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Marbut says he favors enlarging lieutenant governor's role in state government

University of Montana--Missoula. Office of University Relations

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MISSOULA--

Gary Marbut, a Missoula County legislator and a Republican candidate for lieutenant governor, Thursday called for a "considerable transformation" in the duties and responsibilities of the state's second-ranking executive.

Addressing a group of University of Montana law students, Marbut, a Grant Creek rancher, suggested that Montana's lieutenant governor might well serve as the Scandinavian ombudsman serves in listening to and recommending action on citizens' complaints.

"Right along with the growth of all government in recent years," Marbut said, "has come an increasing red tape and procedural problem which the private citizen is unable to solve without help.

"In this whole broad area of public availability, the lieutenant governor could be the ideal person to deal with citizens' complaints, frustrations and needs," he added.

"Recognizing that much of what I propose is dependent upon approval by the governor and the legislature," Marbut continued,"nonetheless I feel that, specifically, the lieutenant governor might well assume the task of personal visits of inspection to various state institutions and agencies--listening to their problems, observing their work and reporting his observations and recommendations to the governor."

Marbut said he would not make a commitment to a sales tax measure now because several such proposals have been recommended and he would have to examine each measure first, before he could recommend or disapprove any of them.

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Marbut Says He Favors--2--

He said two things--need and availability of funds elsewhere--are among the items which should be considered before introducing sales tax legislation.

Marbut said he favors establishing annual state legislative sessions because of the complexities involved in state government and the frequency of changes of federal programs involving Montana.

Concerning air pollution in Montana, Marbut said he recommends establishing local air pollution controls. He said the State Board of Health also should take "a more active role" in setting health standards regarding air pollution in the state.

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