

Successor To Saxbe Appointed

By Abe Gzaidan

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COLUMBUS, Ohio, Dec. 19 —Gov. John J. Gilligan today announced the appointment of Cleveland Businessman Howard Metzenbaum, a Democrat, to succeed Republican Sen. William Saxbe of Ohio.

Metzenbaum, 56, will serve the last year of Saxbe's term. The Republican senator is to become U.S. Attorney General Jan. 4.

Gilligan ended weeks of speculation at a news conference here this morning by declaring his choice of Metzenbaum on the basis of what he called "leadership, compassion, intelligence and dedication that we require in those men we choose for our high public offices."

In selecting Metzenbaum, Gilligan dealt a political setback to former astronaut John Glenn Jr., who is opposing the Clevelander for the Democratic nomination to the U.S. Senate in the primary next May.

Acknowledging that his decision would inject some controversy into that campaign, the governor nevertheless said that it was his "legal responsibility" to appoint the man he felt was the most qualified for the job.

Anticipating accusations that he might be playing favorites, Gilligan said the primary campaign, so far as he was concerned, was still "open and the winner would remain the ultimate choice of the people."

Asked whether his decision was influenced by labor leaders backing Metzenbaum, Gilligan said he had sought advice from scores of people around Ohio and that there was no single force that shaped his decision.

In response to a question about whether the appointment constituted his personal endorsement of Metzenbaum in the 1974 primary, Gilligan replied: "I have appointed him —not endorsed him."

Metzenbaum remained at his home in Shaker Heights Wednesday and was told of Gilligan's announcement by newsmen.

"I look forward with enthusiasm and confidence to serving the people of Ohio," Metzenbaum said. "Assuming my ability to be elected (in the Democratic primary), it will make it much more possible to be more effective for the people of Ohio in that I will have one more year of seniority over other senators elected in 1974."

Glenn, 52, promptly issued a statement from his office across the street from the statehouse charging that the governor had made a "highly political choice at a time, when confidence of the people in our entire governmental process has never been lower."

Glenn also said he was determined to remain in the race despite the governor's action.

"I'm in the race to stay," Glenn said. "The voters will have a choice."