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Ex-lawmaker takes juvenile justice job

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ATLANTA -- Republican Gov. Nathan Deal has picked one-time statewide Democratic candidate and former legislator Carol Jackson to join the Department of Juvenile Justice Dec. 16 to lobby her former colleagues on his behalf.

Jackson, a Cleveland Democrat, served in the Senate from 1999-2005 when she stepped down to seek her party's nomination for secretary of state in 2006. She lost to fellow legislator Gale Buckner who ultimately failed in the general election.

Ironically, her new boss at the Department of Juvenile Justice is a different Gale Buckner, the new commissioner and a former member of the Board of Pardons and Paroles.

Jackson also lost a bid in 2007 to win election as chairwoman of the Democratic Party of Georgia.

Before her election to the Senate, she served 14 years as the clerk of superior court in White County, falling that time to another woman lawmaker from North Georgia, ex-Rep. Jane Kidd.

Commissioner Buckner announced Jackson's hiring Monday along with that of Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb as deputy commissioner, Tracy Masters as legal-services director, Diane Avery as constituent liaison and the promotion of Deputy Commissioner Jeff Minor to assistant commissioner.

"Shawanda, Carol, Tracy, Diane and Jeff have extensive and valuable experience in a variety of areas that will serve the department well," she said. "I look forward to utilizing their talents and skills as we face challenges and enhance DJJ all while helping the troubled youth we serve and ensuring public safety in our communities and facilities."