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Dec. 10.

Senate confirms new EPA head

By John Heilprin THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Senate confirmed Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt as head of the Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday, filling a four-month vacancy with a lopsided vote that did not reflect the efforts by some Democrats to turn his nomination into a referendum on President Bush's environmental policies.

By a vote of 88-8, senators backed Bush's choice of the Utah Republican to head the nation's lead agency for enforcing environmental rules. Leavitt said he will start the job at EPA on Nov. 6, a day after he resigns as governor. His first task, Leavitt said, will be to earn the trust of EPA's 18,000 employees.

"I continue to be very optimistic that I can make a contribution," he told reporters from Salt Lake City, where he learned about the midmorning vote while working out at a downtown healthclub. "I accepted this responsibility because I believe the president is committed to substantially more progress on the environment, and doing it in such a way that does not compromise our place in the world competitively.

The nominee was helped by his three terms as governor, during which he gained a reputation as an affable and competent manager and molded alliances among Senate Democrats who are

Westerners or former governors. Just after the vote, Sen. James Jeffords, I-Vt., who had once tried to delay the confirmation vote, shared a laugh with and, in a congratulatory gesture, twice patted the shoulder of Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

Despite weeks of Democratic efforts to block or delay the vote, including a boycott of one of Inhofe's committee meetings, only eight voted against Leavitt. One, Sen. Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey, led the charge against the nominee on the Senate floor.

"Despite his commentary about balance and stewardship, Gov. Leavitt's record ... reveals a disturbing tendency to place shortsighted economic gain of regulated industries above protecting the long-term health of the public," Lautenberg said.

"The last three years have been the darkest hour of our nation's commitment to environmental protection since EPA was created," he said. "This White

Senate confirms **EPA** head

Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt was approved by the Senate to become head of the Environmental Protection Ac today.

► Born on Feb. 11, 1951 in

Cedar City, Utah. ► Earned a bachelor's degree in economics and business from Southern Utah University.

► Won the governorship for the first time in 1992 and is serving his third term. ► Married to Jacalyn Smith.H

and his wife have five children SOURCES: State of Utah; Associated

House has repeatedly foisted

penchant for secrecy and con up on the Environment Protection Agency.'

Inhofe said opponents w 'misrepresenting the Bu administration's progress" ont environment and distort Leavitt's record. "We desperate need to have this man in office," Inhofe said of Lean who was nominated in August fill the vacancy resulting fr Christie Whitman's departure

And a media frenzy.

Her ideas created the new Explorer SportTrac.

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And when the SportTrac was introduced to the world, so was Candy. The media actually mentioned her by name in several publications. Of course, at Ford Motor Company we've always believed that credit should go where credit is due. And in the case of the new Explorer SportTrac, Candy deserves all the credit in the world. Imagine where your ideas could take you when you explore the world of Ford Motor Company.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Separated Egyptian twins continue recovery process

DALLAS (AP) — Catheters in the chest veins of the separated Egyptian twins were removed Tuesday, decreasing the risk of serious infection, doctors at Children's Medical Center Dallas said.

Mohamed and Ahmed Ibrahim are progressing in their therapy sessions and their nutrition is good. Although still weak, they continue to make daily progress, said Dr. James Thomas, chief of critical care services.

Ahmed also visited his brother's room for the

first time Monday.

"He obviously enjoyed his wagon ride to a from the room, but smiled the broadest when discovered Mohamed in his crib," Thomas said

"While Mohamed is more physically play shaking his rattle and throwing other object Ahmed taught himself how to click his tonguet morning and beams with pride each time he do it, especially if the noise gets a response from staff or family members."

The 2-year-old boys were separated to the tops of their heads in a 34-hour surger on Oct. 12.

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