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By IKE MGBATOGU

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COLUMBUS – Former Ohio Treasurer Kevin Boyce, who left public sector employment for the private sector after losing his reelection bid as Treasurer of State, is right back in it.

Last week, Ohio House Democrats named Boyce to represent the 27th House district, allowing him to take over the seat left vacant after the resignation of W. Carlton Weddington who was recently indicted for bribery, election falsification and filing false ethics statement.

The Columbus native was sworn into office Wednesday and has been added to the official roster of House members on its website.

He is excited to be back to government service.

“I’m thrilled at the opportunity to return to public life and I’m honored to represent my community in the Ohio House,” said Boyce, who went on to say, “This is a critical moment for working and middle class families in the 27th House District. We have both great challenges and great opportunities ahead, but we must find better ways to work together and build broad-based prosperity from the bottom up.”

And speaking of “challenges and opportunities,” both were amply in play for Boyce in 2008 after former Governor Ted Strickland named him Treasurer of State to replace Richard Cordray who left to become Ohio Attorney General.

Boyce served in that statewide post from 2009 to 2011, but failed to hold on to that position after losing his reelection bid to Republican challenger Josh Mandel.

Most recently, Boyce worked for Rice Financial as managing director specializing in municipal bonds.

Boyce joined the Columbus city council in 2000, serving there for eight years during which he rose to become Chair of the Council’s Finance and Appropriations Committee and a member of Mayor Michael Coleman’s economic advisory panel.

Before joining the council, Boyce worked as executive director of KnowledgeWorks Foundation. Taken together, that package of experience plus his generally affable personality convinced Strickland that he was the best man for Treasurer of State job. Now, those factors are also the reasons House Democrats believe he is the best candidate to serve the 27th House District as Weddington’s replacement.

“There’s no doubt Kevin will serve his constituents with the same integrity and professionalism that has come to define him over the years,” said House Minority Leader Armond Budish. “Kevin has a unique blend of experiences that will make him a great lawmaker and strong advocate for his community. We are thrilled to have Kevin join the Ohio House Democratic Caucus.”

For Mayo Makinde, the news regarding Boyce’s selection as Weddington’s replacement is a “bittersweet” feeling. The former President of East Columbus Civic Association applied for the job, and was also a candidate against Weddington in a contest for the seat back in 2008.

But at the same time, Makinde told the Call & Post that he is pleased it was Kevin who got the nod, noting that he has nothing but praises for him.

“Kevin was one [person] I had looked up to while gaining my interest in politics,” said Makinde, who added, “He was someone I trusted to do the job well,” stemming from my experience working with him in City Government as a community leader.

Boyce is a product of Columbus’ public schools. He graduated from East High School before receiving his Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from the University of Toledo and later his Master’s degree in Public Administration from Central Michigan University in 2004.

He is married to Crystal, and they have two sons, K.J. and Kristopher.

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