energy, environmental and infrastructure.

He is a 2004 UA Law School grad and a 2001 communications major from UA.

Roby is a member of a freshman class that saw eight Republican women win House seats, breaking the old record of 112th Congress convenes in January, a record number of new Republican women will be seated, according to the Republican American Women and Politics.

Two additional Republican women are waiting for final calls on their close races, as are two Democrats.

Four new Democratic women also will be joining the House, but nine incumbent Democratic congresswomen lost their seats with retirements, that means the House will have at least 70 women.

The 111th Congress in 2010 had 73 women in the House.

Roby has certainly made a name for herself, which is quite a step up the political ladder from the chambers of the Municipal Council.

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If Gov. Bob Riley calls a special legislative session to deal with ethics reform — and we think some other issues too — governor to call a special session before newly elected lawmakers even begin serving in the regular session.

Legislators began their terms the day after the election or as soon as they took the oath.

Riley has good reason to call lawmakers into session. It is the first time since Reconstruction that Alabama has a GOI houses.

Democrats have fought his agendas for eight years, especially ethics reform. His ethics reform package in the last session the floor for a vote.

That was because the powerful Rules Chairman Sen. Lowell Baron usually kept Republican bills from getting attention they were DOA.

Riley can add some last minute stars in his administration's crown with the new Legislature in place, including issues and making any form of bingo in the state illegal. That, however, would take a statewide vote of the people to reverse

We would be surprised if any gambling bills appear on any ballot in the near future. The issue is on another legal court will get played out next year.

*Kim N. Price is president of Price Publications.*

#### More about Kim

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