

SENATE STATE ADMIN.

EXHIBIT NO. 2

DATE 1.7.05

BILL NO. SB 16

SECRETARY OF STATE  
STATE OF MONTANA

BRAD JOHNSON  
SECRETARY OF STATE



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January 7, 2005

Thank you Sen. Tropila for bringing forward this piece of important legislation. And thank you members of the committee for taking time to consider this bill. I am firmly in favor of banning political candidates from participating in public service announcements for many reasons. Chief among those reasons is the fact of rapidly eroding public confidence in government at all levels.

During the course of my campaign for Secretary of State, it became abundantly clear to me that this practice should not be condoned. The integrity of the electoral process is far too important to have politicians smugly promote themselves with taxpayers money under the guise of public service.

This bill seeks to help level the political playing field. The power of the incumbency is strong enough, and challengers should not be put at an even greater disadvantage. I believe our public servants should be elected and reelected because they have shown a sense of public responsibility. SB 16 demonstrates that sense of responsibility.

It will be a central goal of my administration to enhance and preserve the integrity of the electoral process. Whether it is ensuring secure and fraud-free elections, or requiring elected officials to act responsibly with taxpayers money, I will work every day to protect the credibility of our electoral process. It is the duty of any public servant to avoid even the appearance of impropriety. It is for that reason that I ask the committee to pass SB16.