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

Re: Recommendation Letter on behalf of Michelle M. Sullivan, Judicial Opening, Yellowstone County District Court, Billings, Montana

Dear Ms. Slusser:

I am writing this letter personally on behalf of the application of Michelle M. Sullivan for the judicial opening to be vacated by the retirement of Hon. Michael G. Moses in Yellowstone County District Court, Billings, Montana.

Michelle was an associate for the law firm where I am still employed at as a legal assistant. She worked here from approximately April 2006 through March 2017. I can tell you that Michelle was great at her position, knew all aspects of the law, always met filing deadlines, etc. Even though Michelle had a busy schedule, she always took the time to explain to the legal assistants in the office regarding any questions we had on filing procedures or filing deadlines. We still to this day use the handout Michelle prepared for us when we calendar filing deadlines in state district courts.

I am writing personally hoping you will consider appointing Michelle Sullivan to this judicial vacancy. I feel that Michelle will bring a great deal of experience and fairness to all parties, if she was appointed to fill this judicial vacancy.

Thank you for considering my letter of recommendation.

Sincerely

Arlene S. Forney

April 13, 2023

To: Hannah Slusser

Regarding Nomination of Michelle Sullivan for Yellowstone County District Judge

My name is Brian Biggs, I have lived with my wife Janet in the Billings area for over thirty years. Michelle Sullivan has represented my ninety-five-year-old mother, Eileen Joy Biggs, for the past three years. Mother has lived with Janet and I for the past four years. Mom suffers from Alzheimer's / Vascular dementia and was swindled by a group of people in South Texas for approximately two hundred thousand dollars before she came to live with Janet and me.

Michelle has helped Mom and our family with a host of issues. A name change, guardianship issues, federal and state tax issues, and even criminal proceedings in a District Court in Brownsville, Texas. Michelle has appeared in the court of Judge Moses here in Yellowstone County to represent my mother on the name change and guardianship issues.

My only regret is that I wish I had the good fortune to meet and retain Michelle a year sooner. I am sure she would have saved me thousands of dollars and years of litigation time wasted with a half a dozen attorneys that did not have her competency, professionalism, skill, and sense of honor.

Michelle Sullivan would make a wonderful District Judge; she has the brains and scruples to serve the members of our community for years into the future.

Sincerely,

Brian Biggs

5506 Billy Casper Drive Billings, Montana 59106 brianwbiggs@hotmail.com State of Montana Attn: Hannah Slusser Governor's Office P.O. Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620 Via Email

Re: Thirteenth Judicial District Vacancy

To whom it may concern:

I write in support of Michelle Sullivan's application for the judicial vacancy that will result from the retirement of Judge Moses in Yellowstone County. I have had the honor of practicing with Michelle throughout my entire legal career. When I worked at Holland & Hart LLP as an associate for seven years, Michelle was my colleague. She was also an exceptional mentor. Six years ago, Michelle and I both left that firm to start our own practice, Sullivan Miller Law PLLC. Although I am distressed at the thought of losing her as my law partner, I cannot imagine a lawyer more suited to be a judge.

During my first years practicing, Michelle was always available to help when I struggled with research, with practical application of rules, and with navigating big firm culture. If I needed advice, she made time for me. I saw her do the same with other young associates, paralegals, and legal assistants. She has always respected others in the workplace, and she shows the same respect to opposing counsel. Basic decency and kindness are often overlooked in this profession. Even in our more difficult cases, Michelle has never abandoned those values.

Michelle is also a stickler for the rules. If there is an obscure statute or rule of civil procedure that governs something, then Michelle usually knows it. I cannot count how many times I've come to her with a vague notion of rule that I'm certain should exist, only to have her inform me that it does exist and where it can be found. More importantly, if the Montana Constitution, statutes, or rules do not support an argument, then she is honest in her assessment. Michelle is not afraid to have hard conversations with clients when she does not believe a position is legally viable. She is a woman of strong integrity, and I truly believe that her personality is well suited to the judiciary. I would continue, but I will only hate myself later for facilitating her departure from my firm if she gets the appointment. Yellowstone County would be fortunate to have her as a district court judge, and I strongly support her application.

