

PRESS RELEASE

Colorado Department of Law
Attorney General John W. Suthers

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SUTHERS TO SEEK REELECTION AS ATTORNEY GENERAL

Will not run for Governor or U.S. Senate

(DENVER) – The following is a statement from Colorado Attorney General John Suthers regarding his plans for 2010:

“Let me say at the outset that I really love serving as Attorney General of Colorado. As I’ve told many people, I take great joy in having had the privilege of winning, what I like to call, ‘the legal trifecta’ – being able to serve as District Attorney, U.S. Attorney, and now, as Attorney General. That’s an important fact to keep in mind in trying to make sense out of what follows.

“I find myself the only Republican holding statewide office in Colorado. With all the political developments taking place in the state and an election for Governor and the U.S. Senate looming in 2010, there’s a lot of speculation about who’s going to run for what. And I’m part of that speculation. Because of the enormous cost of campaigns today, people need to make decisions fairly early in the political process. I spent the last month talking to literally hundreds of people about various possibilities before coming to the decision I’m announcing today. I’m doing it now because I believe it’s important to let people know where I stand before the county central committee and Republican Lincoln Day dinner circuit begins in February.

“Let me summarize my thought processes. I’ve been urged by some to run for Governor and have considered it. But any Attorney General who takes his legal and ethical responsibilities seriously will recognize some problems running against an incumbent Governor. The Attorney General is the Governor’s lawyer and my office interacts with the Governor’s office and all the agencies of the executive branch of State government numerous times every day. And while the AG, as an independent constitutional officer of state government, is free to be critical of the Governor from a public policy perspective, politics cannot be allowed to invade the legal relationship between the AG’s office and the executive branch of government. I realize AGs have run against incumbent Governors before, but I’ve concluded I would not personally feel comfortable doing so, because I believe it would be virtually impossible to avoid suggestions or appearances that legal relationships are tainted by political concerns.

“So we turn to the U.S. Senate seat that will be up for election in 2010. In many respects, it’s a marvelous opportunity to pursue one of the most coveted political positions in America. As I indicated, I’ve talked to hundreds of people during the last month and concluded I would have an excellent chance to win the Republican nomination and could wage a very viable general election campaign against U.S. Senator Michael Bennet.

“But I also think I have acquired an accurate picture of what would be involved. As a Republican challenger without the benefit of incumbency, or of an incumbent President to assist in fundraising, and facing the prospect of raising 8 to 10 million dollars to be a viable candidate, I believe I would essentially be Attorney General in name only for the next two years. It’s quite clear I would need to spend an average of 6 to 8 hours per day, 6 days per week, fundraising over the next 21 months. I would also need to engage in out-of-state travel on a constant basis as part of the fundraising process. Every knowledgeable advisor I consulted agreed that a U.S. Senate campaign would cause me to be absent from the AG’s office virtually full time. I realize that happens often when an officeholder seeks higher office and the public generally accepts that. But that fact has not proven comforting to me. Many elected positions have minimal management and organizational responsibilities. The Colorado Attorney General’s office, with 400 employees, is not one of them. The work of the AG’s office is important and should not be given short shrift.

“My father died when I was 15. One of my strongest memories of my dad is his admonition to me that, ‘You must finish every job you take on and you can never do it in a half-baked fashion.’ Try as I might, I have not been able to ignore my father’s words. Accordingly, I’ve decided to spend the next two years doing the best job I can as Attorney General of Colorado. I will not run for the U.S. Senate.

“The soul-searching process that I’ve gone through over the last month has proven to be an epiphany of sorts for me. I have learned that I enjoy the work I’m doing as Attorney General so much that I’m unwilling to give it up to campaign for a seat in the United States Senate. That says a great deal. I believe that I’ve done an outstanding job as Colorado Attorney General over the past four years. Even though it involves very significant financial sacrifices, I want to continue this work. Accordingly, it’s my intention to seek reelection as Attorney General in 2010.

“I realize the decision I’ve made will be disappointing to many Republicans and friends and acquaintances of mine that wanted me to run for Governor or for the United States Senate in 2010, and that it may be disappointing to many Democrats who thought I’d be easy prey if I did, but I hope everyone will understand that such decisions have to be made on the basis of very personal values and beliefs. I must ultimately be directed by my inner compass.”

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Attached: Suthers photo