

## Blackwood turns back Cognac challenge

**By Jason deBruyn**  
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"I appreciate how nice the people were to me and the confidence they placed in me," Blackwood said. "I ran an honest and positive campaign and they responded to it."

The Republican won the 68th District N.C. House of Representatives seat by nearly a 2-to-1 margin, earning 65 percent of the votes.

"It's a tough district," said former Marvin Mayor Mike Cognac, his Democratic opponent. "He has good name recognition. ... We got in late and we gave it our very best shot."

Cognac did not enter the race until August, after fellow Democrat Dan Zeller pulled out. Despite the late start, Cognac said that his campaign did have some successes. "We were incredibly organized," he said. "If nothing else, we got out the message that the people in the 68th District need to pay attention to what is happening in Raleigh because we are getting the short end of the stick here."

Blackwood has served in the House for six years and has been a stubborn opponent for the Democratic machine, something critics say has restricted his ability to be effective in the office. His supporters counter that he stands for what he believes in, even if it means not reaching out to Democrats to pass or write legislation to benefit Union County.

Blackwood has said he is against district representation and involuntary annexation and strongly in favor of the death penalty. He said that tackling the deficit in the state budget was of high priority on his to-do list for the next term, but did not yet know exactly how to tackle that.

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