

NEWS RELEASE
MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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Supreme Court Justice to Swear in New PSC Commissioners

HELENA - Montana's newly-elected public service commissioners take the oath of office Monday during a ceremony at the state agency.

At 10:30 a.m. Monday, Montana Supreme Court Justice James A. Rice will administer the oath of office to Bob Lake, Roger Koopman and Kirk Bushman, who were elected in November to four-year terms. The public is encouraged to attend the ceremony in the PSC's Bollinger Room, 1701 Prospect Ave. in Helena.

"I'm looking forward to the opportunity to work with my fellow commissioners to bring the costs of regulated services down for the people of Montana," Lake, R-Hamilton, said.

Lake, who served eight years in Montana's House of Representatives and since 2010 in the state Senate, believes his experience in the legislature will benefit the PSC and all Montanans.

The former business owner said his top priority is lowering the costs of regulated services - a goal he plans to accomplish in part by working closely with lawmakers and his fellow commissioners.

Koopman, R-Bozeman, who served two terms in Montana's House of Representatives and is a current business owner, echoed Lake's comments.

"This is an especially exciting time to be joining the commission, partly because of the critical issues we have before us, and partly because the make-up of the new commission is so strongly represented by small business people and entrepreneurs who by nature are used to being visionary and proactive," he said.

A "highly aggressive" commission that defends the best interests of Montana ratepayers will in turn strengthen the economy and improve the state's future, Koopman said.

"That's the essential mission we have before us on the PSC, and we have a wonderful blend of skills and experience among the commissioners and the PSC staff, that I believe are very much up to the task," he said.

Bushman, R-Billings, said he's honored to represent southeastern Montana's District 2 and is looking forward to taking office at the PSC, where commissioners are reviewing natural gas rate cases filed by the state's two largest regulated utilities.

"With two big rate cases already underway, it's important to hit the ground running," he said.

Joining the three new commissioners are current members Travis Kavulla, R-Great Falls, and Bill Gallagher, R-Helena. The new commission first meets at 1:30 p.m. Monday to select a chairman and vice

chairman and at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday for a regular weekly business meeting. PSC meetings are streamed live online at www.psc.mt.gov.

The PSC generally regulates private, investor-owned natural gas, electric, telephone, private water and sewer companies doing business in Montana. The agency also regulates certain limited transportation service providers.

For more information, contact PSC Communications/Research Director Justin Post at 406.444.6171. Follow the PSC at [Twitter.com/@MT_PSC](https://twitter.com/MT_PSC) or visit [Facebook.com/MontanaPSC](https://facebook.com/MontanaPSC).