

Katie Campbell  
36235 Kerr Dam Rd  
Polson, MT 59860  
kcampbell2@mt.gov

April 10, 2022

The Honorable Greg Gianforte  
Governor of Montana  
PO Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am writing this letter of recommendation in support of Benjamin Anciaux for 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court Judge.

I have had the honor of working with Mr. Anciaux throughout the duration of my 8 ½ years as a Probation and Parole Officer for the State of Montana, first in his capacity as a conflict attorney for the Office of Public Defender and, most recently, as a Deputy County Attorney for the Lake County Attorney's Office. He has demonstrated an ability to maintain an open-mindedness that has allowed him to make fair, well-informed decisions regarding defendants he represented and those he has prosecuted.

Mr. Anciaux is a competent, confident attorney who is known for his work ethic and his ability to handle a large number of cases. However, despite his knowledge and capabilities, he consults his colleagues on a regular basis to ensure he makes educated, appropriate decisions.

While Mr. Anciaux approaches his cases with compassion, empathy and a focus on defendant rehabilitation, he does not dismiss the importance of accountability, community safety, and the needs of victims and survivors. He continually strives to find the delicate balance within the criminal justice system.

Never in my time working with Mr. Anciaux have I seen him overtly stressed or frustrated. He handles conflict appropriately, through a combination of humor and reasonable discussion. He does not let pride or emotion drive his decisions, but rather the evidence and totality of circumstances.

Mr. Anciaux has the credentials, skills, and abilities to be an exceptional District Court Judge and I hope you will consider him for appointment. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Katie Campbell", written in dark ink.

Katie Campbell, Probation and Parole Officer

From: Dan Yonkin  
41080 US Highway 93 Frontage Road  
Ronan, Montana, 59864  
(406) 249-3011

Date: March 22, 2022

RE: Ben Anciaux District Court Judge Appointment

Dear Governor Gianforte,

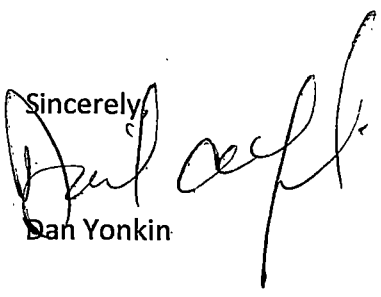
I am writing this letter to express my personal support for your consideration of Lake County Attorney Ben Anciaux for the position of District Court Judge in the 20<sup>th</sup> Montana Judicial District. My name is Dan Yonkin and for the past 21 years, I have worked as a Law Enforcement Officer in Lake County Montana. For most of that time, I have also been a foster parent.

During those 21 years, I have known Ben Anciaux as a defense attorney, a civil attorney representing parents whose children were removed by Social Services, and most recently as a prosecutor. In each of those circumstances, Ben has demonstrated his ability to be diligent and thorough. Throughout my career, I have had the experience of working with a wide variety of attorneys on a wide variety of issues. Of those individuals, Ben Anciaux stands out as someone who knows his case, does a great job managing the issues and shows compassion for the parties involved.

I have seen Ben take on tough tasks and manage them in a professional, skillful manner. Despite his obviously busy schedule, Ben has always found the time to stop and listen, carefully consider and thoughtfully respond to any issue or case I have brought to him.

It is my opinion that as a man respected in a variety of different groups within his community, Ben Anciaux will bring honor, integrity and an equitable application of the law to the Montana Twentieth Judicial District.

Sincerely,

  
Dan Yonkin

**To: Governor Gianforte**  
Governor's Office  
PO Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

APR 11 2022 PM 2:32

**From: Diane Richard, Office Manager**  
Lake County Attorney's Office  
106 4<sup>th</sup> Ave E  
Polson, MT. 59860

**RE: Recommendation of Ben Anciaux as Judge of Department 1, Twentieth Judicial District Court**

Dear Governor Gianforte;

I find myself torn. Torn between wanting to offer wholeheartedly my support of Ben Anciaux for the open judicial position in Lake County and a deep regret that in doing so I'd be encouraging him to leave our county attorney's office. Such a move on his part would be our great loss; it would be the district's great gain.

