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459 **Jim McClure will be a hard man to replace**

Senator Jim McClure comes about as close as any man ever has of earning the name "Mr. Idaho", and he will be a hard man to replace in the U.S. Senate.

Idahoans have been aware for some time that Senator McClure was contemplating retirement from his long political career, but like most Idahoans, this editor had been hopeful that he would reconsider and remain in the Senate for another term.

Although his announcement last week that he would not run for another term did not come as an entire surprise, it brought disappointment to most Idahoans.

Senator McClure has been almost "one of a kind" during his political career in that once Idahoans, or anyone else for that matter, had McClure's word, they could be certain that he would not go back on it.

During most of Senator McClure's national political career, his stand on national and state issues has been very close to that of this newspaper. On the rare occasions when his stand did not coincide with ours, we were always able to understand and respect his reasoning.

Senator McClure has been a valuable friend to Idaho's nuclear industry and the INEL, and his committee positions in Washington have brought Idaho a measure of political "clout" far in excess of that of other rural states with sparse population. Loss of McClure's seniority will tend to erode that political "clout".

Idaho has a good number of able politicians who are signifying their willingness to become candidates for Senator McClure's seat in the U.S. Senate. However, in most cases Idaho must lose an able representative in one area to fill the position vacated by Senator McClure.

On the Democrat side, one of those most prominently mentioned is Second District Representative Richard Stallings. Stallings has been doing a good job for Idaho in the lower house and although his run for the Senate might be welcomed by Republican congressional aspirants in the Second District, it would be a loss of experience for Idaho in the House. Also prominently mentioned on the Democrat side is former Governor John Evans, who could be a controversial figure in East Idaho.

On the Republican side, First District Congressman Larry Craig has announced his candidacy for Senator McClure's

seat. Congressman Craig is an able representative but, as with Stallings, would diminish Idaho's "clout" in the Democrat-dominated House.

Regardless of whom Idaho's next Senator is, Senator McClure will be a "hard act to follow" and Idaho is going to miss the influence "Mr. Idaho" has wielded in the U.S. Senate.

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