

1149 Toole Ct
Billings, MT 59105
Aug15, 2025

Dear Governor Gianforte,

This letter is being written to comment on the appointment to the District Court bench in Billings that you will be making in the near future. Bradley Kneeland is currently a Standing Master in Billings, and I believe he is a superior candidate.

Brad's entire career has been in public service; working in the public defender's office, as a law clerk, as a city prosecutor, and now a Standing Master. Currently, he presides over family law cases, including divorces and child custody matters, most of which involve pro se/self-represented litigants. He also handles criminal arraignments, initial hearings in sanity proceedings and presides over a wide variety of cases involving general civil litigation. He conducts mediations to assist parties in resolving disputes without having to incur the expense and stress of going to trial. His experience prior to his current position spanned criminal law. He represented children and parents in dependency and neglect proceedings, and also represented juveniles. His current role as Standing Master allows him to preside over family law cases. These experiences give him a well-rounded background in the types of cases that a District Court Judge must handle, transferable experience that would be beneficial for a Judge to have to get to work immediately. Brad would be able to hit the ground running seamlessly on day 1.

Brad possesses many characteristics that support him as a Judge. He is intelligent, patient, and objective. He views situations as a whole and considers all details prior to making a decision. In addition, he has strong values, is respectful, and works well with people. I have worked with him on a church committee, the Staff Parish Relations Committee, and he is an exceptional asset. He is easy to talk to, considerate, and is dependable. He is a leader, yet is also a strong team player. His work ethic is unparalleled, and he is extremely responsible.

Brad Kneeland is an incredible fit for this position. He is worthy of the appointment. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Kathy Waldorf
406-690-3666

Office of the Governor
Helena, MT 59620

August 27, 2025

RE: Letter of Support for Bradley Kneeland, Thirteenth Judicial District Court Vacancy

To Whom It May Concern:

I am submitting this letter in wholehearted support for the appointment of Bradley Kneeland for the vacancy for District Court Judge for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court, Yellowstone County.

I have known Brad for several years, most notably we worked together for the Office of State Public Defender. Since that time, Brad has gone on to serve in other public service positions as judicial law clerk for Honorable Jessica Fehr, a city attorney for the City of Billings, and his current position as a Special Master for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court.

Brad is uniquely qualified for this position through his diverse background and experiences. In each of his roles, he has exhibited knowledge of the laws of the State of Montana, the importance of ensuring the justice system is equitable, and treating all counsel and parties fairly in the process. During our time working for the public defender's office, Brad zealously advocated for criminal defendants, often taking on challenging cases and always keeping the client's and their well-being in mind. As a prosecutor, Brad worked to ensure that sentences imposed were equitable and commensurate with the crime charged, and balanced punishment and rehabilitation needs of a defendant. In his current role as a Special Master, Brad presides over criminal matters, mediations and other family law matters. In this role, he has demonstrated his capabilities upholding Montana law while presiding over civil and criminal matters.

What is paramount in Brad's legal background is his commitment to public service and to the community of Billings and Yellowstone County. Each of his roles as a legal professional has served this community, and his candidacy for District Court Judge demonstrates a commitment to justice and to continue serving our community.

Brad is a respected member of the Yellowstone County legal community. He is kind, compassionate, level-headed, incredibly hard-working and always conducts himself as a professional. He is respected by his colleagues and peers. Brad not only possesses the qualifications for this position through his past work but also has the right demeanor and attitude. His variety of experience and his current experience in the Thirteenth Judicial District have prepared him for the challenges of this position.

I've had the privilege to know Brad outside of the work setting as well, and he is an exceptional human being. He is intelligent, caring, a community supporter and a fierce friend. It is without hesitation that I recommend Brad for this position as District Court Judge. He is the well-rounded, best choice for the Thirteenth Judicial District.

Sincerely,



Natasha Y. Fernando, Esq.



Law Firm PLLC

GW Building
2722 Third Ave N. STE 235
Billings, Montana 59101
TEL: 406-248-3900
berstlawfirm@gmail.com

September 4, 2025

Governor Gianforte
Attn: Hannah Slusser
PO Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
nominatejudges@mt.gov

RE: 13th Judicial District Court, Yellowstone County
Department 9 and 10
Application of Standing Master Bradley Kneeland

Dear Governor Gianforte:

This letter is in support of Standing Master Bradley Kneeland's nomination for one of the newly created district court judicial vacancies in Department 9 and Department 10.

I have had the privilege of practicing before Standing Master Kneeland during the last three (3) years as he has served Yellowstone County as a Standing Master. Standing Master Kneeland has presided over a number of my family law cases including parenting plans, marriage dissolutions and orders of protection. Family law cases present a unique challenge for those presiding over the matters. Clients come to proceedings in a heightened state afraid of a process they may or may not understand and worried that they could lose their children, retirement and/or home. Standing Master Kneeland has a unique talent to appreciate and treat all persons who appear before him with respect. The command that Standing Master Kneeland has over his courtroom is unmatched and allows him to give everyone who appears before him an opportunity to be heard and present their case.

