FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

First Interstate Bank donates $25,000 to Montana Food Bank Network during COVID-19 Crisis

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MISSOULA, Mont.—April 16, 2020 — For more than a decade, First Interstate Bank has supported and worked with Montana Food Bank Network (MFBN) and their partners. Amid the current COVID-19 health crisis, First Interstate and its Foundation stepped up again with a special $25,000 donation to help MFBN support those struggling with food insecurity during this challenging time.

“We believe every person has a basic human right to access nutritious, high-quality food,” said Gayle Carlson, chief executive officer of Montana Food Bank Network. “We are so grateful for the support of First Interstate Bank and its Foundation. This donation couldn’t come at a better time for Montanans given the current crisis.”

The donation will help provide the equivalent of 75,000 meals that will be quickly distributed through Montana Food Bank Network’s partner food pantries, making it accessible to Montanans no matter where they live in the state. The amount of food distributed in the month of March has increased in some areas as much as 50 - 100%. This increase is cited as both first time visitors to food pantries as well as employed clients that have recently been laid off.

“The mission of MFBN is one of charity, community support, kindness, and service,” said Kelly Bruggeman, Executive Director of the First Interstate BancSystem Foundation. “Our core values at First Interstate align to support the good work already happening here, and we’re honored to lend a hand.”

“Because we believe in stepping up during difficult times, First Interstate has solidified its annual commitment to once again donate 2% of our net income before taxes to nonprofits serving those in need across our footprint,” Bruggeman added.

Last year, this totaled more than $5.2 million.

To provide relief to both individuals and businesses, First Interstate has created a number of programs to address multiple challenges arising in the current climate.

“We encourage clients and nonprofits to reach out to their local branch or banker for guidance on financial support tools available,” said Jocelyn Lane, First Interstate Regional President. “We’re here to help and are all in this together.”

First Interstate currently has two separate initiatives underway with community focus:
• First Interstate has partnered with EverFi, a leader in financial education programming, to develop online financial literacy modules that assist with planning, teaching, and learning. This content is available at First Interstate’s online Resource Center.

• To ensure meals for families throughout its footprint, First Interstate has kicked off its annual Neighbors Feeding Neighbors program early. Launched in 2009 by the First Interstate Foundation, Neighbors Feeding Neighbors was created to focus resources on food insecurity, one of the most pressing issues facing our communities. During the third quarter of each year, the Foundation doubles its match of money and time donated by our employees to charitable organizations that provide food to our neighbors in need. This year, First Interstate decided to start the outreach a quarter earlier to help our neighbors when they need it most. We plan to keep this campaign in place throughout 2020.

About Montana Food Bank Network:
Montana Food Bank Network’s mission is to end hunger through food acquisition and distribution, education, and advocacy. Their belief is that every person has the basic human right to access nutritious high-quality food that nourishes the mind, body, and soul. The Network is made up of 380 neighborhood food banks, communities pantries, social organizations, homeless shelters, schools, and many other organizations committed to ending hunger in Montana. Montana Food Bank Network distributes food across Montana from Heron to Wibaux, Eureka to Yellowstone, and everywhere in between.

About First Interstate Bank:
First Interstate is a community bank headquartered in Billings, Montana, delivering best-in-class banking and Wealth Management services throughout Idaho, Montana, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming. With more than 150 offices, First Interstate enhances the communities it serves through an innovative corporate philanthropy program, which includes donating a portion of Company profits, matching employees’ personal financial contributions, and donating $10 per hour for volunteer efforts made at qualifying organizations. To learn more, please visit firstinterstate.com.

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