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Oregon Secretary of State

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It Has Been a Pleasure to Serve

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Election 2020

This month, the 2020 General Election was officially certified, and we conducted the Electoral College. Oregon experienced a record number turnout at over 2.4 million ballots cast. The results were certified on December 3rd and Oregonians can have confidence in the accuracy of those certified results. The official results can be [viewed on our website along with a statistical summary](#). If you would like to go back and watch the Electoral College you may do so on [the Oregon State Legislature's website](#). Thank you to everyone who helped this election run smoothly, safely and securely. I am immensely proud of our team here at the Secretary of State's office and of our local, state and federal partners who protect our elections and our votes.

Going the Extra Mile

Sarah Roth is an instrumental member of our Business Services Division. Sarah provides excellent



service not only to our internal customers, but external as well. She has played a pivotal role in the implementation of OregonBuys from its inception, which is our agency's procurement and purchasing tool. It has been a game changing tool that has allowed us to seamlessly carry on our procurement services remotely and very efficiently. Sarah has also been instrumental in the success of our Oregon Records Management System, which is a tool that allows public bodies manage their public information, making transparency more attainable.



Mike Hickam is also with our Business Services Division and focuses on budgetary issues. Mike has helped us navigate through difficult budget decisions with the best and most up to date information and because of his work we delivered our 2021-23 Agency Request Budget early to

Department of Administrative Services and the Legislature. Mike and his accounting team have been awarded the DAS CFO Gold Star Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting which is a credit to Mike, his Chief Accountant, Kevin Herberger and the rest of the accounting team! Mike has also served in the U.S. Air Force for 25 years and is one of many veterans at the Secretary of State. We are grateful to all our veterans for their service to our country.

Both Mike and Sarah are valued members of the BSD leadership team and are dedicated and committed professionals I am so happy to acknowledge in this newsletter.



It Has Been a Pleasure to Serve

As I have reflected on my 20 months as Secretary of State I decided to write an opinion piece that has been published in the Oregonian today.

Opinion: Nonpartisanship should guide secretary of state's work

Upon taking the oath of office as Oregon's secretary of state on April 3, 2019, I quoted the famed commentator Andy Rooney. "Age," he said, "is nothing but experience, and some of us are more experienced than others. I then noted with a smile that at 83 years old, I was the most "experienced" secretary of state in Oregon's history.

I have been very grateful to serve as your secretary and will always look back on this time with great pride in the work we conducted and in the great people I have had the privilege of working with. I want to share some thoughts and reflections on my time in this role.

While many know that our agency conducts elections and audits, people aren't as familiar with our other divisions: archives, business services, corporation, human resources and information services. All of our divisions do amazing work, and I am so proud of everything they do to keep us in line with the goals of transparency, accountability and integrity.

My goal has been to serve in a nonpartisan manner; the core functions of our work don't have a Democratic or Republican way – only the fair and honest way. I wanted to ensure that we are seeking all perspectives and to try to not let partisanship become a barrier or influence in the work conducted.

This is especially important when we are talking about safe and secure elections and audits. My hope is that this will continue in the future. It is troublesome to see how partisan things have become in Salem. Politics will always be infused with partisan agendas, but I have prided myself on being a person who tries to build bridges toward compromise. I believe clinging to partisanship cannot produce good outcomes for all Oregonians. I hope more government leaders see how governing in a partisan manner contributes to the division and strife in our state.

Oregon's secretary of state also serves on the Oregon State Land Board with the governor and state treasurer. Coming from a rural background I feel the need to point out that rural Oregonians often feel left out of the conversation. Having lived in both rural and urban areas of the state, I tried to bring both perspectives to the table to help bring balance: what is good for Wasco may not be good for Salem or vice versa. The balance of perspectives is particularly relevant to the issues that come before the Land Board. Oregon's constitution directs the Land Board to manage lands under its jurisdiction – the vast majority of which are hundreds of thousands of acres of forestlands – to obtain the greatest benefit for the people of Oregon, consistent with resource conservation and sound land management. I urge all public officials to make an extra effort to understand the needs and concerns of fellow Oregonians across geographical differences.

While my time as Oregon's secretary of state comes to a close, I will always remain an engaged citizen. It is vital for Oregonians to understand the various functions of government, how we can share our input and try to improve how Oregon works. Even though state government does great work every day, my office was often contacted by those who struggled to receive the help they needed from government agencies. Earning the public's trust is a critical part of serving the public and maintaining integrity. A responsive government is imperative to building this trust and credibility.

This will be my last newsletter as Oregon Secretary of State. Secretary Elect Shemia Fagan will be sworn in and take office on Monday, January 4, 2020. She was elected to be Oregon's next Secretary of State in the 2020 General Election and we have worked together to make the transition as smooth as possible. I wish her the best in her new role and of course wish the Agency the best in this time of change.

Ben Clarno

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