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## Senator Walter Dalton Completes Statewide Tour to Promote the Home Protection Pilot Program **Dalton makes stops in Asheville, Kannapolis, Raleigh, and Greenville**

State Senator Walter Dalton, Democratic candidate for Lieutenant Governor, completed a statewide tour on Thursday that promoted the Home Protection Pilot Program (HPPP). Over the course of three days, Senator Dalton made stops in Asheville, Kannapolis, Raleigh, and Greenville to promote the program and his plans to expand and improve it.

“The Home Protection Pilot Program has been a great success story and I made the trip across the state to tell everyone about it,” Senator Dalton said. “After I saw people in my home district of Rutherford and Cleveland Counties struggling to pay their mortgages after losing textile jobs, I knew we had to do something to help them.”

Authored by Senator Dalton in 2004, the HPPP initially began in 27 counties but has since expanded to 61 counties; generally the areas that have been hit the hardest with job loss. The program offers qualified applicants a no-interest “bridge loan” for up to \$20,000 to either bring their mortgage payments up-to-date or help with related home costs such as homeowners’ insurance and property taxes.

“As we continue to experience job loss and record foreclosures, we must help those who are struggling to keep up with their mortgage payments,” Dalton said. “The Home Protection Pilot Program has helped many people who, through no fault of their own, lost their jobs. I want to see the program expanded and as Lieutenant Governor, I will promote programs like the HPPP so we can keep North Carolina moving forward.”

Senator Dalton plans to push to get the program expanded to all 100 counties in North Carolina so every area has access to the program. He also wants to double the current funding in order to allow more people to receive assistance and strengthen the network of financial counselors that administer the program.

"I would have probably have had to drop out of school, otherwise," commented Randall Laws. Mr. Laws of McDowell County used the loan to go back to school after losing his job when Thomasville Furniture in Conover shut its operation down.

"This is what a lot of people need, we just need that helping hand to get over the hump sometimes through a financially difficult time," Brooks Preston said. Mr. Preston was a recipient of a HPPP loan in Kannapolis. Laid off from Pillowtex when the plant closed in 2003, Mr. Preston used the loan to go back to school and now owns and operates his own business.

"I have screamed it from the rooftop 'Thank you Senator Dalton for helping us keep our house,'" Sharon Lowery said. Sharon and her husband Phillip, both of Rutherfordton, received a HPPP loan after Phillip lost his textile job in the late 2005. He used the loan to go back to school and is now a level 2 certified nursing assistant and is currently working towards obtaining his LPN degree.

"This is a wonderful program, this is a great program, and I am so thankful for it. I want everyone to know about it," remarked Cynthia Lathan. Ms. Lathan lost her job at Lord and Taylor in Wilson when the company shut down most of its stores in the South. She used the HPPP loan to give her time to transition into her new job at Belk's Department store.

For more information about the program and Senator Dalton's plans, please view the attached document.

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