I also worked on dependent neglect matters with Standing Master Kneeland when he was working as a public defender. These early cases are where I first witnessed Standing Master Kneeland's diligence to his work. Standing Master Kneeland from his early career as a public defender, to serving as a city attorney and now as a standing master approaches his work with a gravity and diligence that allows him to be prepared the moment he enters the courtroom. The preparation work judges put in prior to a hearing can have immense impact on proceedings from ensuring that the court day moves efficiently, to being prepared with the applicable law for the matter that the judge will be presiding over.

I have also had the opportunity to know Standing Master Kneeland personally as he has continued to serve the Yellowstone County community outside his role as Standing Master. He is an involved member of his church serving as an elder. He has participated in events through his church within the community. Throughout his career he has prioritized pro bono work to use his legal degree to assist those who may otherwise not have access to the court system.

The 13th Judicial District Court presents a set of unique challenges. Judges preside over an exceptionally high number of family law proceedings, criminal matters, and dependant neglect matters. Standing Master Kneeland's career has uniquely prepared him to be able to serve as a competent judge on day one. Specifically Standing Master Kneeland has practiced in these three (3) areas that make up the majority of the case load for the 13th Judicial District Court but he has also had years of experience making decisions over these matters in his current role as a standing master.

Standing Master Kneeland's entire career has been spent in service to others and the community. As the caseload in the 13th Judicial District Court has continued to grow it has become more and more important to have judges who have the experience, temperant and abilities to step into this role immediately. Standing Master Kneeland uniquely has this skill set and would be an asset to the 13th Judicial District Court as he continues to serve the people of the community. For all of these reasons I fully support Standing Master Kneeland being appointed to one of the openings in Department 9 or Department 10.

Sincerely,

Katherine Delaney Berst

From: [Amy Hernandez](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bradley Kneeland
Date: Saturday, September 6, 2025 1:07:31 PM

Good afternoon. I am sending a quick email in support of Brad Kneeland for 13th District Judicial Court Judge. I have worked with Brad since 2019 when he started as a law clerk for Judge Fehr. I've been a legal assistant in the County Attorney's office for almost 25 years. He would definitely be an asset if selected. He's fair, impartial, knowledgeable and willing to do the work.

As part of the 13th District, I encourage you to choose Bradley Kneeland for Judge. He deserves this opportunity and will definitely do a great job.

Thank you for your time.

Amy Hernandez
406-672-5720

From: [Kevin Sweeney](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 13th Judicial District Court - District Court Judge Selection
Date: Saturday, September 13, 2025 6:50:13 AM

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I contact you to endorse the selection of Bradley Kneeland to serve as a Billings District Court Judge.

I speculate that you will learn from attorneys and others that provide nomination endorsements that Brad is a dedicated and thoughtful lawyer and, for the past three years, a tireless and smart Standing Master of the 13th Judicial District Court. Brad has proven that he has the right stuff to serve as a District Court Judge.

I have practiced law now for 46 years. In my years, I have come across many lawyers. Brad has impressed me with his skill and dedication to the work of serving Montanans as both a lawyer and as "a decider" in his role as Standing Master. Brad understands that the work is demanding, but approaches it with uncommon interest in doing the work well.

Brad is an impressive lawyer. He will serve Billings well as District Court Judge.

Certainly, with any questions you have for me about this endorsement, please feel free to contact me.

--Kevin Sweeney

From: [bubbabluejones](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of Support for Brad Kneeland – Judicial Appointment/Seat
Date: Monday, September 15, 2025 3:00:02 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong and unequivocal support for the appointment of Brad Kneeland to the judicial seat to Departments 9 or 10 in Yellowstone County. I have known Brad for in both a professional and personal capacity, and I can confidently say he embodies the qualities we need on the bench: integrity, fairness, deep legal knowledge, and a steadfast commitment to justice.

Throughout his legal career, Brad has demonstrated exceptional skill and judgment, earning the respect of colleagues, clients, and community members alike. Whether advocating in the courtroom or engaging in public service, he has consistently shown a deep respect for the law and the people it serves.

One of Brad's most outstanding attributes is his unwavering dedication to impartiality and ethical standards. He listens with empathy, deliberates with thoughtfulness, and makes decisions grounded in both legal precedent and human understanding. These qualities are not only admirable—they are essential for any judicial role.

Moreover, Brad brings a deep understanding of the issues facing our courts today, including the importance of equal access to justice, the need for judicial efficiency, and the ongoing responsibility to uphold constitutional protections for all.

I am confident that Brad will serve with distinction, fairness, and wisdom. His presence on the bench would be a credit to the judiciary and a profound benefit to our community.

Thank you for considering Brad for this position.

Sincerely,

Felicia Pinnick

The Honorable Gregory R. Gianforte
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620-0801
nominatejudges@mt.gov

Re: Recommendation for Bradley Kneeland for Thirteenth District Court Judge in Yellowstone County

It is my honor and privilege to submit this letter of support of Bradley Kneeland being appointed the next district court judge in Yellowstone County. Bradley is a fifth-generation Montanan raised in a rural community. In the almost ten years I have known Bradley, he has shown daily the core values we hold so dear in Montana; he is hard-working, he holds people accountable for their actions, and he has unshakeable integrity. Central to his character is his strong desire to serve others. Bradley has spent his entire legal career in public service.

