



Daniela E. Pavuk  
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Re: Recommendation for Bradley Kneeland for District Court Judge in Yellowstone County

I am writing this letter in enthusiastic support of Bradley Kneeland's application for district court judge in Yellowstone County. I have known Brad for over seven years and have had the pleasure to watch his passion and dedication to public service throughout this time. Brad began his legal career representing some of Montana's most vulnerable citizens while working in the Office of the State Public Defender, first in Miles City, where he was born and raised, and then in Billings. During his time with the Miles City office, Brad represented individuals in felony and misdemeanor criminal cases, youths in juvenile proceedings, and both parents and children in dependency and neglect proceedings. Once he moved to Billings, Brad defended individuals in the Billings Municipal Court in misdemeanor criminal proceedings. Part of his time with the Office of the State Public Defender in Billings was spent serving as the defense attorney for the Billings Municipal Treatment Court where he advocated for appropriate services for individuals and worked with the Treatment Court team to provide programs and services to support a drug and alcohol-free lifestyle for the participants.

Brad then clerked for Judge Jessica T. Fehr, who I had the pleasure of attending my first year of law school with. During his year and a half with Judge Fehr, Brad furthered his criminal law experience and at the same time had the opportunity to exercise his legal research and writing acumen on many civil matters, including drafting orders on several complex civil cases.

Brad was able to round out his criminal law experience when he joined the Billings City Attorney's Office as a prosecutor in 2020. In this position, he prosecuted general misdemeanor offenses. Often, I found myself in discussions with Brad about the current issues facing Billings and the surrounding areas. I was always impressed by Brad's understanding of the issues and his outlook that individuals should be treated with a firm yet fair hand.

It was not surprising to me when Brad announced that he applied for the position of Standing Master for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court in Yellowstone County. He is driven by the need to help and make a difference. Brad became Standing Master in February 2022 and has since demonstrated his intelligence and professionalism on the bench. I received positive feedback from a former partner of mine at Crowley Fleck who tried a complicated child custody case in Brad's courtroom. My former partner was impressed by Brad's understanding of the law,

exercise of good judgment, and ultimate ruling that was in the best interests of the child involved in the case.

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.

As an attorney practicing civil litigation for over sixteen years in Billings, I wholeheartedly support Bradley Kneeland as the next district court judge in Yellowstone County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniela E. Pavuk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Daniela E. Pavuk

4-7-2023



*Law Firm PLLC*

**GW Building**  
2722 Third Ave N. STE 235  
Billings, Montana 59101  
TEL: 406-248-3900  
[berstlawfirm@gmail.com](mailto:berstlawfirm@gmail.com)

April 6, 2023

Governor Greg Gianforte  
P. O. Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620  
Delivered Via Email: [nominatejudges@mt.gov](mailto:nominatejudges@mt.gov)

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

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing to provide my full support and encouragement for Bradley Kneeland to fill the vacancy of District Court Judge for the Thirteenth Judicial District created by Judge Michael Moses' retirement. I have known Mr. Kneeland both professionally and personally for several years and know him to be one of the most dedicated, knowledgeable, and patient attorneys in our community.

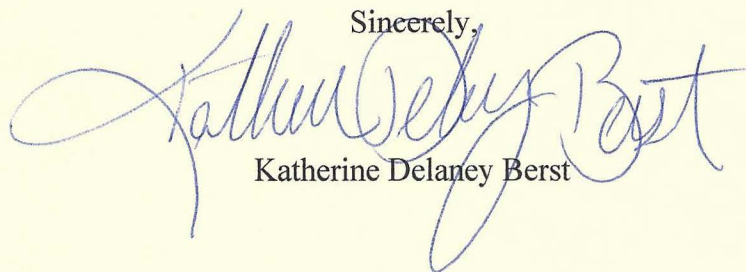
Mr. Kneeland's professional experiences make him uniquely well qualified to step into the role of District Court Judge. Mr. Kneeland has experience serving the people of the Thirteenth Judicial District as both a public defender and city attorney, as a law clerk for one of the busiest departments in the Thirteenth Judicial District, and finally as a Standing Master. Through these varied experiences Mr. Kneeland has gained the experience necessary to serve as a District Court Judge. Throughout Mr. Kneeland's career I have observed him to always be well researched and thoughtful in the practice of the law and the application of the law. I have further observed that Mr. Kneeland's work ethic is unparalleled. Through this set of skills Mr. Kneeland is able to interact with people in the community from all walks of life in a manner of respect for all people and their problems while also being able to clearly articulate what the law is on an issue and how it applies to the case. As a Standing Master Mr. Kneeland strives to ensure that he provides decisions and rulings efficiently so that cases can continue to progress, and parties do not have lengthy periods of uncertainty while waiting for decisions.

