



Paper Cuts

Faulty Filing Kills 3 Florida Campaigns

June 23, 2018

By Eric Shaw

Paperwork can kill a campaign.

A political run is first born as a passing notion in the mind of an office-seeker, but its public birth is the paperwork-packed process of registering for candidacy.

Carelessness with that process scuttled three Florida campaigns on June 22.

In past years, getting the state's qualifying forms completed has hindered many frisky Florida pols--sometimes to the point of preventing registration on time, and sometimes by so weighing down applicants that they drag themselves past the finish line at the last moment.

Ask State Rep. Al Jacquet of House Seat 88, Delray Beach, about that last scenario.



Florida State Rep. Al Jacquet

On the 22nd, Jacquet [literally waited till the final minute to submit forms](#) for his November house race.

At the Tallahassee's Elections Office, the state rep put his qualifying papers in at 11:59am--barely beating a noon deadline.

Jacquet's only potential rival for the seat, Molly Wilson (who played a role in the recent [Jack Latvala scandal](#)), was furiously scribbling out forms close by. But her challenge attempt bit the dust when 12pm slipped past, and her applications remained incomplete.



Anika Omphroy

That same day, a similar drama played out for Democrat Barrington Russell, the incumbent of House District 95--which covers parts of North Lauderdale, Lauderdale Lakes, Brewer Lakes and Broward.

[Thirty-nine-year-old Anika Omphroy had submitted her papers by](#)

[deadline, and she won the seat by default](#) when Russell, her only opponent (and the one who'd bested her in the previous contest), failed to submit a proper application by 12:00.

To compete in any election, documents that swear you're the right age, not a felon, etc., must be completed.

Barrington duly submitted these particular testaments . . . last November.

It wasn't too late. It was too early!

These documents need to be more recent to be valid.

We don't know if he filed other forms.

We do know paperwork beat Jack Barrington before Omphroy got a chance to.



Democratic Rep. Reggie Fullwood

[Sarasota, DeSoto, and Hardee](#) Counties, and most of [Manatee County](#) compose Florida's 13th congressional district. In the 13th, it wasn't deadlines that derailed the candidate, but an oversight by his notary public (NP).

Like Jacquet or Omphroy, Democratic Rep. Reggie Fullwood could have [nailed down the seat without opposition](#), but his NP forgot to check a box confirming that Fullwood had submitted a certain fiduciary form.

With no candidates properly certified, the district has called a special election, and a Jacksonville Councilman, Democrat Johnny Gaffney, says he'll use the new filing deadline to join the race.

Fullwood will rejoin the battle, too.

Now, with someone to compete against, Fullwood optimistically declared he is, "excited about running again."

I'm sure he would've been more excited if his notary had just checked that box.