His current position as Standing Master for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court in Yellowstone County makes Bradley the most qualified individual to serve as District Court Judge in the same district on *day one*. As Standing Master, Bradley presides over dissolutions of marriage, parenting plans, property divisions, maintenance, and child support matters, as well as temporary, final, and modification hearings, contested proceedings, status and scheduling conferences, and intervention hearings.

Equally significant is Bradley's extensive civil law experience he has developed in this role, including handling guardianships, probates, debt collections, orders of protection, lower court civil appeals, and general civil lawsuits where no jury trial is requested. Bradley routinely conducts settlement conferences, rules on discovery disputes, presides over non-jury civil trials, and issues final judgments. This broad array of civil docket experience has given Bradley deep and practical command of substantive and procedural civil law, which compliments his family law experience.

In criminal matters, Bradley reviews most filings in Yellowstone County for probable cause and authorizes initiation of proceedings. He presides over criminal law and motion dockets, including arraignments, bail hearings, probation revocations, and change-of-please hearings. Bradley also reviews civil commitment petitions, conducts sanity and initial commitment hearings, and frequently covers Emergency Protective Services (EPS), dependency and neglect hearings, and juvenile detention proceedings. Bradley's work in dependency and neglect matters has informed his background representing parents and children in these cases, which provides him with a meaningful perspective when presiding over such proceedings.

In addition to his busy regular docket, Bradley conducts mediations at the request of district judges, facilitating resolution of civil disputes, family law matters, criminal cases, and dependency and neglect proceedings.

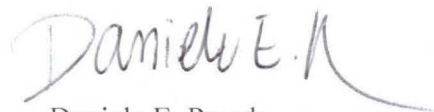
Bradley also serves as a *pro tem* judge in Yellowstone County Justice Court, where he oversees criminal arraignments in the newly established Arraignment Court.

Throughout his legal career, Brad has demonstrated that he can be empathetic while also holding people accountable. Brad makes the community of Billings better, and he would be a valuable addition to the judiciary here in Yellowstone County.

Across all these roles, Bradley conducts legal research, issues findings of fact and conclusions of law, and remains committed to efficient and just resolution of matters before the court.

As an attorney practicing law for almost nineteen years in Billings, I emphatically support Bradly Kneeland as the next district court judge in Yellowstone County. We need judges like Bradley to keep our community safe and hold people accountable for their actions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniela E. Pavuk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "k".

Daniela E. Pavuk
9-7-2025



Moira Murphy Law Office, PC
A better legal system for you

Governor Gianforte
Attn: Hannah Slusser

Via email: nominatejudges@mt.gov

Re: 13th Judicial District Court, Yellowstone County, Montana
Application of Bradley Kneeland

Dear Governor:

This is a letter of support for Bradley Kneeland's nomination for District Court judge in Yellowstone County.

I first met Mr. Kneeland when he was a law clerk for District Court Judge Jessica Fehr, in Billings, Montana. Mr. Kneeland has experience in both civil and criminal law. I have appeared before him as a Standing Master numerous times on custody and dissolution matters. Mr. Kneeland has a polished disposition and is well prepared for court. He listens intently to testimony and asks pertinent questions of witnesses. He is well-informed and makes well-thought-out decisions.

Mr. Kneeland would make an excellent addition to the District Court bench.

Very Truly Yours,

Moira Murphy
Attorney at Law

(406) 206-6513 tele
(406) 206-6514 fax
moira@mmllo.org

2722 3rd Ave. N
Suite 240
Billings, MT 59101

September 18, 2025

Governor's Office
Attn: Hannah Slusser
PO Box 200801
Helena, Montana 59620

Re: Letter of Support for Bradley Kneeland, Thirteenth Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am writing to offer my full support for Bradley Kneeland, who has applied for the appointment of a new district court judge in Yellowstone County. Bradley is a dedicated legal professional with a deep-rooted commitment to justice, and I believe he would be an outstanding addition to the bench.

Bradley grew up in a small town in Montana, where he was actively involved in his community and church, fostering strong values of service, integrity, and leadership. After receiving his law degree, Bradley has devoted his career to public service, first as a public defender, then as a law clerk, and now as a Standing Master. His current role, in which he presides over family law cases, has provided him with excellent qualifications for becoming a district judge. His ability to approach cases with an unbiased perspective, combined with his strong critical thinking skills, makes him particularly well-suited for the complexities of the district court.

Bradley's extensive experience in conducting hearings, fact-finding, and issuing conclusions is a testament to his legal expertise. He excels in detailed legal research and applies his knowledge of both state and federal law with precision. His ten years of experience in the legal field have equipped him with the tools necessary to serve as a well-rounded and effective district judge. Bradley's dedication to family law, in particular, will allow him to transition seamlessly into the role of district judge, ensuring that he brings both a deep understanding of the law and a compassionate approach to his work.