I have also had the privilege of knowing Mr. Kneeland personally for the last several years and from these interactions can say that Mr. Kneeland in both professional and personal settings

is a genuinely kind, patient, and thoughtful person. Mr. Kneeland has been able to master the art of work-life balance which can often be a struggle for attorneys. I would also highlight that Mr. Kneeland in all of his interactions demonstrates his high moral character.

Mr. Kneeland's work history and disposition make him by far one of the most well qualified attorneys to serve as a District Court Judge. I am confident that Mr. Kneeland would be a fair, compassionate, and intelligent judge who would serve the Thirteenth Judicial District with the same unwavering dedication that has been exemplified throughout his career.

Sincerely,



Katherine Delaney Berst

April 17, 2023

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

Re: Recommendation Letter on Behalf of Bradley Kneeland

To Whom It May Concern:

I write today in support of Bradley Kneeland to be appointed as judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District, Yellowstone County. My parents started a fire suppression business in Billings in 1989. I worked for them for many years before purchasing the company from them in 2009 and continued their work. Through my work in the fire suppression industry and as a member of the Billings community, I value individuals who want to help and protect others. I am tired of seeing individuals elected or appointed who are only in it for themselves, who are only looking to climb the power ladder. I respect people who fully commit to their current role and focus on carrying out the duties they are asked to do. Billings needs a judge that does not let their ego get in the way but one that believes they are just like the people they serve.

Brad is that person. I have seen Brad commit to his positions as public defender, prosecutor, and now standing master. He has worked tirelessly for the Billings community in these roles. I have no doubt that he would do the same as a district court judge. Brad has displayed a high level of common sense, compassion, caring, and understanding. One of Brad's best qualities is his genuine character. He is sincere, does not sugar coat it but tells it like it is, and he above all, has integrity.

Sincerely,



Joe Burtell

April 23, 2023

Hannah Slusser  
Governor's Office  
PO Box 200801  
Helena, MT, 5062-  
[nominatejudges@mt.gov](mailto:nominatejudges@mt.gov)

Governor Gianforte –

I write you in strong support of Brad Kneeland's application to replace the Honorable Michael Moses in Montana's 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial District. Brad's wide range of experience, compassion, and incredible work ethic make him an ideal candidate to serve in Montana's busiest judicial district. Over my ten years as a prosecutor focusing exclusively on domestic violence cases, Brad has served as both a colleague and opposing counsel, and he has done so with the integrity, professionalism, and efficiency required of our district court judges.

Domestic abusers are often as challenging to prosecute as they are difficult to defend, and finding a prospective jurist who has done both is a truly rare feat. In Brad's role as an attorney with the Office of the Public Defender, I personally observed Brad's ability to simultaneously protect his clients' constitutional rights while minimizing the impact of their combative egos. During one such incident, I watched Brad endure a client's verbal tirade with patience and skill. Many attorneys would be less inclined to earnestly discharge their constitutional obligations in such a situation, but Brad went on to secure a favorable resolution for his client regardless.

Conversely, working with domestic violence victims can be equal parts challenging, demoralizing, and rewarding. Brad seamlessly stepped into his role as the City of Billings' second Domestic Violence Prosecutor at a time when my family needed it most – the birth of our first child. With little guidance, Brad took over a case load designed for three prosecutors and became the embodiment of what a domestic violence prosecutor should be. He discharged these obligations with a law and order mentality, but maintained the kind of compassion and patience for victims that are part and parcel of this demanding profession.

Acting as one of two standing masters in Montana's busiest judicial district, Brad has shown that he has what it takes to step into the role of a District Court judge. Brad has demonstrated his worth to the residents of Yellowstone County by discharging his duties, many of which are accurately described as uninteresting to lawyers and non-lawyers alike, without controversy or politicization. This is the work of our District Court judges, a job that is admirable, understated, and absolutely essential to a functional democracy. I urge you to appoint Brad to the District Court bench.

Sincerely,



Benjamin J. Halverson

April 17, 2023

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

Re: Recommendation Letter on Behalf of Bradley Kneeland

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I write today in support of Bradley Kneeland to be appointed as judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District, Yellowstone County. My parents started a fire suppression business in Billings in 1989. I worked for them for many years before purchasing the company from them in 2009 and continued their work. Through my work in the fire suppression industry and as a member of the Billings community, I value individuals who want to help and protect others. I am tired of seeing individuals elected or appointed who are only in it for themselves, who are only looking to climb the power ladder. I respect people who fully commit to their current role and focus on carrying out the duties they are asked to do. Billings needs a judge that does not let their ego get in the way but one that believes they are just like the people they serve.

