



DIANE SMITH FOR MONTANA

Whitefish, MT

November 3, 2011

For Immediate Release

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Montana Businesswoman Diane Smith Announces Candidacy for Congress

Diane Smith, a Montana-based entrepreneur and businesswoman, filed paperwork today with the Federal Elections Commission to enter the Democratic Primary for Montana's At-Large Congressional Seat. Smith, of Whitefish, is active in Montana's business community.

"Montana needs Congress to focus on creating jobs, and that is what I have spent my life doing," said Smith. "Like a lot of parents, my husband and I are concerned about what kind of future our 17 year-old daughter will face. As I travel around our state, I am awed by the spirit and entrepreneurship of Montana's people. But over the past several years, policies in D.C. have become impediments to our innovation and prosperity, and our elected leaders are either unable or unwilling to stop the political games and focus on results.

"Washington needs to remember that growth and prosperity come from the small business people who create most of the nation's new jobs, and invest themselves, their vision, and often their life savings into their companies," Smith said.

A rural entrepreneur, Smith co-founded a hi-tech digital video company called Avail-TVN in Kalispell, Montana. The company has grown to more than \$190 million in annual sales. (Smith left the company in 2008, after raising sufficient funding to ensure its viability and overseeing a merger that kept its technology jobs in Montana.) Smith, having worked in emerging technologies and consulted with numerous start-ups in Montana, knows what it takes to start a business from scratch, and provide good jobs and a future for Montana.

Smith moved to Montana in 2002, after working in fast-growth telecommunications companies that deployed new wireless and communications technologies. "Before we moved to Montana, I worked in Washington, D.C. and saw up close how government could facilitate new ideas, or stop them cold.

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“I have a lot of ideas to simplify government and support our innovation economy. I’m not looking to make elected office a career, but I think my experience as an entrepreneur can be put to good use in Congress. I want to work to get America moving forward again so that Montanans have a better future here at home.”

Smith has been married to her husband David Pickeral for 31 years and is the proud mom of their daughter Ally, who is a member of Whitefish High School’s Class of 2012. She is the author of TheNewRural.Com, a graduate of George Mason University and George Mason University School of Law, and a member of the Montana Academy of Distinguished Entrepreneurs. She is a guest lecturer in entrepreneurship at the University of Montana, serves on the Whitefish City-County Planning Board, and is a founding member of the Flathead 911 Foundation.