Beyond his professional qualifications, Bradley is well-regarded in his community. He is known for his strong work ethic, leadership qualities, and commitment to volunteerism. Bradley consistently goes above and beyond to support various community initiatives and is a positive influence on many individuals. His involvement at church, as well as in other local activities, has earned him the respect and admiration of his peers.

Bradley's integrity, knowledge, and passion for the law make him an ideal candidate for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court vacancy. I wholeheartedly recommend him for this appointment, confident that he will serve the people of Yellowstone County with fairness, dedication, and a strong commitment to justice.

Should you require any further information or wish to discuss Bradley's qualifications in greater detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Rebecca L. Muller DNP, APRN, MSN, FNP-BC, CIC

Governor Gianforte
Helena, MT 59620

September 17, 2025

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am extending my support for the appointment of Bradley “Brad” Kneeland for the vacancy of District Court Judge in Yellowstone County.

I have had the absolute privilege of knowing Brad professionally and as a dear friend for nearly a decade.

Throughout his career, Brad has demonstrated his commitment to justice. Specifically, Brad has done so through his actions; practicing in the office of the public defender where I was his supervisor, working as a prosecutor with the City of Billings, and presently as a standing master for the 13th Judicial District, Yellowstone County.

Brad’s diversified but focused legal experience has made him uniquely qualified for the role of District Court Judge as in each capacity, Brad has been dedicated to the idea of justice for all.

In addition to possessing the typical qualities that come to mind when contemplating what makes a good trier of fact such as impartiality, integrity, and wisdom, Brad also possesses a thirst for legal knowledge, courage, and humility.

Throughout the years that I have known Brad, I have witnessed his dedication to the law. If you spend any amount of time around Brad, it will become immediately obvious how much he loves the law and as a result, Brad is always broadening his legal knowledge base which is imperative for a judge.

Brad also possesses courage, which I think is sometimes a not so obvious trait in terms of judicial fitness. Courage is vital. Again and again, I have watched Brad make decisions that required him to be brave; not always decisions that will placate the masses. Certainly, doing the right thing is not always easy and one must have the courage to forge ahead regardless.

A good judge must also be humble. A judge lacking in humility is an affront to the principles of our judicial system. Brad's demonstrated humility promotes impartial decision making which is essential to being equitable.

Brad will unequivocally excel at the position of District Court Judge and will do an outstanding job for the people of Montana.

Sincerely,

Merry Marr

L

LISA J. BAZANT, ATTORNEY AT LAW

September 23, 2025

Governor Greg Gianforte
Attn: Hannah Slusser
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
nominatejudges@mt.gov

RE: 13th Judicial District Court, Yellowstone County
Department 9 and 10
Application of Standing Master Bradley Kneeland

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing in support of Standing Master Bradley Kneeland's nomination for one of the newly created District Court judicial vacancies.

I have had the privilege of practicing before Standing Master Kneeland these several years he has served Yellowstone County. Over the years, Standing Master Kneeland has displayed professionalism, integrity and intelligence. As a criminal defense attorney, I appear regularly before Standing Master Kneeland. Despite the number of cases before him, he is well prepared and knowledgeable of the nuances of each matter. He demonstrates the fair mindedness, dignity and the judicial temperament one expects of a judge. But what truly sets him apart is his ability to treat both parties with respect. There is courtesy and decorum in the Courtroom and not a hint of favoritism toward one party or the other.

The Thirteenth Judicial District Court presents unique challenges given the extensive number of family law proceedings. Yellowstone County citizens need to know that the a new judge is ready on Day One to act efficiently and competently. Standing Master Kneeland is that candidate. He has presided over the many aspects of family law cases, including parenting plans, marriage dissolutions and orders of protection. Family law matters present litigants experiencing heightened emotions and anxiety. A judge needs to exhibit compassion, intelligence and understanding. Standing Master Kneeland has that unique talent to appreciate and treat all persons with respect.

Having worked with Standing Master Kneeland, I can attest to his unwavering dedication to the law and impressive work ethic. For these reasons, and without reservation, I support the candidacy of Standing Master Kneeland to file one of the two vacancies in the Thirteenth Judicial District Court, Yellowstone County.

Respectfully yours,



Lisa J. Bazant

SELVEY LAW FIRM, L.L.C.

L. SANFORD SELVEY, II
Attorney at Law

316 N. 33rd St.
Billings, MT 59101
E-mail: selveylaw@gmail.com

Phone: (406) 252-7503
Fax (406) 252-4074

September 25, 2025

Via Email: nominatejudges@mt.gov

Judicial Support Letter

**RE: Bradley Kneeland
Nomination for Thirteenth Judicial District Judgeship**

To Honorable Governor Gianforte:

I am writing this judicial support letter on behalf of Bradley Kneeland, who is currently the Standing Master for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court here in Yellowstone County, because he is an exceptionally qualified candidate for one of the two Thirteenth Judicial District Court Judge positions currently open.

