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Secretary of State Addresses Election Policy Issues in D.C.

CHEYENNE, WY – Secretary of State Edward Buchanan addressed the National Lieutenant Governors Association last week in the nation's capital. The Association gathered to discuss state, federal, and international affairs at the 2019 Federal State Relations Meeting. As Wyoming's de facto lieutenant governor, Secretary of State Buchanan was asked to speak to the group on the state of elections in Wyoming and the Federal – State relationship regarding election policy and administration.

"In Wyoming, it is my firm belief that we do elections right. Wyoming has been a model when it comes to elections in the United States in more ways than one. Over the years, the Wyoming Secretary of State's Office has been on the forefront of some groundbreaking election policy developments. Wyoming was the first state to write into law same-day voter registration, allowing voters on Election Day to register to vote. In the 1990's this designation allowed Wyoming to achieve an exemption from the national voter registration act. States rushed to implement same-day voter registration to gain the same exemption, and these states were calling our election office in an attempt to figure out how to avoid this federal mandate," said Secretary Buchanan.

In D.C., Secretary Buchanan discussed many topics pertaining to elections in Wyoming, including his opposition to many of the policy proposals found in the first piece of legislation passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in 2019 - House Resolution 1. H.R. 1 would alter federal law to mandate that automatic voter registration and same-day voter registration be implemented nationwide.

"H.R. 1 would gut the authority of states to carry out elections on their own terms as set by elected representatives in the states. And in doing so, brings each state down a path of more integration and less security by becoming less decentralized. H.R. 1 mandates automatic voter registration, and for those states - like Wyoming - that provide same day registration, the cost and burden is going to be substantial. Every state would feel a significant impact and loss of authority under this law." Buchanan further stated that "Election policy requires a collaborative and studied approach - one free of blame and political games. As United States, we must avoid federal mandates and do more to support each other and share the policies that work and the challenges that we have faced and overcome."

Secretary Buchanan pledged that he would work with Wyoming's congressional delegation on preventing H.R. 1 from becoming law.

Organized in 1962, the National Lieutenant Governors Association is the professional association for the elected officials first in line of succession to the governors in the 50 states and five U.S. territories. In addition to his role as Secretary of State, Secretary Buchanan serves in the capacity of lieutenant governor, as he is first in the line of succession to Governor Mark Gordon.