Sincerely,

Sullivan Miller Law PLLC

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to express my profound support for Michelle Sullivan in her run for the Thirteenth Judicial District Judgeship opening.

I have known Ms.Sullivan for only two years, but in that amount of time I have developed the utmost admiration and respect for her. I think she is incredibly intelligent not only in her knowledge pertaining to legal issues, but also in regards to her common sense approach to justice. I feel that Ms. Sullivan always looks at the bigger picture and understands how to eloquently guide people through what could possibly be the most difficult time of their lives. Court proceedings can be overwhelming and stressful for anyone; especially people unfamiliar with the protocol of court. Ms. Sullian has been my source of assurance and support throughout the entire realm of emotions that legal proceedings will generate. I have entrusted her to represent me which she has done fairly and effectively.

Given the opportunity, I know Ms. Sullivan would not only be an asset to this community, but to the justice system as a whole.

Sincerely,

Mikel Cochran

MARK D. PARKER
CASEY HEITZ
SHAWN P. COSGROVE
GEOFFREY T. CUNNINGHAM
MICHAEL L. DUNPHY

401 North 31st St., Suite 805 P.O. Box 7212 Billings, MT 59103-7212 (406) 245-9991 FAX (406) 245-0971

April 11, 2023

Hannah Slusser Governor's Office P.O. Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620

Re: Letter of Support - Michelle

Sullivan

To Whom It May Concern:

I write today, in support of Michelle Sullivan to be appointed as judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District.

She is smart and has a level head. I have watched our local bench go from three judges to eight. She will keep up with her workload and will not embed in her decisions, intellectual blunders, petty biases, or political ideology. She will be a thoughtful listener and a fearless decision maker.

I could chronicle for you how I know all of this, but I am sure you have plenty of letters to read, so I will keep it short. We have worked with and against each other on a wide assortment of claims. She's always top notch.

Very truly yours,

Mark D. Parker

MDP/ls

From: Andy Patten
To: NominateJudges

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consideration of Michelle Sullivan

Date: Saturday, April 15, 2023 11:35:12 AM

I advocate the appointment of Michelle Sullivan as district judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District. My experience with Ms. Sullivan is that she is a hard worker, knows the law, civil and professional. I think she is well prepared to be a district judge and once on the bench Ms. Sullivan will conduct herself with appropriate judicial demeanor.

J. A. Patten

James A. Patten



2817 2nd Avenue North, Suite 300 PO Box 1239 Billings, MT 59103

T: 406.252.8500 F: 406.294.9500

E: apatten@ppbglaw.com

MARK D. PARKER
CASEY HEITZ
SHAWN P. COSGROVE
GEOFFREY T. CUNNINGHAM
MICHAEL L. DUNPHY

401 North 31st St., Suite 805 P.O. Box 7212 Billings, MT 59103-7212 (406) 245-9991 FAX (406) 245-0971

April 13, 2023

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

RE: Thirteenth Judicial District

Judge Vacancy

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I write to unequivocally support the appointment of Michelle Sullivan for the position of District Court Judge for the Thirteenth Judicial District. During my legal career, I have had the opportunity to work with Michelle whereby we have, in some instances, been aligned on the same issue, and in other instances, been adverse to one another. Michelle has always demonstrated the highest level of integrity and competence during these interactions.

Michelle can remain level-headed while zealously representing her clients. She possesses the uncanny ability to be the most reasonable person in the room, when needed, and also be the toughest litigator in the room, when needed. Simply stated, Michelle is a top-notch lawyer and her intelligence and skills will no doubt transfer to the bench and yield well-reasoned, independent and impartial decisions. Michelle is a hard-working, extremely intelligent attorney who would make an exceptional judge.

