

# Eastern Idaho Democrat seen likely choice for lieutenant governor post

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BOISE — An Eastern Idaho Democrat likely will be appointed the new lieutenant governor, said Lt. Gov. John V. Evans, who is slated to become the new Idaho governor, in an exclusive interview here.

Evans will automatically advance to the state's executive position with the appointment by President-elect Jimmy Carter of Idaho Gov. Cecil D. Andrus to become the new secretary of interior.

Evans said he has a long list of candidates but added it appeared East Idaho has among the most outstanding.

Among those he named are former State Sen. Ray W. Rigby, Rexburg attorney; former State Sen. Stan Kress, Firth school superintendent, who narrowly lost in his quest to win the Second District congressional spot; State Rep. Patricia McDermott, Pocatello, House minority leader; State Rep. Melvin Hammond, Rexburg, former minority leader; and former State Sen. Robert Saxvik, Burley.

"There are many others besides this," he said.

Of these, Rigby or Kress are looked on as

having the inside track.

Evans, who arrived in Boise Friday morning to act as governor while Andrus was at Plains, Ga., to be informed of his new position, said he anticipates no major changes in the state official family, aside from the assistants Andrus may take with him to Washington.

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Evans pointed out he and Andrus, both Democrats, have had close working relations while he was lieutenant governor the past two years and before that as the Senate minority leader.

"Governor Andrus has always confided in me on any major state governmental policies and legislation," said Evans.

#### **Transition period**

He pointed out Andrus likely will be busy at the nation's Capital soon during the transition period of moving the administration from President Ford to Carter.

"I would hope," said Evans, "that Governor Andrus will present the State of the State and the budget messages. He has been responsible for this."

This would be done the first week of the legislature which convenes Jan. 10. Andrus would take his new post Jan. 20.

Evans said he anticipates briefing sessions by Andrus of all the departments so that he will be able to assume the governorship.

Regarding appointments, Evans said that likely some may want to retire or go back to their former jobs in private industry.

"One of the secrets of Governor Andrus' success has been his ability to select top people to head departments," he said.

#### **Office help**

He pointed out, for example, that an executive such as Darrell V. Manning, director the Department of Transportation, might even go with Andrus to his new assignment, and there could be others, including some members of his office staff, such as ad-

ministrative assistants John Hough, R. J. Bruning and Gary Catron; and Chris Carlson, press secretary.

Evans said he plans to ask formation of a team of about a dozen to study the investigation of departmental changes.

Evans pointed out he had always planned to seek the governorship after Andrus had served, but this came earlier than he anticipated.

"But I'm ready," he said with a smile.

Evans, now 51, won the lieutenant governorship by defeating GOP State Chairman Vernon F. Ravenscroft two years ago.

He has served 14 years in the Senate, six as minority leader under two different governors and two as a majority leader under a third governor. He served two terms as mayor of Malad and operates a ranch at Malad.