

OKLAHOMA CITY - Glenn Coffee said Friday that he is stepping down as secretary of state. The announcement from one of Gov. Mary Fallin's top advisers comes just two months before the start of the legislative session in February. "There is never a convenient time," Coffee said, adding that he and his family just recently made the decision. Coffee's departure leaves a void of institutional knowledge in Fallin's inner circle, though the former congresswoman, lieutenant governor and state House member is a political veteran. Fallin said Coffee helped craft fiscally conservative budgets, landmark lawsuit reform and workers compensation legislation. "His experience and wealth of knowledge will be sorely missed," Fallin said. "I wish him the best in his future endeavors." Coffee, 45, will leave his \$90,000-a-year post no later than Jan. 31. He advised Fallin to have a successor in place by Feb. 1. Coffee served 12 years in the Oklahoma Senate, rising from minority leader to the first Republican to serve as president pro tem before term limits ended his legislative career. He actively campaigned to elect Republicans to the Senate and was instrumental in GOP efforts in 2008 to gain control of the Legislature's upper chamber. Coffee said he will pursue a career in the private sector. He said he has some things in the works that he is not ready to publicly discuss. He said he has no plans to go back to work for the Senate. "This is about me and my family," Coffee said. "It was just time." Coffee lives in Oklahoma City with his wife, Lisa, and their four children. "If I didn't have the needs of my family to consider, I suspect I would have to be pried out of this building," Coffee said in his Wednesday resignation letter to Fallin. Secretary of Finance Preston Doerflinger will assume Coffee's responsibilities as Fallin's lead budget negotiator. Fallin plans to retain Coffee as a consultant on water issues. Details of the arrangement have not been finalized. "We plan to name a permanent replacement but do not have a hard timeline in place," said Alex Weintz, a Fallin spokesman. Fallin's appointment of Coffee to the post drew criticism due to

a law that required lawmakers to wait two years before they can be hired by the state, unless they are paid with funds that are not appropriated. Coffee's salary came from non-appropriated funds. Coffee holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Northeastern State University and a law degree from the University of Oklahoma. Gov. Mary Fallin's Cabinet Gary Ridley: Secretary of Transportation Stephen McKeever: Secretary of Science and Technology Preston Doerflinger: Secretary of Finance Michael Ming: Secretary of Energy Maj. Gen. Rita Aragon: Secretary of Veterans affairs Jim Reese: Secretary of Agriculture Dave Lopez: Secretary of Commerce Phyllis Hudecki: Secretary of Education Gary Sherrer: Secretary of Environment Terry Cline: Secretary of Health and Human Services Maj. Gen. Myles Deering: Secretary of Military Michael Thompson: Secretary of Safety and Security Lt. Gov. Todd Lamb: Cabinet-level post of small business advocate Alex Pettit: Chief Information Officer Barbara Hoberock 405-528-2465 Original Print Headline: Coffee to resign as secretary of state