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Long makes history in District 45



By Jese Williams - Reporter

Republican Deborah Long was leading Democrat Fred Thomas at press time in the race for the S.C. House District 45 seat, which covers parts of Lancaster and northern York counties.

As of 11:30 p.m., Long had 7,174 votes in Lancaster County, while Thomas had 6,758 votes.

York County numbers were unavailable, but they usually favor the Republican candidate.

Long will make history if her lead holds, becoming the first woman elected to the state House from Lancaster County. Thomas would have made history had he won. He would have become the first black since Reconstruction to win a Lancaster County House seat.

Long, a Fort Mill optometrist, and Thomas, who serves on Lancaster County Council, were vying for the House seat held by Mick Mulvaney, who was running for the state Senate District 16 seat.

While awaiting the House 45 numbers to come in, both Long and Thomas spoke of how clean the race was.

"We ran a very positive race," Thomas said. "I'm very proud of that."

On Tuesday night, Long wasn't only concerned with the election, but was also thinking about her husband, Jim, who had a heart transplant a day before.

Long said some of her campaign events had to be rescheduled or canceled as she tended to her husband.

He remained hospitalized while she kept tabs on the race at the Lancaster County Administration Building on Tuesday night.

"You just do what you got to do," Long said. "The only regret is that my husband couldn't be here."

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