Candidate for Governor Mike McCabe wants full disclosure of donations, update of conflict of interest laws, to take redistricting out of the hands of elected officials, restore independent oversight, bring back civil service protections for government hiring, and end discriminatory voter suppression.

ALTOONA, WI - On Thursday, Wisconsin governor candidate Mike McCabe put forward a comprehensive plan for freeing state government from the clutches of cronyism, corruption and what amounts to legal bribery of state officials.

“Wisconsin was once known from coast to coast as a beacon of clean, open and honest government. Our state no longer deserves that reputation. I want a Wisconsin that is worthy of it again,” McCabe said.

Once elected, McCabe will seek approval of a package of reforms to:

* Create full disclosure of political donations and election spending, and set tighter limits on campaign contributions that are a quarter of what current state law allows.

* Update Wisconsin’s conflict of interest law to prevent state public officials from taking actions benefiting donors who have contributed more than $1,000 to their campaign committees or spent more than $5,000 on election advertising favoring the officials.

* Take redistricting out of the hands of elected officials who stand to benefit from the legislative district boundaries they draw and assign the task to an independent, nonpartisan legislative

service agency in a process modeled after Iowa's system.

* Restore independent oversight of elections and government ethics by replacing party-affiliated elections and ethics commissioners with a nonpartisan agency headed by a board whose members cannot belong to a political party and cannot endorse or financially support candidates for partisan office.

* Bring back civil service protections for government hiring to ensure those getting state positions are chosen based on what they know and not who they know.

* Repeal discriminatory voter suppression measures such as Wisconsin's Voter ID law.

In the mid-1990s, McCabe helped start the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, a nonpartisan watchdog group that focuses on exposing the influence of big money in state government and works to make people matter more than money in politics. He led the group for 15 years as its director. For its efforts under McCabe's leadership, the Democracy Campaign was named the Citizen Openness Advocate of the Year in 2012 by the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council and the state chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. He left the Democracy Campaign at the end of 2014 to start Blue Jean Nation, a grassroots citizens group working to organize people locally to challenge the political establishment to change its ways.

As a candidate for governor, McCabe is leading by example by refusing to accept any single donation of more than $200 for his campaign, despite state law allowing candidates for governor in Wisconsin to take $20,000 checks from individuals and $86,000 donations from political action committees. Supporters are allowed to give more than once but not more than $200 at a time and no more than a total of $1,000 for the entire campaign.