I have been a practicing criminal defense attorney here in Montana for over 36 years. I first came to know Bradley when he was a law clerk for Thirteenth Judicial District Court Judge Jessica Fehr.

Bradley was an exceptional law clerk for Judge Fehr, as I saw him in action in the courtroom with the presiding Judge. Judge Fehr, one of the community's finest judges, has always been exceptionally prepared for her cases. Law Clerk Bradley Kneeland was always at her side, ensuring she had all the relevant research and case law for each case.

Subsequently, Bradley represented many indigent defendants charged in District Court with serious felony charges; Bradley was dedicated to his clients, always had their best interests at heart, and provided effective and competent representation.

Bradley then switched gears and worked as a prosecutor of persons charged with misdemeanor offenses in the Billings Municipal Court.

Bradley was very effective and took particular care to exercise his authority as a prosecutor to make sure that victims of domestic abuse were protected and cared for as best as possible by making sure that the perpetrators of the domestic abuse were held accountable; at all times, Bradley was reasonable and fair but tough.

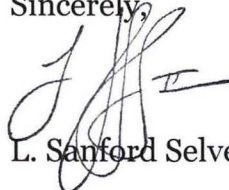
For the last four years, Bradley has been a very effective, hard-working, and dedicated Standing Master; in that role, Bradley has taken on a very heavy caseload to assist the overburdened District Court Judges. Bradley is well-versed in the handling of complex civil cases, which include a variety of civil disputes, including but not limited to divorce proceedings.

Bradley also handles a heavy caseload of criminal cases in the form of arraignments and bail bond issues.

Thank you for your consideration, as citizens of Yellowstone County would greatly benefit from having Bradley as a District Court Judge.

Please feel free to call for any further information at (406) 698-4565.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Sanford Selvey', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name.

L. Sanford Selvey



Scott Twito
Yellowstone County Attorney
217 N 27 Street
PO Box 35025
Billings, MT 59107
Phone: 406-256-2870
Fax: 406-256-6931

September 24, 2025

The Honorable Greg Gianforte, Governor of Montana
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

Re: Bradley Kneeland, Applicant for Montana Thirteenth Judicial District Court

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I support Standing Master Bradley Kneeland for a judicial position in the Montana Thirteenth Judicial District.

I have known Standing Master Kneeland since he was an assistant public defender assigned to the Billings Region. I learned more about him and his legal skill after he started clerking for District Judge Jessica Fehr in 2019. Currently, Standing Master Kneeland interacts with my office conducting arraignments and other preliminary hearings on behalf of the Thirteenth Judicial District Court. Standing Master Kneeland has demonstrated to me throughout his legal career that he has the qualities to be an excellent member of the judiciary.

As far as qualities that would serve him as a district judge, Standing Master Kneeland has shown me, when I have personally appeared before him, that he is incredibly well prepared for court. When hearing the arguments and positions of counsel it is obvious that Standing Master Kneeland previously took time to thoroughly review legal matters relevant to the case and the arguments before him. This demonstrates that he is respectful of the parties and their positions and his decisions are well-informed. I am confident that he will carry this quality to the bench should you appoint him as district judge.

Please consider Standing Master Kneeland. He would be an excellent choice for the district.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott Twito", is written over a horizontal line.

Scott Twito
Yellowstone County Attorney

From: [Naz Sanks](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of support for Kneeland
Date: Friday, September 26, 2025 4:53:50 PM

Hello,

We are writing to support a nominee for the open Judge position in the Thirteenth judicial district. The candidate we would like to express support for is Bradley Kneeland. We believe he has shown professionalism and objectivity when serving the needs of our community, following the Law and making our community a better place to live. We are residents of Billings, both of us are community members as parents and professionals, and based on our research of all of the candidates we would like to support the candidacy of Bradley Kneeland. We believe that as a Judge he will continue to do a wonderful job to serve the citizens of his district!

Thank you for your attention,

David Sanks, PharmD and Naz Sanks MS,LCPC
3789 Donna Drive
Billings, MT 59102

KATHLEEN MCQUILLAN
PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR
2501 Montana Avenue , Ste. 6
Billings, MT 59101
(406) 598-1742 kathmcquillan@gmail.com

September 28, 2025

RE: Reference letter for 13th Judicial District Court Judge Candidate, Bradley Kneeland

To the Honorable Governor Gianforte:

I am a licensed private investigator in the State of Montana. I have been assisting criminal defense attorneys in the state for over twenty years.

I first met Bradley Kneeland when he began his legal career with the Office of the Public Defender for the State of Montana.

As I got to know Mr. Kneeland, he expressed to me that he wanted to contribute more to the justice system and one day hoped to serve in the capacity of a District Court Judge.

Several years passed and, in that time, he worked as a prosecutor in Billings Municipal Court, a law clerk for the Honorable Jessica Fehr in the Thirteenth Judicial District and is currently a Standing Master in the Thirteenth Judicial District and has held that position since February 2022.

Mr. Kneeland is clearly the most qualified candidate for the position of District Court Judge. He will be able to give everyone that comes before him in his court the respect and fairness they deserve due to his diverse background in the justice system.