I have had the pleasure of working with Ben in two capacities; beginning in 2004 when I became the Director of the CASA program in Lake County and again in 2017 when I became the Office Manager for the Lake County Attorney's Office. I have a great admiration for him, and I can't honestly say that I feel that way about very many people. I have seen his expertise as a defense attorney. I have seen his expertise as a prosecutor. I have seen his integrity as an individual and his unwavering dedication to his job; be it prosecution or defense. To me, Ben is the personification of the Legal Scales of Justice of which we so often see pictures. He gets the importance of weighing things out in order to come to an appropriate decision. Ben and I have had many a debate about the legal system in general and the fairness (or sometimes lack thereof) of the justice system. I was naïve in my belief that justice would always prevail and truth would win the day. What I didn't know was how often legal technicalities could get in the way of that. Ben has a keen awareness of the balance that has to play out; the balance between what is fair, what is just, and what could get in the way of either from happening. I have sat with him in Court on several trials and it still amazes me how he is able to keep track of all the things being said and what their legal ramifications are. He seems to inherently know what is important and what is superfluous. He doesn't like to engage in psychological games with defendants, jurors or opposing attorneys. He's more of a "tell it like it is" kind of guy. I have watched him get berated in Court by a pro se Defendant or two; and where I feel deeply offended and outraged on his behalf, his expression almost always remains unchanged throughout the outburst. His human compassion for Defendants allows him to see the situation

from their point of view, even while he prosecutes them as needed for their rehabilitation and punishment. We have had a few more challenging cases this year with defendants thinking it's a good idea to go pro se. It means a lot of pro se motions getting filed with the defendant's hopes that something will stick; but it also means Ben has to make sense of their often questionable motions and respond as the consummate professional that he is. Still he manages to somehow make lemon-aid from the lemons and has commented several times that these things are "forcing him to be a better attorney". Ben likes challenges, and I've yet to see him shy away from one. The judicial position would be a challenge he is more than capable of taking on.

I am just realizing that I don't think there is a legal question I have asked Ben for which he didn't have the answer readily available in his head or knew exactly where to find it. I marvel at how much information he is able to store and process to a logical conclusion in a moment's notice. He is a valued and respected member in the weekly meetings we have with the Sheriff's Office, Probation and Parole and others. When he is there, we somehow know we'll get a fuller look at whatever case is being brought to the forefront. When he's not there we viscerally miss the benefit of his experience, his wisdom and his expertise.

I could go on and on about Ben; and perhaps I have. But I know the character of the man and how dedicated he is to the judicial process. I know that if he sits on the bench that he will be fair and concise; that he will do his utmost to preserve the law and the dignity of all those involved in the process. It is both an honor and pleasure to know him and support him as the next Judge of the Twentieth Judicial District Court.

Most Sincerely,



Diane Richard, Office Manager  
Lake County Attorney's Office

cc:

Benjamin (Ben) Anciaux  
Hannah Slusser, Governor's Office

**CLERK OF DISTRICT COURT**

Lake County Courthouse  
106 4th Avenue East  
Polson MT 59860  
(406) 883-7254 - phone  
(406) 883-8582 - fax

April 11, 2022

Governor Gianforte  
Governor's Office  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena MT 599620-0801

Lyn Fricker  
Clerk of District Court  
106 4<sup>th</sup> Ave E.  
Polson Montana 59860

Re: Recommendation of Ben Anciaux as Judge for Department 1 Twentieth  
Judicial District Court Lake and Sanders County

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I have worked around Ben for over thirty years and find him to be an honest hard working man. He has plenty of experience and has been on all sides of the system in my years as Clerk. He and another partner were the best public defenders Lake County has ever had.. They did the work of what they have 8 attorneys doing now. I have witnessed him work very hard over the years. He has always handled himself in a professional manner and I feel he could handle the position of District Court Judge. I obviously will be working very closely with whomever becomes our next Judge so I am very interested .

Please consider Ben Anciaux .

Thank You.



Lyn Fricker  
Clerk of Court

Katie Campbell  
36235 Kerr Dam Rd  
Polson, MT 59860  
kcampbell2@mt.gov

REC'D APR 18

April 10, 2022

The Honorable Greg Gianforte  
Governor of Montana  
PO Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am writing this letter of recommendation in support of Benjamin Anciaux for 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court Judge.

I have had the honor of working with Mr. Anciaux throughout the duration of my 8 ½ years as a Probation and Parole Officer for the State of Montana, first in his capacity as a conflict attorney for the Office of Public Defender and, most recently, as a Deputy County Attorney for the Lake County Attorney's Office. He has demonstrated an ability to maintain an open-mindedness that has allowed him to make fair, well-informed decisions regarding defendants he represented and those he has prosecuted.

