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Department of State

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A Democracy We Can Believe In: Reigning in Unlimited Contributions for School Board Elections

School Board Contribution Limits HB20-1066

Honorable Chairman Foote and the Members of the Senate State, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee:

Last year Colorado made historic gains in campaign finance reform, by shining light on dark money, requiring the disclosure of corporate spending, and stopping foreign financial influence in our politics. We passed these laws because Coloradans deserve to know who is trying to influence our elections and votes. To continue our fight against the corruption gripping all levels of government and our work of promoting cleaner, fairer, and more transparent election, we support HB 20-1066.

Contribution limits serve an important role, in preventing the corrupting effect of money on candidates and elected officials. Just like candidates running for offices from county commissioner to governor, candidates for school board should have contribution limits. That is why the Office of the Secretary of State supports the School Board Contribution Limits Act.

Many Coloradans believe that politicians are beholden to big-money special interests, and that the rich and powerful are allowed to side-step the rules. In the case of school board elections there have often been no rules to even bother to side-step. Unlimited campaign donations to school board candidates is a practice long overdue for reform.

The sensible limits set forth in HB20-1066 will ensure that candidates have the ability to raise the funds they need to run a campaign without the appearance, or reality, of corruption that unlimited donations can create. I support limiting individual and committee contributions to these candidates.

These are common sense reforms. We urge the committee to support HB20-1066 and continue our work to make a democracy that all Coloradans can believe in. We also thank Senator Gonzales for being a strong partner in the fight against corruption.