I have also had the pleasure of getting to know Bradley on a personal level as well.

Bradley Kneeland is a fifth generation Montanan born into a family of civil servants.

He was raised in Eastern Montana and has the common sense, hard work ethic and love of family that is shared by all Montanans.

Mr. Kneeland understands that if he were to become the next District Court Judge for the Thirteenth Judicial District, he would be able to continue his family's legacy of serving their communities.

I highly recommend Attorney Bradley Kneeland to be the next appointment for Yellowstone County Thirteenth Judicial District Judge.

Thank you for your attention in this regard.

Sincerely,

Kathleen McQuillan

ROCHELLE BELEY, MS, LCPC

MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPIST

**P.O. BOX 29
HARLOWTON, MT 59036
(406) 855-4517
(406) 632-4899 (FAX)
rbeley@itstriangle.com**

September 28, 2025

Governor Greg Gianforte
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

Re: Bradley Kneeland

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing this letter of support for Bradley Kneeland for Judgeship with the Thirteenth Judicial District. I have known Mr. Kneeland in his professional capacity as Standing Master for Thirteenth Judicial District for the past three years. Professionally, I provide Parenting Plan Evaluations for the District Court and have completed those evaluations for Mr. Kneeland. I believe Mr. Kneeland prioritizes the best interests of the children when ruling on matters involving family law. I have always found Mr. Kneeland to be professional and respectful while serving as a Standing Master.

Thank you for this opportunity to support Bradley Kneeland for a position with the Thirteenth Judicial Court. I believe his experience and standards would be an asset to the Court and community.

Respectfully,



Rochelle Beley, MS
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor

SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

*Phillips County Courthouse
P.O. Box 470
Malta, MT 59538
(406) 654-1062 Office
(406) 654-2363 Fax*

Yvonne Laird
District Judge

Kathy King
Court Administrator

Kelley A. Barstad
Court Reporter

Phillips County - Malta
Blaine County - Chinook
Valley County - Glasgow

September 26, 2025

Governor's Office
Attn: Hannah Slusser
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, Montana 59620
Via email: nominatejudges@mt.gov

RE: Bradley Kneeland – Thirteenth Judicial District Judge Applicant

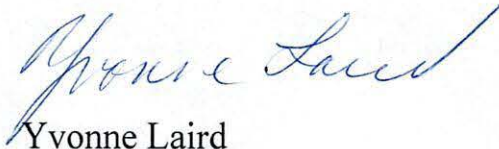
Dear Governor Gianforte:

Please accept my letter of support for Bradley Kneeland's appointment as a District Court Judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District. Mr. Kneeland has had the opportunity to practice in several areas of the law which results in a well-rounded and informed understanding of the legal process and the importance of a studied and balanced judiciary.

Mr. Kneeland will be able to bring the same empathy, compassion, and legal prowess he displayed when representing children in law school and later when practicing, representing children and parents in dependency and neglect cases, to the bench. This will allow him to run a judicially sound court that maintains respect for all parties appearing before the court.

Mr. Kneeland has displayed a dedication to public service rarely seen in today's world. He has worked as a Public Defender, Treatment Court Defense Attorney for Billings Municipal Court, and District Court Law Clerk. Mr. Kneeland currently serves as a Standing Master in the 13th Judicial District handling a wide variety of cases and serving as a mediator in family law matters. Mr. Kneeland's dedication to public service and the ethical practice of the law would certainly serve him well as a member of the judiciary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Yvonne Laird". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "Y" and a long, sweeping underline.

Yvonne Laird
District Court Judge

Governor Gianforte
Attn: Hannah Slusser
PO Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
nominatejudges@mt.gov

RE: 13th Judicial District Court, Yellowstone County
Department 9 & 10
Application of Standing Master Bradley Kneeland

Greetings Governor Gianforte,

I have had the honor and privilege of working as the judicial assistant for Bradley Kneeland since his appointment to Standing Master for the 13th judicial district court in February of 2022. I am very excited that he put his name in the pool of candidates for one of the newly announced district court judge positions. I am proud to work with such a talented leader. As Standing Master he serves this community with the highest respect and integrity with heartfelt dedication to the law. The diversity of the standing master position leads to the knowledge and experience to serve as a district court judge and opportunity for a seamless transition. Bradley Kneeland is an ideal candidate for one of the district court judges.

Thank you for your time,
Martha Forrest-Martin

Raschel Gallagher LCPC, LAC
Family Relations Supervisor
Po Box 81512
Billings, MT 59001
rgallaghercounseling@gmail.com
406-598-4029

09/258/2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Brad Kneeland in his application for the position of judge. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Standing Master Kneeland for 3 years in both a professional and personal capacity, and I can attest to his outstanding character, deep legal acumen, and unwavering commitment to justice.

Throughout his career, Standing Master Kneeland has consistently demonstrated the qualities we most need in a judge: integrity, impartiality, and sound judgment. His legal expertise is matched only by his dedication to fairness and respect for all individuals who come before the law. He has shown exceptional skill in navigating complex legal matters with clarity and thoughtfulness, always guided by a strong moral compass.

