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Kenneth Paschal wins Alabama House seat; becomes Legislature's only Black Republican

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Retired Army First Sgt. Kenneth Paschal is a candidate for the Republican nomination in Alabama House District 73.



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21-cv-01531
11/12/2024 Trial
Plaintiffs Exhibit No. 320

Retired Army Sgt. Kenneth Paschal handily defeated Democrat Sheridan Black in a general special election for a Shelby County-based state House seat, and will become the Legislature's only Black Republican once he is sworn into office.

Also on Tuesday, former state Rep. and ex-Trump administration official April Weaver, a Republican, soundly won her special election against Democrat Virginia Teague Applebaum.

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Paschal led Black 75 percent to 25 percent as of 9:40 p.m. Tuesday, according to [preliminary results from the Alabama Secretary of State's office](#).

The Alabama GOP and his campaign said Paschal became the first Black Republican elected to the state Legislature since Reconstruction (about 140 years ago).

"The voters of District 73 didn't choose me because of the color of my skin. They got to know me," the retired Army sergeant said in a statement. "They saw a God-fearing man of integrity who values and defends our Constitution. But I do recognize the historical

significance of what happened today. I hope to be an example to all Alabamians that the Republican Party is open to everyone who shares a belief in freedom, self reliance, fiscal responsibility, and opportunity for all.”

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Voters cast ballots in two special elections Tuesday in Shelby County -- House District 73, which became vacant when former Rep. Matt Friday, R-Montevallo, was elected to the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals in November; and Senate District 14, which was vacated by Cam Ward after he was named as director of the Alabama Bureau of Pardons and Paroles.

As of 9:40 p.m. Tuesday, Weaver led Applebaum, 82 percent to 18 percent.

Once sworn in, Weaver would be the only Republican woman in the state Senate.

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Alabama Republican Party Chairman John Wahl issued a statement late Tuesday night congratulating Paschal and Weaver.

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“Senator-elect Weaver brings a wealth of legislative experience to the State Senate, having previously served in the Alabama House. Additionally, her extensive background in healthcare – including her position in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – will be valuable to not only her district, but to our state overall as we continue to emerge from the COVID pandemic,” Wahl stated.

Wahl also stated that Alabama Republican Party is “incredibly enthusiastic” about Paschal’s election. “Representative-elect Paschal – the first African-American Republican elected to the Legislature since Reconstruction – is a man of exceptional character whose ‘God and Country’ campaign resonated with Shelby County residents. After serving honorably for over two decades in the U.S. Army, he came home to Alabama, where he has spent the last 10 years volunteering for pro-family causes. I’ve enjoyed getting to know Representative-elect Paschal during this campaign and am honored to call him a friend. I look forward to working with him on the issues that matter most to Alabama voters.”

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