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Under the Dome:

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Sen. Dalton is Mr. Effective

How effective were the state legislators now running for statewide offices?

Sen. Walter Dalton was the most effective of the candidates for major office, according to a survey by the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research. He ranked sixth in the state Senate for 2007.

Still, Dalton, who is running for the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor, dropped slightly from his fifth-place spot in 2005. He has ranked in the top 10 since 2001.

State Sen. Kay Hagan, a candidate in the Democratic primary for Republican Elizabeth Dole's U.S. Senate seat, ranked just behind Dalton at No. 7. She maintained her 2005 rank and has been in the top 10 since 2003.

Republican gubernatorial candidate Fred Smith, a state senator from Johnston County, was No. 38 -- his lowest effectiveness rank since taking office in 2002.

Sen. Janet Cowell maintained her 2005 rank of 25. She is running for the Democratic nomination for state treasurer.

Cowell's potential opponent in the treasurer's race, Republican Rep. Bill Daughtridge, was ranked the 50th most effective representative in the state House.