

Trump-Backed Pastor Mark Burns Secures Spot in South Carolina Runoff

Pastor Mark Burns, an evangelical leader with strong backing from former President Donald Trump, has advanced to a runoff in the race for the Republican nomination for South Carolina's 3rd Congressional District.

This district, a traditional Republican stronghold, is set to see a new representative as incumbent Rep. Jeff Duncan steps down after seven terms.

Despite a crowded field of seven GOP contenders, none emerged as a clear frontrunner in the primary, paving the way for Burns to leverage Trump's influential endorsement.

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Trump's support, highlighted on Truth Social, is expected to be a significant factor in Burns' bid for the nomination. "Pastor Mark Burns is an America First Fighter, and has my complete and total endorsement—he is a good man, a hard worker and will not let you down!" Trump proclaimed.

Trump lauded Burns' stances on critical issues such as border security, law enforcement, economic policies and the defense of the Second Amendment.

Burns has made these issues central to his campaign, positioning himself as a staunch opponent of the "woke" agenda and a defender of conservative values. His campaign prominently features Trump's endorsement, reflecting their close alignment on these key points.

Burns, a former South Carolina National Guard member, founded a church in Easley and has been recognized by Time Magazine as “Donald Trump’s favorite pastor.” His deep ties to the evangelical community and his commitment to conservative principles resonate strongly with the district’s electorate.

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Rep. Jeff Duncan’s decision to retire follows personal turmoil, including a public divorce filed by his wife last year amid allegations of multiple affairs.

In his January statement, Duncan emphasized the need for fresh leadership, saying, “At some point in a career, one needs to step aside and allow others to bring fresh ideas and abilities into the fight for liberty.”

In addition to Burns, the Republican field included South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster’s endorsed candidate, nurse practitioner Sheri Biggs; former senator Lindsey Graham’s staffer Kevin Bishop; state house representative Stewart Jones; and businessman Franky Franco.

As Burns moves forward to the runoff, his campaign is buoyed by the promise of continued support from Trump and a base eager for a leader who champions conservative values and challenges the current administration’s policies.

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