

Florida GOP May Drop Gurney

Tallahassee, Fla.

State Republican leaders may dump indicted Senator Edward J. Gurney if he does not abandon his re-election campaign, Florida's GOP chief said yesterday.

State party Chairman L. E. Thomas of Panama City said a number of party leaders had urged him to seek Gurney's withdrawal from the race because of the senator's indictment Wednesday on bribery, conspiracy and perjury charges.

Thomas said he will call a state executive committee meeting by Wednesday to seek guidance.

"If they voted overwhelmingly to ask him to step down, I would go to him," Thomas said.

Gurney's spokesman in Washington, John Gardner, said the senator now plans to stay in the race but "I hate to predict the future."

Gurney, 60, a member of the senate Watergate committee, says he's innocent of the charges that involve an alleged \$233,000 fund collected from builders seeking influence with the Federal Housing Administration.

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