Mr. Anciaux is a competent, confident attorney who is known for his work ethic and his ability to handle a large number of cases. However, despite his knowledge and capabilities, he consults his colleagues on a regular basis to ensure he makes educated, appropriate decisions.

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Mr. Anciaux has the credentials, skills, and abilities to be an exceptional District Court Judge and I hope you will consider him for appointment. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Katie Campbell, Probation and Parole Officer

**From:** [Valerie Borgmann](#)  
**To:** [NominateJudges](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]  
**Date:** Friday, April 29, 2022 11:12:08 AM

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My name is Valerie Borgmann and I worked for Sanders County Justice Court for 29 years until my retirement in 2017. I read the story in the Sanders County Ledger about submitting letters of support for the judge vacancy in the 20th Judicial District.

My support is unwavering for Benjamin Anciaux. I no longer remember the specifics, but I do remember Mr. Anciaux was the attorney for a case before our court and although our interactions were short term, his professionalism was noteworthy. He and I were introduced and each time we spoke he addressed me by name. This may seem insignificant, but he was the only attorney I worked with on a temporary basis who showed me this courtesy. I was grateful for this simple act of respect and kindness. Court matters are often high pressure and I was impressed with his diligence.

There are many changes happening throughout our state and indeed our country and these are particularly trying times. I believe Mr. Anciaux has the integrity and the dedication to law that will be of benefit to the 20th Judicial District. Strength of moral character combined with wisdom and patience are essential qualifications for any judge and I believe Mr. Anciaux possesses those qualities and would be an asset not only to the 20th Judicial District, but to the State of Montana.

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Borgmann

**CLERK OF DISTRICT COURT**

Lake County Courthouse  
106 4th Avenue East  
Polson MT 59860  
(406) 883-7254 - phone  
(406) 883-8582 - fax

REC'D APR 25

April 11, 2022

Governor Gianforte  
Governor's Office  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena MT 599620-0801

Lyn Fricker  
Clerk of District Court  
106 4<sup>th</sup> Ave E.  
Polson Montana 59860

Re: Recommendation of Ben Anciaux as Judge for Department 1 Twentieth  
Judicial District Court Lake and Sanders County

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I have worked around Ben for over thirty years and find him to be an honest hard working man. He has plenty of experience and has been on all sides of the system in my years as Clerk. He and another partner were the best public defenders Lake County has ever had.. They did the work of what they have 8 attorneys doing now. I have witnessed him work very hard over the years. He has always handled himself in a professional manner and I feel he could handle the position of District Court Judge. I obviously will be working very closely with whomever becomes our next Judge so I am very interested .

Please consider Ben Anciaux .

Thank You.



Lyn Fricker  
Clerk of Court

April 29, 2022

Governor Gianforte  
% Hannah Slusser  
Governor's Office  
PO Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I write to you today in support of appointing Benjamin R. Anciaux, Esq., of Polson, MT., to the judgeship of the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court of Montana.

As his close friend for almost 40 years, I can say with confidence that I believe he has the proper judicial temperament for the position: Ben is, without question, a man of integrity, diligence, steadfastness, open-mindedness, firmness, and clear-headed realism.

Over the years, I have come to know Ben as someone with a keen ability for understanding both verbal and non-verbal cues in others--an essential skill for any lawyer, as well as any judge. His intellect is formidable, and his adeptness with ideas and concepts (both legal and non-legal) is undeniable. His critical thinking skills are unmatched. He communicates with clear and concise language that cuts right to the point and is broadly comprehensible without ever being unnecessarily technical. When Ben speaks, he speaks with the sort of honesty and directness we expect of our public servants in Montana.

As a man of integrity, Ben exemplifies honesty in all that he does and displays a strong moral compass in every aspect of his life. He works hard, loves his family dearly, and has spent his adult life dedicated to the betterment of his community. His wife Laura is as fine a person as he is, and their marriage has always exemplified dedication: to their three children, their extended family, and to their community and the state of Montana as a whole.

Unique amongst many judges, Ben has worked on both sides of the legal profession, beginning as a Deputy County Attorney in Richland County, then in private practice and as a contracted public defender in Lake County and currently as a Deputy Lake County prosecutor. In addition, he has dedicated legal services more broadly, with activities such as serving on the state's medical malpractice board and working with tribal courts.

