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**Rep. Schneck: Your vote will honor the service of veterans**

*Much is at stake, do your part as a citizen by voting this Election Day*

In the coming week, Americans will mark two days that are significant to our democracy: Election Day and Veterans Day. On Tuesday, millions of Americans will make their voices heard at the polls. On Friday, we honor those who served to protect our nation and our freedoms. I urge you to participate in both.

Good morning, I'm Representative John Schneck of Bangor. I'm honored to be a member of the Legislature's Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, which deals with veterans issues as well as policy around elections, campaign practices and voter registration. I'm especially proud of our work this year on new laws spearheaded by Democrats that help Maine keep up with the changing needs of Maine veterans, combat homelessness and address their higher education and transportation needs.

As a veteran, a state lawmaker and a citizen, it's been wonderful to see how engaged Mainers are this election season. You can see it in the large numbers of absentee ballots requested and cast, in the debates among candidates and in the day-to-day conversations with friends and neighbors.

There's a lot at stake this year, from who we put in the White House to who'll be on our towns' school boards.

And, of course, voters will also decide what kind of Maine Legislature we'll have for the next two years.

Those decisions will affect how we educate our children and prepare them for the working world, whether Augusta shifts costs to local property taxpayers and whether we can achieve true welfare reform that moves people out of poverty and into sustainable employment – and that creates accountability and effectiveness throughout the system.

I served in the Navy during the Vietnam War, and I'm proud to serve in the Legislature alongside other veterans. Among House Democrats, we have veterans of the Army, Navy and

Marines, veterans who also served in the Vietnam era, a younger veteran who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, the co-chair of the Legislature's Veterans Caucus and a recipient of the Bronze Star.

I know that each and every one of them wants voters to participate in our democracy.

Meanwhile, some highly visible politicians are trying to cast doubt about the integrity of our election system. They're trying to dissuade – even intimidate – voters from exercising their rights. They're trying to undermine our American tradition of peaceful transfers of power.

We've got to stand up against this. We've all got to live up to our responsibilities as citizens. So please do your part by voting this Tuesday. Your actions will honor the service of our veterans.

I'm Representative John Schneck of Bangor. Thanks for listening.

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