Very truly yours,

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Casey Heitz

CH:ez

BY EMAIL

State of Montana Attn: Hannah Slusser Governor's Office P.O. 200801 Helena, MT 59620 nominatejudges@mt.gov

Re: Letter of Support – Michelle Sullivan

To Whom It May Concern:

I write in strong support of Michelle Sullivan's application for the judicial vacancy in Yellowstone County.

I have looked up to Michelle as my mentor for the past several years. She consistently makes space for me to ask questions regarding legal research, application of rules, and interpretations of case law. I have observed her respectful nature in hard and uncomfortable situations and seen her be a level-headed and fearless advocate for her clients.

Michelle is not only a talented, sharp attorney, but also a genuine and kind person. She listens to those around her and has a great sense of humor. Michelle's personality in combination with her legal expertise makes her very well suited to serve as a district court judge.

When I think about the person I want to strive to be, I think of the strong women in my life. Michelle is one of those strong women. I have no doubt she will make a wonderful judge for the community of Yellowstone County.

Thank you for your consideration of my letter of support.

Sincerely,

Anna M. Reed

From: Peggy Christensen
To: NominateJudges

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Nomination Letter on behalf of Michelle M. Sullivan

Date: Thursday, April 13, 2023 5:44:43 PM

To: Governor Greg Gianforte,

Please accept this letter as my nomination in support of Michelle M. Sullivan as District Court Judge, 13th Judicial District, Billings Montana.

My name is Peggy Christensen, I live and work in Yellowstone County in the capacity of Court Appointed Guardian & Conservator.

I have had the pleasure of working with and being represented by Michelle Sullivan.

I am confident in her ability to be honest, impartial, transparent, knowledgeable and discerning with whatever situation would come her way on the bench.

Our community would be a richer one with her addition to the Justice system in this capacity.

Thank you for reading this email and carefully considering this information.

Peggy Christensen

GUNDERSON LAW FIRM

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Attorney: TODD D. GUNDERSON email: tgundylaw@gundylawfirm.com Support Staff:
TANYA E. TWETEN, Legal Assistant

email: gundylaw@gundylawfirm.com

PO Box 926 • Billings, Montana 59103 2822 Third Avenue North • Suite 205 • Billings, Montana 59101 TELEPHONE: (406) 252-2177

April 14, 2023

Hannah Slusser Governor's Office P.O. Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620

RE: Letter of Support for Michelle Sullivan

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in full and unwavering support of Michelle Sullivan's appointment as District Judge in the Montana Thirteenth Judicial District.

Within the last year, I had the privilege of observing Michelle during three days of depositions. It was a high-dollar case and the depositions involved nine other attorneys, some of whom were heavy-hitters. Michelle outshined all of them. She was analytical, smart, to the point, and quickly grasped every aspect of the case.

I have also worked with Michelle on other cases involving a variety of issues. I believe that her best quality may be that she tries to <u>resolve</u> cases. It is a trait I am finding lacking in far too many lawyers these days.

Thank you for time and attention.

Very Truly Yours,

Todd D. Gunderson

April 15, 2023

Hannah Slusser

Governor's Office PO Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620

Dear Ms. Slusser:

My name is Judith Hosford. I was a licensed insurance adjuster in Montana for 35 years, specializing in adjusting workers' compensation claims and lastly worked as the Claims Manager for Industrial Injury Claims/Midland Claims Service. I would like to offer a reference letter for Michelle Sullivan, one of the applicants for the vacancy in the Thirteenth Judicial District (Yellowstone County).

I was first introduced to this individual in 2017 when she was retained to defend claims for one of our largest accounts, the Montana Health Network. I was told she has been an attorney for 18 years but had not ventured over to the workers' compensation court yet. We worked together frequently. She always took into consideration the merits of each individual case, which was presented well in meetings, mediations, or the workers' compensation court. She was not beyond stating where the legal line was drawn to anybody if there was a question. Her work ethics are undeniable. Her legal competency was valued by our client, the plaintiff attorneys, and all who worked with her over the years. I had the pleasure of working with Michelle for 3 years until I retired in 2019.