Brad is that person. I have seen Brad commit to his positions as public defender, prosecutor, and now standing master. He has worked tirelessly for the Billings community in these roles. I have no doubt that he would do the same as a district court judge. Brad has displayed a high level of common sense, compassion, caring, and understanding. One of Brad's best qualities is his genuine character. He is sincere, does not sugar coat it but tells it like it is, and he above all, has integrity.

Sincerely,



Joe Burtell

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  
13<sup>th</sup> 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.

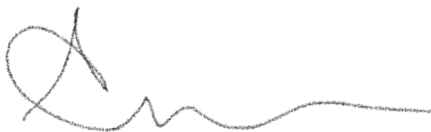
I have known Bradley for several years through his work as a defense attorney, law clerk for the Honorable Jessica Fehr, as a city prosecutor, and in his current position as a Standing Master.

Bradley's diverse background and judicial experience make him the ideal candidate to replace the Honorable Michael Moses. 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 black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Tiernan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Amanda Tiernan

Dylan D. Crouse  
425 Creek Court  
Sheridan, WY 82801  
307-388-0127  
MT Bar No. 56415081  
[dylncrouse@gmail.com](mailto:dylncrouse@gmail.com)

May 1, 2023

***Via Electronic Mail***

Gov. Greg Gianforte  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620  
[nominatejudges@mt.gov](mailto:nominatejudges@mt.gov)

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

Dear Governor Gianforte:

You should appoint Brad Kneeland to be a Yellowstone County District Court Judge.

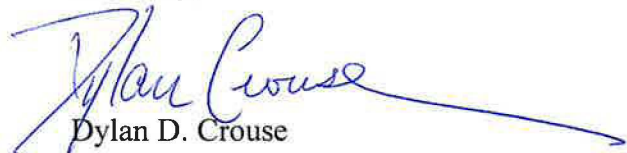
First, Brad has the exact qualifications needed to succeed as a Judge. He began his career working in Municipal Court, Treatment Court, and the Office of the State Public Defender. He clerked for Judge Jessica T. Fehr and then became a prosecutor in the Billings City Attorney's Office. Most recently, he became a Standing Master for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court. With this background, Brad experienced every side of a courtroom and mastered the types of cases appearing most often in District Court. Brad already climbed the learning curve and will deliver professional, competent results on his first day in office.

Second, Brad exemplifies good character. He keeps his own counsel and does not spread rumors. When mediating, he provides guidance without judgment or impatience. He does not shy away from emotionally wrenching cases. He is open-minded, compassionate, and hardworking. He knows what is right and when to be decisive. Brad has judicial temperament.

Finally, and most importantly, Brad cares. He cares that the justice system upholds the rights of litigants. He cares that little kids have good homes, that victims are safe from their abusers, and that wrongdoers face fair punishment. He will help make the justice system work because he believes it can work.

Brad is exceptional, and he will do exceptional work. You should let him get started.

Sincerely,

  
Dylan D. Crouse



HUGHES

L · A · W<sub>PLLC</sub>

May 3, 2023

Governor Greg Gianforte  
nominatejudges@mt.gov

Re: Applicant Bradley Kneeland

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am writing to recommend Bradley Kneeland for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court judicial vacancy. Mr. Kneeland is the only candidate with experience in the areas most significantly impacting the judicial system in Yellowstone County.

In filling the vacancy left by Judge Moses, it is important to consider the unique challenges faced by Yellowstone County. In 2020, 10,201 new cases were filed. Of these, 3,422 were civil cases (excluding domestic relations cases). The remaining 6,779 cases were mostly comprised of abuse and neglect, involuntary commitment, domestic relations and criminal cases. The statistics for 2021 were similar with 10,042 cases being filed. Of those cases, 2,771 were civil filings. The remaining 7,271 were mostly comprised of abuse and neglect, involuntary commitment, domestic relations and criminal cases.

The 2020 and 2021 new case filings are up from 6,803 cases filed in 2010 and 6,368 cases filed in 2011. The number of cases assigned to each judge was actually higher in 2010 than in 2020. Despite the three new judicial positions created in 2010 and 2018, the On-Time Case Processing Rate is dropping. It has dropped from an average of eighty-six percent in 2017 to an average of seventy-five percent in 2020. Criminal proceedings had an alarmingly low On-Time Case Processing Rate of sixty-four percent. Dependent/neglect proceedings also had an alarmingly low One-Time Case Processing Rate at sixty-one percent. Civil cases have the highest On-Time Case Processing Rate of eighty-eight percent.

