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Joe Hackney seeks re-election in 54th House District

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PITTSBORO -- Joe Hackney has filed for re-election to the North Carolina House of Representatives.

Joe Hackney has served as Speaker of the House of Representatives since 2007. He represents the 54th District, which is comprised of Chatham County and parts of Orange and Moore counties.

"I have been fortunate in my legislative career to represent a district with people who care deeply about the success of our state," Hackney said. "They support environmental stewardship, strong agriculture programs and continued investment in education, and that's what I have worked for during my legislative career."

During his time as Speaker, Hackney has overseen the implementation of stronger ethics rules in state government and continues to be among the state's strongest advocates for ethics and campaign finance reforms. He has also led the House as the state grappled with the worst recession since the 1930s.

Under his leadership, the General Assembly made difficult choices that resulted in a \$2.4 billion budget reduction this year.

"The global economic crisis forced us to cut state spending by 11 percent from the previous year. That was a challenge, yet we not only made our targets, but we did so in a way that kept education strong in these difficult times so that our workforce is prepared when opportunities arise."

The state also developed this smaller budget in a way that allowed it to retain its coveted high bond ratings. North Carolina is one of seven states in the country that has earned the highest ratings from all three of the major bond rating agencies. The ratings allow the state to receive the lowest interest rates available when the state borrows money for projects.

"We have not leveraged our future in North Carolina," Speaker Hackney said. "We have kept our financial integrity intact, continued to make education a priority, renewed emphasis on job creation and made steady progress in reforming our ethics laws. I'm pleased to have played a part in these efforts and I'm hopeful that the people of my district will send me back to the General Assembly so that I can continue this work on their behalf."

Prior to becoming Speaker, Hackney was House Democratic Leader for one term, House Majority Leader for one term and Speaker Pro Tempore for two terms. As House Leader, he helped win back the majority in 2004 and expand this majority in 2006. No Democratic seats were lost during his leadership of the caucus.

Speaker Hackney began his legal career as a clerk for North Carolina Supreme Court Associate Justice Frank Huskins. He worked as an assistant district attorney in Orange and Chatham counties from 1971-74 before entering politics as the campaign manager for North Carolina Congressman Ike Andrews.

Since 1974, Hackney has been a partner in the Epting & Hackney law firm in Chapel Hill, N.C. In addition, he and his brother continue to operate the family cattle farm in Chatham County where they grew up.

Hackney received a bachelor's degree in political science and a juris doctorate degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He and his wife, Betsy, have two adult sons, Dan and Will.

Speaker Hackney is the immediate past president of the National Conference of State Legislatures. In 2007, he received the group's Excellence in State Legislative Leadership Award, the nation's top honor for state legislators.

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