I do feel that Yellowstone County, and the state of Montana, would be remiss if Michelle Sullivan was not appointed for the vacancy of the judgeship. She is a well rounded individual who is analytical and honest in her work endeavors and highly respected as an attorney of some 20 years in practice.

Sincerely

Judith Hosford 223 Fairpark Drive Billings, MT 59102 To: Hannah Slusser

Regarding Nomination of Michelle Sullivan for Yellowstone County District Judge

My name is Brian Biggs, I have lived with my wife Janet in the Billings area for over thirty years. Michelle Sullivan has represented my ninety-five-year-old mother, Eileen Joy Biggs, for the past three years. Mother has lived with Janet and I for the past four years. Mom suffers from Alzheimer's / Vascular dementia and was swindled by a group of people in South Texas for approximately two hundred thousand dollars before she came to live with Janet and me.

Michelle has helped Mom and our family with a host of issues. A name change, guardianship issues, federal and state tax issues, and even criminal proceedings in a District Court in Brownsville, Texas. Michelle has appeared in the court of Judge Moses here in Yellowstone County to represent my mother on the name change and guardianship issues.

My only regret is that I wish I had the good fortune to meet and retain Michelle a year sooner. I am sure she would have saved me thousands of dollars and years of litigation time wasted with a half a dozen attorneys that did not have her competency, professionalism, skill, and sense of honor.

Michelle Sullivan would make a wonderful District Judge; she has the brains and scruples to serve the members of our community for years into the future.

Sincerely,

Brian Biggs

5506 Billy Casper Drive Billings, Montana 59106 brianwbiggs@hotmail.com

Crist, Krogh, Alke & Nord, PLLC

Attorneys at Law

E>(8)<=

Eric Edward Nord enord@cristlaw.com Telephone (406) 255-0400 Facsimile (406) 255-0697 The Securities Building 2708 First Avenue North, Suite 300 Billings, Montana 59101

April 20, 2023

Hon. Greg Gianforte, Governor State of Montana Attn: Hannah Slusser Governor's Office P.O. 200801 Helena, MT 59620 nominatejudges@mt.gov

RE: Letter of Recommendation for Michelle Sullivan, Candidate, District Court Judge, Thirteenth Judicial District, Yellowstone County

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing to express my strong support for Michelle Sullivan for the position of District Court Judge of the Thirteenth Judicial District, Yellowstone County. In her many years as a litigator, Michelle Sullivan has proved herself to have the makings of a sound jurist—she is respectful, patient, fair-minded and conscientious.

I offer my support for Michelle Sullivan because she has a deep understanding of the law through her professional experience. Even though I have been on the other side of litigation with Michelle, I have found her to be professional, courteous, and responsive. She has demonstrated a deep understanding and commitment to the rule of law.

As a skilled lawyer, Michelle will serve the people well as a District Court Judge in Yellowstone County. I strongly support her application.

Respectfully,

Eric Edward Nord

LUCAS & TONN. P.C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW 513 MAIN STREET P.O. BOX 728 MILES CITY, MT 59301 www.lucasandtonn.com DANIEL Z. RICE BRYANT S. MARTIN ADAM FORSLUND

> Telephone: 406-232-4070 Telefax: 406-232-4093

E-MAIL:

dan@lucasandtonn.com bryant@lucasandtonn.com adam@lucasandtonn.com

April 20, 2023

Hannah Slusser, Governor's Office PO Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620

RE: Judicial Nomination of Michelle Sullivan

Dear Ms. Slusser

I am writing to recommend Michelle Sullivan for judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District Court.

Ms. Sullivan and I have worked on cases over the years; I have found Ms. Sullivan to be knowledgeable, personable, easy to work with and fair.

Ms. Sullivan has mediated family law cases for me; she does a great job explaining strong and weak positions to the parties. Ms. Sullivan understands that family law is difficult for all involved.

