

Candidates stump in Greenville

By: [Jimmy Ryals](#)
The Daily Reflector

Sunday, March 02, 2008

Several candidates for state and federal offices came through Greenville last week.

Also, a third candidate entered the race for the Pitt County Board of Education District 5B seat.

N.C. Sen. Walter Dalton, a Rutherford County Democrat running for lieutenant governor, held a news conference Thursday on the steps of the Pitt County Courthouse. Dalton appeared with a Wilson County woman to tout the Home Protection Pilot Program.

The program gives interest-free loans of up to \$20,000 to families facing home foreclosure.

To qualify for the loans, applicants must have lost jobs recently because of market shifts and must have been up-to-date on mortgage payments when they lost their jobs, Dalton said Friday. Nearly 300 families have received the loans.

The program also offers counseling to people in danger of losing their homes, he said.

Dalton, who drafted the 2004 legislation that created the program, said he came to Greenville because Pitt is one of 39 counties not covered by the home protection program.

Dalton has made expanding the program statewide and increasing funding part of his campaign platform.

"Foreclosures have increased dramatically in the United States, and they've increased in North Carolina," he said. "And we're still in this transitioning economy."

Losing a home "is a pretty doggone severe thing," he added. "You not only lose your house, you lose self-esteem, you lose hope."

Dalton made similar appearances last week in Asheville, Kannapolis and Raleigh. He faces Democrats Dan Besse, Pat Smathers and Hampton Dellinger in the Democratic primary May 6.