

Gardner gets our support

FELLOW NEW HAMPSHIRE citizens, thank you for the trust you have placed in us for the coming two-year term. We have several critical issues facing the state and we are looking forward to getting to work.

Before bills are officially introduced in January, we do have important organization business to attend to. Our state Constitution provides that members of the legislature cast ballots in a joint session of the House and Senate for the purpose of electing the state treasurer and secretary of state. These two offices are very special in their purpose, and we take our roles in this election very seriously, as you have entrusted us to represent you in this process.

We have two candidates for the office of Secretary of State this year. On meeting day, Dec. 5, we both will be casting our vote for whom we believe has the highest of qualifications and personal integrity, a person who has given his life to serving the public and being a fair steward of our laws, and a person who has proven to our state that he can do his job without partisan motivations. Our support will be for Bill Gardner.

We find it concerning that some of our colleagues in the legislature chose to support a politician, Colin Van Ostern, over a lifelong public servant like Bill Gardner. It is saddening that candidates for the office of Secretary of State should need to raise a campaign war chest with more than 100 donations from people outside of New Hampshire. We hear a lot about getting money out of politics, but this has injected money and politics into what should be an independent, non-political office.

On the contrary, Mr.

Gardner has run an honest and open campaign, without the need for campaign staff, consultants, out-of-state fundraisers, or much fanfare. He operates on his own unique level, taking the time to talk with each voting House or Senate member, sharing stories of his long tenure in his office, and being 100 percent transparent about what he believes is the right way forward for his department. For those of you who don't know much about Bill Gardner, he is a lifelong resident of Manchester, a Democrat and caring father and grandfather. He was once a state representative, but chose a different path of service when he ran for the position of Secretary of State in

1976. He knew then, as he knows now, the weight of his office and the duties he is charged with.

For the last 42 years, he has been a fair arbiter, a straight shooter, and a staunch protector of New Hampshire best interests in our electoral process, business filing processes, and other important functions of his office. He has an open door policy, and will take the time to personally help any citizen who he encounters in his daily business.

Some people may tell you that over 40 years on the job is too long, but we believe just the opposite.

Understanding the evolution of the laws that have governed our elections over decades helps provide valuable perspective. Over his decades of service, he has made the office the envy of the country. He is known around the United States as the man who has made New Hampshire "First in the Nation." The First in the Nation Primary is here because Bill has worked tirelessly to keep it in our state. We vote in record numbers, we are noted for good and clean elections, and our Secretary has been cited year after year for his service.

Mr. Gardner is a living legend in our state, and for him to be challenged in this manner, at this time, is unfortunate and unfair to the citizens who so desperately deserve public servants like him. There are those who don't support his reelection but the proof is in the job performance. He gets our support because he does the job. Don't let this fine official slip away. Bill is quality and he shows this year after year. His office is open and anyone can come through the door for advice and get it. The office runs well and the people of New Hampshire can be proud of him and his staff.

We ask our friends and colleagues of both parties in the New Hampshire House and Senate to stand with us, and support our friend, Secretary of State Bill Gardner, on Dec. 5.

...

State Sen. Lou D'Allesandro is a Democrat from Manchester. State Rep.

Dick Hinch, outgoing House majority leader, is a Republican from Merrimack.

Your Turn, NH

Rep. Dick Hinch and Sen. Lou D'Allesandro