It is undisputable that whoever takes Judge Moses' place will face an exceptionally high caseload. Moreover, the statistics show that the vast majority of the cases processed do not involve sophisticated civil litigants. Rather, the voluminous caseload involves parents facing abuse and neglect proceedings, criminal cases and domestic relations matters. The judicial system does not work if cases cannot be moved forward in a timely manner. If the On-Time Case Processing rate is going to come back up, and it must, Yellowstone County needs a judge

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that is experienced in managing a significant volume of cases as well as someone experienced in the areas most affecting this County's judicial system. This is why I recommend Bradley Kneeland.

Mr. Kneeland started out as a public defender, a position in which he managed a voluminous caseload. Those cases involved criminal defense as well as dependent/neglect proceedings. Not only did Mr. Kneeland manage a high volume of cases, he worked directly with the population of people who he will face most regularly if he becomes a judge. He spent a year and a half working as a prosecutor for the City of Billings, where he learned criminal law from the prosecution side. In that position, he worked directly with pro se defendants as well as working directly with crime victims.

Mr. Kneeland clerked for Judge Fehr, where he learned the perspective of all cases from the judicial side. He has spent the last year as a standing master, a position in which he mediates a variety of cases involving civil lawsuits and domestic relations. He presides over cases where litigants are represented by counsel as well as pro se litigants.

I've personally observed Mr. Kneeland in his capacity as a prosecutor for the City of Billings. He was always prepared and always took solidly supported positions in the cases he chose to prosecute. He was respectful, but firm, with pro se defendants. He treated the criminal defense attorneys with respect. He was compassionate towards victims while always maintaining a high degree of professionalism. He was always prepared despite the significant caseload faced by City prosecutors.

Thomas Pardy and Michelle Sullivan have a vast amount of civil experience and their experience in the civil realm would be an asset to Yellowstone County in civil cases. Both are upstanding citizens and exhibit a great deal of integrity. However, at this time, civil cases comprise approximately one-third of the Yellowstone County caseload. Further, civil cases currently have the highest On-Time Case Processing Rate of eighty-eight percent. This is contrasted with the incredibly high dependent/neglect caseload with an On-Time Case Processing Rate of sixty-one percent and a criminal caseload with an On-Time Processing Rate of sixty-four percent.

As you consider the best applicant for this position, I am hopeful that you will consider the specific needs of this County. While each applicant could be an asset in some areas, Mr. Kneeland will be an asset in all areas. He may be young, but he will work tirelessly to bring up the On-Time Case Processing Rate in the areas that are suffering the most. We will be best served with a judge who is capable of handling the extremely high volume of these cases and that candidate is Bradley Kneeland.

Sincerely,



Jacquelyn Hughes

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

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May 3, 2023

**RE: Reference letter for 13<sup>th</sup> 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 seven years ago.

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.

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



**Molly Ward Disability Law, P.C.**

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*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*

May 4, 2023

VIA EMAIL

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

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

Dear Governor Gianforte:

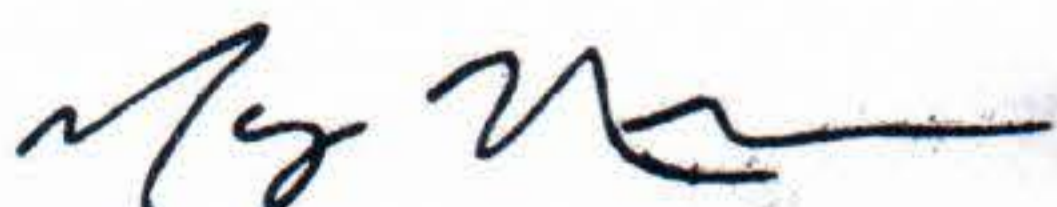
I am writing in support of Mr. Bradley Kneeland to fill the vacancy left by the Honorable Judge Michael Moses in Montana's Thirteenth Judicial District.

Mr. Kneeland is uniquely qualified for this position. He has experience as a public defender, prosecutor, and most recently, as Standing Master in one of Montana's busiest judicial districts. Mr. Kneeland has brought compassion, considerable legal expertise, and an incredible work ethic to each of these positions. More importantly, Mr. Kneeland deeply appreciates the legal profession, and he has shown sincere devotion to each position in which he has served.

