

Is it Richard Morgan's last hurrah? In unofficial returns from yesterday's runoff primary election, Morgan was decisively defeated by Mike Causey of Greensboro for the G-O-P Nomination to face incumbent state insurance commissioner Wayne Goodwin in the November General Election. Morgan failed even to carry, Moore, his home county. A retired Eagle Springs Insurance Executive, the 60-year-old Morgan, was once among the most important political figures in state politics. In 2003 he was elected Co-Speaker of the North Carolina House Of Representatives, having previously served as Chairman of the powerful house rules committee. Three years later some republicans, angered by Morgan's seeming indifference to party loyalty, engineered his defeat in the 2006 primary at the hand of an inexperienced newcomer, Joe Boyolan. Since then Morgan has made two unsuccessful attempts to return to statewide prominence. Four years ago he won his primary bid for the office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction but lost in the general election. Tuesday's lopsided defeat could convince Morgan that statewide name recognition is not enough to turn back a determined challenger like Mike Causey who even attracted the backing of the Moore County Tea Party. Republicans featured in three other state runoff primary elections. Dan Forest easily won his primary battle with Tony Gurley for Lieutenant Governor. Ed Goodwin turned back Ken Gardner for secretary of State, and John Tedesco received the G-O-P Nomination for Superintendent of Public Instruction, turning back Richard Alexander. In the only Democratic Party Runoff, Voters favored John Brooks over Marlow Foster for Commissioner of Labor.