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For Immediate Release

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### **Deputy Secretary of State Chris Winters Announces Broad Support from State Leaders**

Berlin, VT — June 28, 2022 — Deputy Secretary of State Chris Winters, also Democratic candidate for Secretary of State, has released another round of endorsements from statewide and local leaders which includes legislators, municipal clerks, and community members, all of whom laud his approach to running a Secretary of State's Office that is focused on great service, public protection, transparency and making Vermonters' lives safer, easier and better.

Winters has earned the endorsement of more than a dozen State Senators, past and present, as well as dozens of current and former Representatives, many of whom are Committee Chairs, including the last two Chairs of the House Committee on Government Operations, the committee with oversight responsibility for the Secretary of State's Office. Several Municipal Clerks are also backing his candidacy as the best candidate to replace Jim Condos.

Winters says, "I'm honored to have the support of the people I have worked with - and for - all these years. I feel especially flattered that several town clerks have been willing to endorse my campaign. Clerks are notoriously guarded about making an endorsement when they are the chief elections officials for their towns, but they will make an exception if they see the stakes are high enough."

Winters initiated and implemented the Secretary of State's universal mail-in voting efforts in 2020, as well as the office's legislative agenda in 2021 which included the permanent option to

vote by mail. He states “I know firsthand the attacks that have been leveled against election officials and I am committed to providing continued support and guidance to town clerks as we did in the 2020 election cycle.”

“I am humbled and honored by how much support I am getting from the people who know me from my career in public service,” says Chris Winters. “I have worked hard for Vermont behind the scenes for many years, but I had no idea what to expect when I stepped out as a candidate for office for the first time. It’s gratifying to see that I’ve made a positive impact and a lasting impression. It also makes me all the more determined to carry on the great work we’ve been doing in the Secretary of State’s Office.”

Chris’s broad support, combined with the recent endorsement from the Vermont State Employees Association, of over six thousand members, demonstrates the strong appeal of this campaign, and Vermont’s desire to uphold the excellence of the Secretary of State’s Office, and take it to the next level with Chris.

Winters, the current Deputy Secretary of State of 7 years and 25-year veteran public servant in the Secretary of State’s office, announced his candidacy on February 18 after Jim Condos said he would not seek another term.

**Secretary of State Jim Condos** said of Chris:

“You won’t find anyone more dedicated or knowledgeable about this office than Chris. He has been an indispensable partner in carrying out my vision for an office that is efficient, credible, accountable and delivers the services Vermonters expect and deserve. If elected, he will make a great Secretary of State.”

A sampling of the endorsements are below, with more to follow in the coming weeks:

**Deb Markowitz, Montpelier - former Secretary of State 1998-2010**

Chris is not a typical politician. Our democracy does best when the people who oversee our elections and open government laws are committed to doing so in a professional and nonpartisan way. Chris has demonstrated his nonpartisanship and commitment to transparency and good government for decades. Chris will be ready on day one to serve as our Secretary of State.

**Doug Racine - Former Lt. Governor**

As a former Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of the Agency of Human Services, I understand the many challenges of running a state agency. Chris Winters has the relevant experience, a strong commitment to the important work of the office, and a track record of results. At a time when we could really use some continuity and stability in government, he’s the most qualified person to be our next Secretary of State.

**Tim Ashe, Burlington - Former Senator, Chair of Senate Finance, and President Pro Tem.**

Supporting Chris is a no-brainer. I observed him up close in the first months of COVID - his efforts were absolutely vital to the seamless continuity of government at all levels. His integrity is unimpeachable. While he's a Democrat, you will not find a Republican, Progressive, or independent who knows Chris who has a single bad word to say about him.

**Mitzi Johnson, Grand Isle - Former Speaker of the House**

I'm endorsing Chris Winters for our next Secretary of State for his collaborative leadership and patient, tireless work to improve voting access. When I was Speaker of the House, Chris was the legislative lead for the Secretary of State's office. He's an excellent listener, addressing peoples concerns and striving to find an acceptable middle ground, all the while fighting for Vermonters. Those skills and his positive attitude earned Chris respect from legislators across the full political spectrum. I've always appreciated how well he works with the legislature, town offices and Vermonters to create proactive and informed policy for Vermont from smooth licensing processes to help Vermont's workforce to accessible, secure elections.