Personally, Mr. Kneeland is a generous and thoughtful man. He is not only an exceptionally competent attorney, but he is an exceptional human. Mr. Kneeland genuinely wants to help people. He knows the letter of the law and would act as a fair and honest adjudicator. Mr. Kneeland has the ideal temperament for a District Court judge.

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

Sincerely,



Molly C. Ward Newrones  
Attorney at Law

# SELVEY LAW FIRM, L.L.C.

---

L. SANFORD SELVEY, II  
Attorney at Law

316 N. 33<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Billings, MT 59101  
E-mail: [selveylaw@gmail.com](mailto:selveylaw@gmail.com)

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

May 4, 2023

## **Re: Letter of Reference for 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court Judge Candidate Bradley Kneeland**

To the Honorable Governor Gianforte:

I have been a practicing criminal defense attorney here in Montana for 31 years and before that in Tallahassee, Florida for 13 years.

I have had the pleasure of getting to know a very fine candidate for the Thirteenth Judicial District Court Judgeship in Yellowstone County, Bradley Kneeland, first when he clerked for an absolutely effective and fair District Court Judge Fehr.

Bradley was an exceptional law clerk for the Judge as I saw him in action in Court with the presiding Judge. It was obvious that he had very well assisted Judge Fehr to be totally prepared to handle all court matters.

Subsequently, Bradley represented many indigent defendants charged in District Court with 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 provided exceptionally professional and fair representation on behalf of the Billings Municipal Court.

As in Bradley's style, he was always well prepared in handling his heavy caseload; but always reasonable and fair.

Since those days, Bradley has been a very effective, hard-working, dedicated, and fair Standing Master handling complex civil cases and in the mix, criminal cases regarding bail bonds, attorney appointments, release conditions, etc.

In the long run, I very highly recommend Attorney Bradley Kneeland to be the next appointment for Yellowstone County Thirteenth Judicial District Court Judge.

Attorney Kneeland is a most qualified, experienced person with an "across the board" experience in the legal world.

The citizens of Yellowstone County would greatly benefit from having attorney Kneeland as a District Court Judge.

Thank you for your attention in this regard and please feel free to call for any further information at (406) 698-4565.

Sincerely,

L. Sanford Selvey, II

Merry Marr  
1631 Zimmerman Avenue  
Billings, MT 59102  
406-531-1789  
Montana Bar No.: 7196  
[merry@lawmontana.com](mailto:merry@lawmontana.com)

***Via Electronic Mail***

Gov. Greg Gianforte  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620  
[nominatejudges@mt.gov](mailto:nominatejudges@mt.gov)

RE: Letter of Support for Bradley Kneeland

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I have known Brad for approximately 5 years. I first knew him professionally, as his supervisor at the Office of the Public Defender and I am now lucky enough to call Brad my friend.

Brad has innumerable qualities that make him both an exceptional human being and also a fierce jurist. It is my belief that to be a good attorney, one must have both favorable emotional qualities as well as possessing the intelligence necessary to excel at the practice of law; Brad has both.

It is also important to note that Brad has dedicated his legal career to preparing for this moment, having worn many different hats in the judicial system. Defender, prosecutor, standing master... Brad has even been the attorney in drug court and was able to support many, many people through their recovery. This experiential knowledge is invaluable.

There are multiple examples I can provide that demonstrate Brad's character but one that has always stayed with me occurred when I was transitioning from my position at the Office of the Public Defender into private practice. As the lower court supervisor, I often had some of the more challenging cases and one of my tasks was to help in their reassignment prior to my departure. I had sent out an email to the remaining attorneys briefly describing the more challenging cases and asked them to let me know if anyone would be willing to volunteer to take them on. We had an exceptional team at the time and everyone volunteered, but what struck me about Brad was that he immediately volunteered for a case that was probably one of the most challenging cases I have had in my career. Obviously, I cannot elaborate too much, but Brad stuck with that case, no

matter how difficult, dismal and terrible it became until there was resolution and the best possible outcome for the client. Using both his astute legal skill as well as his determination and nerve, Brad was able to get a result for the client that was infinitely better than expected. I should mention that Brad was able to do this while exhibiting compassion, tempered by professionalism.

I could go on and on, but Brad has the intelligence, drive, integrity and compassion that I believe are hallmarks of being a judge and he has them in spades.

It is without hesitation that I join the many people supporting Brad in his application for District Court Judge. I would like to thank Brad in advance for the difference he will make.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Merry Marr". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal tail on the "M" and "r".

Merry Marr