I can think of no more well-suited individual for a judgeship on the 20th Judicial District of Montana than my dear friend Benjamin. I humbly request that he receives your full consideration for this appointment, as it is a position for which he is most suited by his intellect, temperament, and experience.

Sincerely,

Betty M Kijewski

PO Box 80, Dayton, MT 59914

**From:** [karlellen@ronan.net](mailto:karlellen@ronan.net)  
**To:** [Slusser, Hannah](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ben  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 11, 2022 12:31:25 PM

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My name is Ellen R. Kaphammer, I live in Ronan and serve on the city council. Ben is our Ronan city attorney, and has worked hard for the City of Ronan, he is honestly the attorney we have had. I also know Ben as a defense attorney, and prosecutor, he has a great deal of experience in several areas and I feel he would serve well as district judge in Lake county. Ben has my full support.

Ellen R. Kaphammer  
116 3rd Ave S.E. Ronan, Mt. 59864  
406-676-8666  
406-291-0948

05/05/2022

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Candidate Benjamin Anciaux. I have known Mr. Anciaux for more than 15 years and have worked with him in varying capacities in that time. For the last 5 years, I have worked with Mr. Anciaux in my capacity as a Child Protection Specialist.

Mr. Anciaux has worked with me in nearly all of our Dependency and Neglect cases for Lake County in addition to serving as the Deputy County Attorney and City Attorney for the City of Ronan. Benjamin Anciaux' experience in both the public and private sector uniquely qualify him to address the needs of our community as a District Court Judge. Mr. Anciaux has been a part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Court legal community for many years. During that time, he has demonstrated a deep understanding of the law, a commitment to justice, and a commitment to keeping children and families in our community safe.

Benjamin Anciaux has extensive exposure to both family law and criminal law. I believe Mr. Anciaux is objective, fair minded, and embodies the average community member's sense of morality. Mr. Anciaux has the ability to make tough decisions and stand up for what is right, even in difficult situations. It is with great confidence that I recommend Mr. Anciaux for nomination to the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cynthia Hunter', written in a cursive style.

Cynthia Hunter

Brandi M. Clark  
903 11<sup>th</sup> Street E., Unit J1  
Polson, MT 59860  
(406) 253-4307

May 9, 2022

Letter of Recommendation

RE: Ben Anciaux

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter as a formal recommendation in support of Ben Anciaux as Lake County District Court Judge. I have known Ben for several years, I worked in Youth Court as a Juvenile Probation Officer, and I feel confident stating that he is a well deserving candidate that will truly be a beneficial part of the Judicial System and Lake County.

During the time that I have known Ben it has been very obvious that he is determined to achieve his goals and is a prime example of a great prosecuting attorney for the County Attorney's Office. Ben is committed to the members of this community, I feel he would be a fair, and reasonable Judge.

I have a great deal of respect for Ben, and I am proud to be able to provide this letter of recommendation. Please feel free to contact me if you would like any further information on the merit of Ben Anciaux for this position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brandi M. Clark", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Brandi M. Clark

**COTTER LAW OFFICE, P.C.**

Britt Cotter, Esq.

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May 9, 2022

Governor Greg Gianforte

Office of the Governor

P.O. Box 200801

Helena, MT 59620-0801

Sent by Email to [nominatejudges@mt.gov](mailto:nominatejudges@mt.gov)

**RE: Letter of Support for Judicial Candidate Benjamin A. Anciaux  
20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court**

Dear Governor:

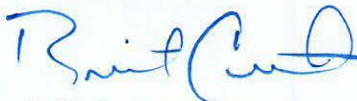
Please accept this letter in support of Benjamin A. Anciaux's candidacy for 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court Judge.

Ben, in my opinion, is the most skillful trial attorney we have in our district. No one has spent more time in the courtroom or done more jury trials, especially the difficult trials. I doubt there is a legal issue that Ben has not come across in his career.

Ben is kind, honest, and thoughtful. He works harder than most and yet still finds the time to volunteer in our community. He has the experience and temperament to be an excellent judge.

The other candidates are all exceptional attorneys and I respect them very much. I am supporting Ben because he has lived and practiced law in our district for 36 years, and I believe he has earned the opportunity to be our judge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Britt Cotter", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Britt Cotter, Esq.