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***** Press Release *****

Molly Gray Sworn in as 82nd Lieutenant Governor of Vermont

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Montpelier, VT - On January 7th, 2020, Molly Gray was sworn into office as the 82nd Lieutenant Governor of Vermont by the Honorable Peter W. Hall of the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in the Senate Chamber of the Vermont State House.

Following the ceremony, Lieutenant Governor Gray delivered an Inaugural address to the Senate, the majority of whom were present virtually. Gray's remarks began with a moment of silence in recognition of the 152 Vermont lives lost to Covid-19 and a rebuke of yesterday's attack on the nation's capital. Gray said, "I stand before you today in shared sadness and disbelief. Let the record forever reflect that this was an attack on our democracy, constitution, and most dearly held principles by a sitting president."

She went on to address the work yet to be done to defeat the pandemic, saying "Our history shows that as Vermonters we are brave in the face of fear, we defy the odds, we are not afraid of the unknown, and we welcome the opportunity and responsibility to lead and set a new course. Perhaps it's the harshness of our winters, the unpredictability of our seasons, the stubbornness and resilience of those who came before us, or a deep pride in the place we are so fortunate to call home, that binds us and enables us, to turn our greatest challenges into our greatest opportunities. This moment lacks neither."

The Lieutenant Governor spoke to the key issues brought to the forefront by the Covid-19 pandemic in Vermont; the economic well-being of families, the growth of the workforce and viability of communities, the lack of reliable broadband access state-wide, the threat of climate change on Vermont's working lands and environment, and the state's demographic crisis. The Lieutenant Governor also noted the progress needed to achieve social, racial, and economic justice in Vermont, which were issues underscored by the Black Lives Matter movement and the justifiable social unrest over the past year.

"Unfortunately, this pandemic is far from over and as we well know, it has laid everything bare: from inequities in access to basic internet so critical for online learning and remote work to the absolute essentialness of affordable, quality child care to the economic wellbeing of our families and businesses...Not only will we be judged by how effectively we continue to meet the humanitarian and emergency needs of Vermonters, but also how we envision and prepare for a stronger, more equitable and economically viable Vermont."

Gray was elected to the office of Lieutenant Governor on November 3, 2020, and is the fourth woman in Vermont's history to hold the office of Lieutenant Governor. She most recently served as Assistant Attorney General.

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Below and attached is a complete copy of Lieutenant Governor Molly R. Gray's Inaugural Address before the Senate.