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GOVERNOR NAMES JOE THORNTON ACTING SECRETARY OF DMAPS

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Gov. Joe Manchin today announced that he has named Culloden resident Joe Thornton as the acting secretary of the West Virginia Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety (DMAPS), effective Jan. 1. Thornton will replace James W. Spears, who becomes Gov. Manchin’s Chief of Staff at the first of the year.

Manchin said that as deputy secretary of DMAPS, Thornton has gained the knowledge, experience and respect necessary for a smooth transition.

“Joe Thornton has been working in state government since 2001, and has continuously shown how dedicated he is to the state of West Virginia.” Manchin said. “He brings skill and leadership to the position, and I believe he will help ensure a smooth transition as Jim moves to the Governor’s Office.”

Thornton joined DMAPS in 2005 as Deputy Cabinet Secretary of Operations and Media Relations. Prior to this, he worked for the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources as a public information specialist.

Thornton is a native of Princeton, W.Va., and he served 10 years in the U.S. Air Force, including posts in Texas, North Dakota and Turkey. After he was honorably discharged from the Air Force, he returned to West Virginia and earned a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree in Journalism and Mass Communications at Marshall University.

Thornton is married and has one daughter.