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Secretary of State Murray Announces the Appointment of Election Director

CHEYENNE, WY – Wyoming Secretary of State and Chief Election Officer, Ed Murray, today publicly announced the appointment of Kai Schon as the new Election Director in the Office of the Secretary of State. Director Schon assumed the position of Election Director after working in the Secretary of State's Election Division for over eight years as the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Coordinator. Prior to his appointment this year, Director Schon served as the Interim Election Director. Director Schon is one of several longtime employees in the Secretary of State's Office who have been promoted to new leadership roles under Secretary Murray, including Deputy Secretary of State, Karen Wheeler, and Compliance Division Director, Kelly Janes.

"I'm very pleased to promote Kai to this important position. Kai's experience and exemplary work have proven that he is fully prepared to lead our Election Division as director. Kai will be integral to the division's goals and objectives, the most important of which is the formation of a new partnership with Wyoming's county clerks to support them through the 2016 election. This will be followed by my initiative to increase voter turnout among our youth. Only 10% of Wyoming's youth, aged 18-24, voted in the last election, so we are finally going to tackle this issue" said Murray.

Commenting on his recent appointment, Director Schon said: "After working closely with Wyoming's County Clerks in all 23 counties on election technologies as Wyoming's HAVA Coordinator, I am excited to build upon these relationships and my past experiences in Wyoming by tackling new challenges as this division looks to prepare for 2016 and beyond. Secretary Murray's goals and objectives for my division are taking our entire Office in a new and innovative direction, and I could not be more thrilled by this opportunity."

As the state HAVA Coordinator, Director Schon administered Wyoming's statewide voter registration system while overseeing the certification process of voting systems as required by the Help America Vote Act of 2002, which required that states update all of their voting systems and to implement a statewide voter registration system. This upcoming March, Kai and his staff will be training the County Clerks and their staff on the use of updated components of Wyoming's statewide voter registration system (WYOREG) as part of the Office of the Secretary of State's ongoing efforts to prepare for the 2016 presidential election.

Next week, Secretary Murray and Director Schon will both attend the National Association of Secretaries of State Winter Conference to discuss new developments in election law and technology. At this conference, Secretaries of State and Election Directors from around the country will address the issues facing the voting process in a presidential election year.

Kai is a native to the Chicago area and made the trek out west 12 years ago with his wife, Olivia, and their three children. Kai started his career with the State in May of 2007 as Wyoming's first HAVA Coordinator. Outside of the office, Kai also serves as a worship pastor in Cheyenne.

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