**Carol Dawes, Barry City Clerk, Legislative Lead for the Vermont Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Association**

The Secretary of State's office is one of the main points of contact between municipal clerks and state government. Chris Winters has been providing outstanding support to - and advocacy on behalf of - municipal clerks during his tenure as Deputy Secretary of State. His years of experience, and the relationships he has built, will benefit Vermont clerks, towns, and residents. I look forward to continuing our work together.

**Martha Allen, East Montpelier - Past VT NEA President and Lifelong Educator**

Chris Winters has played an important role in ensuring that Vermonters and municipalities are protected when it comes to many government regulations. I was fortunate to get to know Chris when I ran for the House in 2018 and 2020. He was always there to answer my questions, of which there were many! This is just a small part of his work in the office, but it demonstrates his friendly and supportive demeanor, his attention to detail, and his dedication to the democratic process in our state. As Deputy Secretary of State for several years, Chris has what it takes to continue this effort with consistency and integrity.

**Tom Stevens, Waterbury - Chair of the House Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs**

I've known Chris for many years now, and in that time, he's proved his dedication to serving Vermont through his years of service at the Secretary of State's Office. He works hard to understand the issues, build coalitions, and make Vermont a better place. Chris has both the character and the drive to be a champion for all of us and keep the Secretary of State's Office on the right track.

**Carolyn Partridge, Windham - Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry**

Chris has been deeply involved in serving Vermont and protecting Vermonters for decades. I have seen him roll up his sleeves as a school board member and do the hard work behind the scenes as Deputy Secretary of State. I trust that he will act with integrity as our next Secretary of State - Chris Winters is getting my vote.

**Dick Sears, Senator from Bennington, Chair of Senate Judiciary**

As Chair of Senate Judiciary, I lead the effort to pass legislation brought forward by Secretary of State Jim Condos and his Deputy Chris Winters around death threats aimed at their elections team. I understand what is at stake right now in defense of democracy, even right here in Vermont. I know Chris Winters is the person who is ready to deal with those challenges, to hold the line for Vermont, and show other states what is possible.

**Maida F. Townsend - State Representative, South Burlington, former Chair of House Government Operations**

Today, the work of the Secretary of State's Office is more challenging and complex than ever. Vermont needs stability and continuity in that very important Office. I was the previous Chair of the House Committee on Government Operations and am a current member of the Appropriations Committee where I have a lot of insight into the Office and how it works. I know Chris Winters is ready to lead the Secretary of State's Office, because I have seen him do the work as Deputy Secretary of State. Chris is the most qualified person for the position, without a doubt. In all he does, Chris exemplifies fairness, thoughtfulness and inspires trust and good will from those around him.

**Jim Rader - Former City Clerk of Burlington (1982-1993)**

I'm happy to support Chris Winters for Vermont Secretary of State. He has demonstrated a commitment to public service and good government, and to election integrity, transparency, and non-partisanship. He's exactly what Vermont needs at a time when the integrity of our elections is at risk across the country. Vermont is lucky to have him.

**Joan Lenes, Former State Rep from Shelburne and St George**

I have known Chris Winters since my time in the Legislature. He is an authentic and highly qualified leader who inspires confidence and trust as the face of the Secretary of State's Office. He is patient and kind, and his nonpartisan and always helpful approach is reflected in the team he leads - we have all come to know and expect nothing but excellent service from his office. Chris is the most qualified candidate to be our next Secretary of State and he has my support.

**The Vermont State Employees Association**

“These are an outstanding group of committed, pro-state employee candidates whom we feel we can rely on to stand with us when the going gets tough,” said Aimee Bertrand Towne, VSEA’s president.

Legislators:

**Jeanette White**, Windham - Windham County Senator, Chair of Senate Government Operations

**Claire Ayer**, Addison - former State Senator from Addison County

**Donna Sweaney**, Windsor - Former Representative and Chair of House Government Operations

**Dick Mazza**, Colchester - Grand Isle County Senator, Chair of Senate Transportation

**Dick Sears**, Bennington - Bennington County Senator, Chair of Senate Judiciary

**Ann Cummings**, Montpelier - Washington County State Senator, Chair of Senate Finance

**Alison Clarkson**, Woodstock - Windsor County Senator, Senate Majority Leader

**Ginny Lyons**, Williston - State Senator Chittenden County, Chair, Senate Health and Welfare Committee

**Thomas Chittenden**, South Burlington - State Senator Chittenden County

**Chris Bray**, New Haven - Addison District State Senator, Chair of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy

