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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 5, 2020

SECRETARY OF STATE CANDIDATE FORREST MANDEVILLE ANNOUNCES HIS ELECTION SECURITY PLAN

Columbus, MT, February 5, 2020—Representative Forrest Mandeville (R-Columbus), Republican candidate for Secretary of State, has announced his plan to protect the security of our elections while ensuring everyone's right to vote is protected. Mandeville has been a tireless advocate for secure and accessible elections throughout his three terms in the Montana State House, and looks forward to bringing these same values and work ethic to the Secretary of State's office.

This three-part plan prioritizes security, accessibility, and maintaining confidence in our election system, all ideals and goals for which Mandeville has advocated during his three terms in the House.

First, Montana needs stricter voter identification laws. 36 states have some form of voter ID requirement, of which Montana is one of the weakest. According to the non-partisan National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), Montana's voter ID requirement is classified as Non-Photo ID, Non-Strict. While an ID is requested at a polling place, photo ID is not required and a utility bill is an acceptable form of ID. "A utility bill is not identification" said Mandeville, "and should not be treated as such. Montana should be a leader in the area of election security, and photo ID should be required to vote." Mandeville believes the 18 states that require photo ID can provide many models on which to base legislation, and there are many options to allow exceptions for voters who have a religious objection to being photographed, lost their ID, or have a need to remain confidential.

Next, same-day voter registration, in which people can register to vote through the end of business on election day, needs to end. Mandeville has discussed the issue with election administrators throughout the state and the concerns about same-day voter registration are constant. This practice creates long lines at the courthouse on election day, stressful work environments for election workers, and delays in counting ballots and announcing election results. "Same-day voter registration puts unnecessary strain on our election system, including on our hard-working election workers", Mandeville said. As Secretary of State, Mandeville will advocate ending voter registration no later than the Friday before an election.

Finally, accessible polling place elections need to be ensured whenever possible. Voting in person at a polling place on a paper ballot is by far the most secure way to vote. Additionally, many people may need the assistance that polling places allow, including an accessible ballot marking device to help

disabled individuals cast their vote. Mandeville has used accessible voting machines himself, and encourages others to use them as well to increase familiarity with these machines, but also to decrease any stigmas that may be attached to using them. “The right to choose our leaders is a fundamental American value, and we must ensure that all Americans have the ability to participate in free and secure elections” said Mandeville, “this includes have polling places that meet ADA accessibility standards and have accessible voting machines.”

Mandeville, a fourth-generation Montanan, lives in Columbus with his wife and three children. He is a small business owner working in land-use consulting. Mandeville has served House District 57 in the legislature since first being elected in 2014. He has chaired the House State Administration Committee the past two legislative sessions, which hears bills on election law, among other topics.