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# NEWS RELEASE

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**Louisiana  
Department of State**



**Tom Schedler  
Secretary of State**

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## **SECRETARY SCHEDLER RESPONDS TO LAWSUIT; VOWS TO FIGHT**

**BATON ROUGE, La.** – Secretary of State Tom Schedler shared the following comments today during a brief meeting with the press to address a lawsuit filed several weeks ago and calls for his resignation. Schedler says his intent is to fight the allegations, finish his term in office, and make amends with his family, friends and colleagues who have been hurt by his actions.

“I know staying in office, on the surface, seems surprising, even shocking,” Schedler said. “But after some brutally honest discussion with the ones who’ve been hurt the most by my actions, all of them are in unanimous agreement. I must continue the job I was elected to do. But, I plan to fight these allegations,” he stated.

“My first inclination was to walk away so I could protect my family and myself from what was sure to be a wave of judgement and disappointment,” Schedler shared. “But I’ve experienced just the opposite. I have been overwhelmed by the public’s kindness,” he said. “Friends, colleagues and complete strangers have offered their advice, their prayers, their compassion and most importantly, their forgiveness. It’s been humbling.”

“The fact is, only politicians and editorial writers have publicly suggested I resign,” he noted. “Staying will not be easy, but leaving is cowardly. As is always the case, the truth about all this can be found somewhere in the middle. All the facts will be revealed in the proper place, at the proper time. I do not intend to feed the rumor mills and gossip columns.”

“I know, there will be some out there that will disagree with my choice to stay. But when I think of the critical crossroads we face in terms of elections alone: we’re in the midst of early voting right now, there are still concerns over cyberattacks on elections, we’re about to issue an RFP allowing for us to purchase new voting equipment, we have a brand new commissioner of elections; and a fast approaching mid-term election for Congress, I cannot in good conscience step down.”

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“Our work will not be thrown into chaos because I’ve been targeted in an unfair lawsuit,” Schedler emphasized. “This is a time to dig in and work even harder because the deadlines for all these important issues are fast approaching and the outcomes are crucial for voters,” he said.

“From today forward, I am committed to two things: repairing my relationship with the people that mean the most to me and second, protecting the continuity of service for the people of Louisiana here at the Secretary of State’s Office. I work for the people of this state. They elected me to do a job and it’s much too important to just walk away with my tail between my legs,” said Schedler. “I’m a New Orleans boy at heart and I get up when I get knocked down, especially when the fight is not over.”

“After this statement, on the advice of my attorneys, I will not discuss the ongoing litigation. Period. I will attempt to avoid being a distraction by focusing on accomplishing the goals of the office. I ask that everyone treat my family and staff with sensitivity and kindness. They have played no role in this mess and cannot be expected to speak on my behalf.”

“I, and I alone, stand here today, with all that I have left of my reputation as a good, honest, straight-forward guy, and say I’m sorry. I made a mistake, and I will leave it to God to judge what’s in my heart and what’s next for me in my life,” Schedler said.

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