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## Your morning jolt: Why Tommy Irvin was the tallest man at a Republican fundraiser

9:01 am October 1, 2010, by Jim Galloway

Gary Black, the Republican nominee for agriculture commissioner, held a fundraiser at the Depot near the state Capitol on Thursday evening.



State Agriculture Commissioner Tommy Irvin/AJC

We were only there a few minutes, so we have no crowd count. But certainly the tallest man in the room was state Agriculture Commissioner Tommy Irvin – a Democrat who will be absent from the November ballot for the first time since most Georgians have been alive.

Why was he there?

“It’s a big job, a big department with a lot of people. He’s going to need some help,” said Irvin. And he was speaking of Black. Say what? asked a mentally sputtering reporter.

“I think he’s going to win,” said Irvin.

And somewhere in the distance, Democrat J.B. Powell of Blythe, Ga., the Democratic nominee for ag commissioner, is shaking his head and wondering why he ever agreed to leave the state Senate.

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**The Cato Institute, a Washington-based Libertarian group,** has made its peace with Gov. Sonny Perdue.

In 2004, in a two-year review of the freshman governor, the institute gave Perdue a “D” in its twice-a-year grading of the nation’s governor – primarily for his decision to call for a tax increase within days of taking office.

In 2006, Perdue was moved up to a “C.” And in 2008, into his second term, the man from Houston County earned a “B.”

On Thursday, [the Cato Institute awarded Perdue the same grade](#) in its final look at his administration.

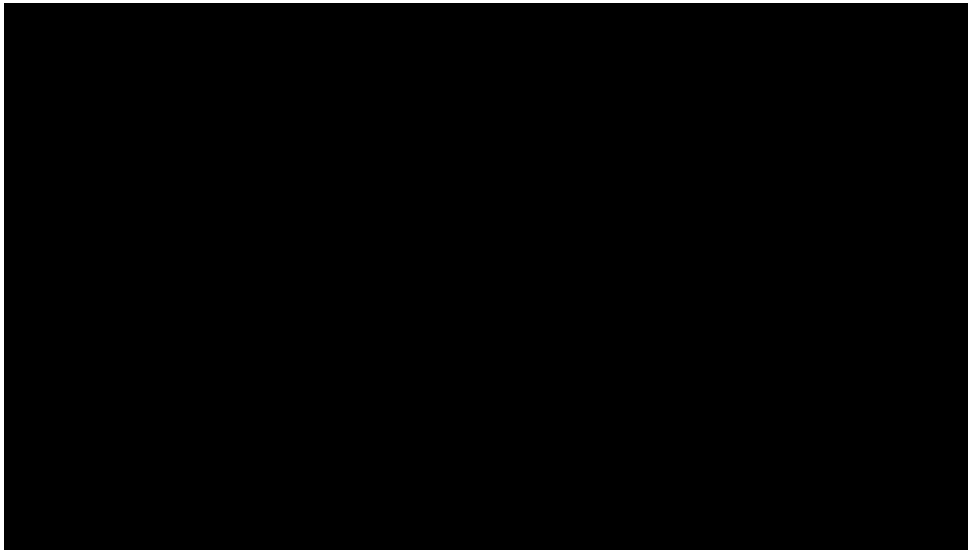
“This time, on the tax front, he got dinged because he raised the hospital tax in 2010 and in 2009 he vetoed a capital gains cuts,” said Chris Edwards director of tax policy for Cato and the author of the annual report. “He’s not a Cato champion, but he certainly isn’t the worst, either.”

[Libertarian blogger Jason Pye takes](#) exception to the grade. Also worth noting: In 2002, Cato gave Gov. Roy Barnes a “B” – and the third-highest score in the nation.

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**My AJC colleague Jeremy Redmon has the details on a new job plan** unveiled on Thursday by [Democratic nominee for governor Roy Barnes](#).

Accompanying that debut was a new Barnes TV spot – the first one in a while, as pointed out by [11Alive’s Jeff Hullinger](#) – that doesn’t mention Republican rival Nathan Deal:



The script:

**Roy Barnes:** I’ve got a jobs plan. If there’s a nail driven, a wire connected or concrete poured by local or state government, it’ll be by legal Georgia workers.

Let me tell you something else we need to do. Any company that moves jobs overseas shouldn’t be eligible for Georgia tax credits and should be able to bid on work for state and local governments.

**Male voiceover:** Roy Barnes. No on-the-job training necessary.

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**Earlier this week, the state Public Service Commission announced** that a Monday, Oct. 4 hearing on the Georgia Power rate case in downtown Atlanta was shifted from 6 p.m. – a time perhaps convenient to many employed bill-payers – to 9 a.m.

Scheduling conflicts, you see.

And, by the way, the Georgia GOP will have its Victory Dinner next Monday, Oct. 4. The reception starts at 6 p.m. Bobby Jindal, governor of Louisiana, is the main speaker.

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**AJC PolitiFact Georgia was challenged by Chuck Donovan, the** Libertarian candidate for U.S. Senate, to examine some of his charges against Republican incumbent Johnny Isakson. [Click here to read.](#)

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