Moreover, Standing Master Kneeland is a person of humility and empathy. He understands the real-world impact of legal decisions and approaches each case with the seriousness and care it deserves. His calm demeanor and ability to listen deeply to all sides make him particularly suited for the bench. I have seen Mr. Kneeland care about those families he sees as he often calls or emails with questions regarding mental health, opportunities and resources in the community to help children/families.

I am confident that Standing Master Kneeland will serve the judiciary with distinction and uphold the highest standards of the legal profession. I strongly urge you to consider his application favorably. Our community would be fortunate to have someone of his caliber serving as a judge.

Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Raschel Gallagher LCPC, LAC

Family Relations Supervisor

From: [Emily Beard](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 13th Judicial District Court - District Court Judge Selection
Date: Monday, September 29, 2025 1:52:33 PM

Dear Members of the Judicial Selection Committee,

I am writing to offer my strong support for the appointment of Standing Master Bradley Kneeland to the position of District Court Judge. I have known Bradley for almost five years and have had the opportunity to observe the professionalism, fairness, and integrity he brings to every aspect of his career in public service.

Bradley has every qualification necessary to succeed as a District Court Judge. He has served with distinction as a Standing Master in Yellowstone County over the past three years. Bradley's wide-ranging experience throughout the justice system—including his prior work as both a prosecutor and defense attorney—provides him a balanced and comprehensive perspective that is essential for the bench. His ability to approach cases with impartiality, comprehensive legal knowledge, and respect for all parties involved is a testament to his judicial temperament.

Bradley is thoughtful in his decision-making, professional in the courtroom, and dedicated to ensuring fair outcomes for those that appear before him. His broad experience and knowledge of the unique aspects of this district make him highly qualified to serve as a District Court Judge. I urge you to give him your full consideration for this vital position.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Emily Beard

Emily Beard
Emily Beard Law, PLLC
PO Box 20259
Billings, MT 59104
(406) 545-2903
emily@emilybeardlaw.com



HUGHES

L · A · W_{PLLC}

September 29, 2025

Governor Greg Gianforte
Attn.: Hannah Slusser
nominatejudges@mt.gov

Re: Applicants Bradley Kneeland and Laurie Grygiel

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am writing to recommend Bradley Kneeland and Laurie Grygiel for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court judicial vacancies. These two candidates have much needed experience in the areas where the two new judges will need it, especially considering the specialized courts we will see in 2026.

On January 2, 2026, the Thirteenth Judicial District will transition into specialized courts. The two newest judges will be assigned family law, dependent neglect and civil cases. In recent years, Yellowstone County has seen over 10,000 new filings per year. The vast majority of those filings are domestic relations, abuse and neglect, criminal law and involuntary commitments. With the specialized courts, whoever is appointed will face an exceptionally high caseload in the areas of family law and dependent neglect proceedings. Mr. Kneeland and Ms. Grygiel have been standing masters in the Thirteenth Judicial District for several years and have been successful in those positions. They've been managing a work load similar to that of a district court judge and have shown that they have the ability to effectively manage the workload and issue timely and accurate rulings.

The family law case load is heavy in more than just caseload statistics. It is emotionally charged and tends to bring out the worst in people. The litigants are often pro se and are not at all sophisticated litigants. As a standing master, Mr. Kneeland has a significant amount of experience dealing with pro se litigants. Not only is he experienced, his ability to calmly, yet firmly, control his courtroom in the midst of emotionally charged situations is beyond reproach. His courtroom demeanor commands respect. While I've not practiced in front of Laurie Grygiel, I've heard the same can be said of her.

Mr. Kneeland and Ms. Grygiel also have a significant amount of experience in the area of civil law. They oversee mediations referred to them by the district judges and preside over pro se

3031 GRAND AVE. #151

BILLINGS, MT 59102

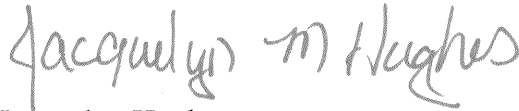
PHONE 406.855.4979

EMAIL JHUGHES@HUGHESLAWMT.COM

civil trials where the litigants have not requested a jury trial. Finally, they both have experience in dependent neglect cases as they preside over emergency protective services hearings. Mr. Kneeland represented parents in dependent neglect proceedings prior to becoming a standing master, making him familiar with the rights of parents in dependent neglect proceedings.

Both Mr. Kneeland and Ms. Grygiel are already successfully doing exactly the kind of work that will be expected of them if they are appointed to fill the judicial vacancies. They will be true assets to the Thirteenth Judicial District and I am hopeful you will consider appointing them to fill the two new vacancies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacquelyn M. Hughes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jacquelyn Hughes



Scott Twito
Yellowstone County Attorney
217 N 27th Street
PO Box 35025
Billings, MT 59107

Criminal 406-256-2870
Civil 406-256-2832
Dependent Neglect 406-256-2714
countyattorney@co.yellowstone.mt.gov

September 29, 2025

Governor Greg Gianforte
Via email: nominatejudges@mt.gov

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I write to you in support of Standing Master Kneeland and his application for one of our two newly created judicial positions in Yellowstone County.

