

GOP Comptroller Candidate Welcomes Spitzer Challenge

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All eyes are on Eliot Spitzer today, but Republican candidate John Burnett chided the former governor and current media darling's last-minute jump into the comptroller race.

"The comptroller's office is too important to be used to rehabilitate a political career," Burnett wrote today. "In America, anyone can run for public office, it is part of democracy, but today's news about a disgraced former Governor is the latest example of why the public is disappointed by politicians."

A career businessman and longtime Wall Street executive with Morgan Stanley and Merrill Lynch, Burnett has long lauded his own qualifications as an outsider to city politics.

"Nobody has their hands in my pocket, unlike other politicians that are career politicians, everyone has their hands in their pockets," Burnett told reporters at a press conference two weeks ago when he announced his campaign.

Spitzer is challenging current Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer in the Democratic primary.

Spitzer and Burnett in the fray brings a new level of intrigue to what was once thought of as a one-horse race — especially after the months lead time Stringer had to build a long list of supporters and endorsements.

John Liu, the sitting comptroller, is a Democratic candidate for mayor.

—*Daniel Stein-Sayles*