**Bobby Star**, North Troy - State Senator, Essex-Orleans District, Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee

**Michael Sirotkin**, South Burlington - Chair, Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs

**Cheryl Hooker**, Rutland - Rutland District Senator

**Alice Emmons**, Springfield - Chair, House Committee on Corrections and Institutions

**Dick McCormack**, Bethel - State Senator Windsor County

**Johanna “Joey” Donovan** - Burlington - Former State Representative

**JoAnne Mook**, Bennington - Former Representative

**Peter Anthony**, Barre - State Representative

**Jim Masland**, Thetford - State Representative

**Linda Martin**, Wolcott - Former State Representative, Town Clerk, Vice Chair of Government Operations

**Cindy Weed**, Enosburg Falls - Former State Representative

**Marcia Gardner**, Richmond - Former State Representative

**Carolyn Branagan**, Georgia - Former State Representative

**Michel Consejo**, Sheldon - Former State Representative

**Warren Kitzmiller**, Montpelier - State Representative

**Tess Taylor**, Barre - Former State Representative

**Phil Winters**, Williamstown - Former State Representative

**Kirk White**, Bethel - State Representative

**Tom Bock**, Chester - State Representative

**Peg Flory**, Pittsford - Former State Senator, Rutland District

**Will Stevens**, Shoreham - Former State Representative and Owner of Golden Russet Farm

Municipal Clerks:

**Karen Richard**, former Colchester Clerk and VMCTA legislative chair

**Carol Dawes** - Barre City and VMCTA legislative liaison

**Cherilyn Brown** - Moretown, also a cosmetology licensee

**Stacey Jewell** - St Johnsbury

**Rosie Laquerre** - East Montpelier

**Rosemary Morse** - Berlin

**Barbara Graham** - Williamstown

**Linda Wells** - Plainfield

**Nancy Ertle** - Corinth

**Rosemary Audibert** - Johnson

**Linda Martin** - former for Wolcotte

**Jim Rader** - former for Burlington

Business and Community Leaders:

**Frank Cioffi**, President, greater Burlington Industrial Corp

**Stephen and Carol Amos**, Wheelock - Educators

**Thomas Hark**, Williston - Co-Founder Vermont Youth Conservation Corps

**Stephen McArthur**, Montpelier - Book Publisher & Advocate for Survivors of Domestic & Sexual Violence

**Rickey Gard Diamond**, Montpelier - Author, Editor, Feminist

**Michael Lipson**, South Burlington - Attorney

**Judi Daly**, Moretown - Licensed Clinical Social Worker

**Bonnie Nash**, Newport - Owner/Fiber Artist at Kingdom Alpaca, LLC

**Susan "Sam" Anderson**, St. Albans - Past Real Estate Comm'n Chair and Central VT Ec Dev Corp Executive

**Tristram Coffin**, Burlington - Former US Attorney, Litigator, Downs Rachlin and Martin

**Chris Palermo**, Waterbury - Funeral Director, Small Business Owner

**Lisa Falcone**, Burlington - Executive Director, Mercy Connections

**Spence Putnam**, Weybridge - Past Executive Director of Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

**Valerie White**, Barre - Owner, Ladder One Grill

**Jason Aldous**, Randolph - Director of Policy Support, Dartmouth-Hitchcock

**Rob Backus**, Burlington - Attorney, former Office of Professional Regulation Chief Prosecutor

**Bob Walsh**, South Burlington - Former Representative and Real Estate Commission Member

**Susan Farrell**, Ira - 9 year Chair of the Vermont State Board of Nursing, Former Director of the Castleton Nursing Program

**Bill Atkinson P.E.**, Essex Jct - Vermont Professional Engineering Board Past Chair and National Society of Professional Engineers Vice President

**Michael Palmer**, Esq., Middlebury - Small Business Owner, Ethics Expert

**Amy Messina**, Ascutney - Member of the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence and Real Estate Licensee

**Noah Detzer** - Former Secretary of the Vermont Democratic Party & Public School Teacher

**Denise MacMartin** - Northfield, Community Activist

**Elizabeth Deutch** - Hinesburgh, RN, Community Activist

**Jeanne Keller** - Burlington, Community Activist

**Ruth Wallman** - Williston, Former Executive Director, Lake Champlain Islands Chamber and Grand Isle Economic Development

Former Deputy Secretaries of State:

**Bill Dalton**, Richmond

**Brian Leven**, Stowe

**John Howland, Jr.**, Brownsville