I am the Deputy Chief County Attorney in the Civil Dependency and Neglect Division of the Yellowstone County Attorney's Office. Having been an attorney practicing primarily in Yellowstone County for the past 18 years, I believe Standing Master Kneeland would add so much to our community as a district court judge. I have known Standing Master Kneeland since he was a public defender and have been impressed with him since we met. One of the most impressive things about Standing Master Kneeland is how articulate and eloquent he is, while remaining clear and easy for litigants to understand. Following hearings before Standing Master Kneeland when he has covered DN matters, multiple Child Protection Specialists have commented that they would love if Standing Master Kneeland could cover more of their hearings. Given the number of hearings our social workers attend, such compliments are truly high praise.

Standing Master Kneeland has also served as a mediator in our DN proceedings at times and has treated all parents and attorneys with respect, care, and kindness. He has also brought his preparedness he practices in the courtroom to those mediations. We leave those mediations with all parties knowing they were heard, and then were met with creative solutions to complex problems.

Standing Master Kneeland would add much to our bench in Yellowstone County. I urge you to consider him for your nomination. If you have any additional questions, I would be happy to answer them.

Sincerely,

/s/Heather C. Webster

Heather C. Webster
hwebster@yellowstonecountymt.gov
Deputy Chief County Attorney

Molly Ward Disability Law, P.C.

*Molly C. Ward, Attorney
2722 Third Ave N, Suite 400
PO Box 1536
Billings, MT 59103
Telephone: 406-294-7694
Fax Number 406-206-3427*

September 29, 2025

VIA EMAIL

Office of Governor Greg Gianforte
PO Box 200801
Helena, MT 59602

RE: Letter in Support for Standing Master Bradley Kneeland
Thirteenth Judicial District Court Vacancy, Yellowstone County
Department Nine and Ten

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing in support of Standing Master Bradley Kneeland to fill one of the newly created district court vacancies in Yellowstone County, the Thirteenth Judicial District, Departments Nine and Ten.

Standing Master Kneeland is uniquely qualified to be a district court judge. He has experience as both a public defender and as a deputy city attorney. As Standing Master, he has worked tirelessly for the last three years in one of Montana's busiest judicial districts. He has presided over a broad range of cases, including dissolutions, parenting plans, guardianships, debt collections, orders of protection, criminal arraignments, bail hearings, and numerous other proceedings. Parties come before Standing Master Kneeland in an extremely vulnerable state, often anxious or fearful about their families and their future. He conducts his proceedings with the utmost professionalism and compassion toward all parties involved. Standing Master Kneeland possesses considerable legal expertise and an incredible work ethic, no doubt because of his profound respect for the legal profession. Standing Master Kneeland knows the letter of the law and would act as a fair and honest adjudicator.

Personally, I know Standing Master Kneeland to be an incredibly generous, thoughtful, and faith-filled man. He cares deeply about the community of Billings and is constantly striving for ways to make it better. He is devoted to service throughout the city, to his church, and to his family. Standing Master Kneeland is not only an exceptionally competent attorney, but he is an exceptional human. As such, he has the ideal temperament for a district court judge.

I cannot think of an attorney better suited for this position than Standing Master Bradley Kneeland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Molly C. Ward Newrones', written in a cursive style.

Molly C. Ward Newrones
Attorney at Law



Yellowstone County Attorney Office
217 N 27th Street
PO Box 35025
Billings, MT 59107

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Dependent Neglect 406-256-2714
countyattorney@co.yellowstone.mt.gov

Office of the Governor
Of the State of Montana
Attn: Hannah Slusser
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

RE: Letter of Recommendation for Bradley Kneeland
13th Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Governor Gianforte and Commission Members,

I am writing this letter to express my support for Bradley Kneeland to be appointed as the newest district court judge for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court vacancy.

I have known Bradley for several years through his work as a defense attorney, law clerk for the Honorable Jessica Fehr, as a city prosecutor, and in his current position as a Standing Master.

Bradley's diverse background and judicial experience make him the ideal candidate for one of the District Court Judge vacancies. Bradley has experience in both civil and criminal law (both defense and prosecution) in his own legal practice. In addition, he stands miles above the rest of the candidates because of his work as a Standing Master. In that position he has presided over family law matters and mediated complex dependency cases, arguably some of the most difficult areas of law, as well as a variety of other duties unique to a district court judge.

Through all the different roles in his career he has consistently shown competence, professionalism, and compassion. These qualities are what I value in a Judge. Bradley's knowledge of the law and familiarity with the courtroom make him the clear standout candidate for this position. I believe he has the right temperament, is the most qualified, and is the right person to serve the people of Montana as the newest judge for the Thirteenth Judicial District.

As a fellow attorney, community member, friend, and colleague I recommend Bradley Kneeland for District Court Judge.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amanda Tiernan".

Amanda Tiernan,
Senior Deputy County Attorney