Beyond Ms. Sullivan's deep understanding of the law is her fairness. When working with Ms. Sullivan, I never got the sense that she was trying to game things to benefit her clients. Instead, because of her equitable nature, the facts of the case rise to the top so that the parties work better at resolving the issues.

Ms. Sullivan would be an asset in serving Montanans on the bench. Please appoint Ms. Sullivan to replace outgoing Judge Michael Moses.

Sincerely

Adam L. Forslund

From: <u>Janet Walker</u>
To: <u>NominateJudges</u>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michelle Sullivan

Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2023 10:22:03 AM

Attention: Hannah Slusser,

I employed Michelle Sullivan to represent me in a lawsuit filed against me by my twin sister Bonnie Ballou in 2014. We ended up in district court and after 8 years of litigation, and two supreme court litigations, Michelle Sullivan was successful in saving my share of my parents ranch from 1 dollar to 1.42 million. Ms. Sullivan was very thorough and was essential in saving not only my share of the family ranch but my families future. After several consultations and meetings with Ms. Sullivan, I would highly recommend her for the position which she is seeking. I feel she is extremely qualified for the position.

Sincerely,

William Walker

MIDLAND CLAIMS SERVICE, INC & Industrial Injury Claims®

P.O.BOX 20151 • BILLINGS, MONTANA 59104 • 406-656-9960 Fax 406-656-9983



April 25, 2023

Governor's Office of the State of Montana PO BOX 200801 Helena, MT 59620

Attn: Hannah Slusser

Re: Letter of Support For Michelle Sullivan – Thirteenth Judicial District (Yellowstone Co)

Dear Ms. Slusser:

Please accept this letter of support for Michelle Sullivan for appointment to fill the vacancy in the Thirteenth Judicial District – Yellowstone County.

I have worked with Ms. Sullivan as counsel on numerous occasions. Her professional performance and ethics on the matters that we worked on together were consistently at or above expectations. I encourage the appointment of Ms. Sullivan.

Thank you for accepting this letter of support of Ms. Sullivan.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Marsh, RPA, CPIA, CIA, CIU

President

Midland Claims Service, Inc. Industrial Injury Claims®



RALPH W. STEELE, P.C.

ATTORNEY AT LAW a professional corporation

202 West Main Street, Suite 201 Bozeman, Montana 59715

Ralph W. Steele www.steelelawmt.com

April 27, 2023

Telephone: (406) 582-9986 Telefax: (406) 582-9995 E-mail: rsteele@steelelawmt.com

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

RE: Thirteenth Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing to lend my full support for the appointment of Michelle Sullivan to serve as District Court Judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District. I have practiced continuously in Bozeman since 1998. I have appeared in hearings and tried cases in numerous jurisdictions in Montana including the Sixth, Thirteenth and Eighteenth judicial districts.

I have known and worked professionally with Michelle Sullivan for three years. My knowledge of Michelle's abilities is based upon personal observations of her approach to the practice of law. Michelle possesses excellent skills in legal analysis and writing, and an ability to understand and distill complicated facts. She also demonstrates a unique ability to engage professionally and respectfully with opposing counsel, litigants and witnesses. Michelle is a positive person by nature, with a firm command of the law, which combined with her community service and communication skills, enhances her ability to reach a broad cross-section of parties and witnesses who may appear before the court in civil and criminal matters.

Michelle exceeds all of the personal qualities and professional requisites to serve with distinction and would be an excellent district court judge. If appointed, Michelle will serve the best interests of all citizens who appear before her court and the community and state in which she serves.

I highly recommend the appointment of Michelle Sullivan to serve as the next District Court Judge in Yellowstone County.

Respectfully yours,

RALPH W. STEELE, P.C.

Ralph W. Steele

RWS/Izc

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

To whom it may concern:

This letter of support is being written on behalf of Michelle Sullivan. We met Michelle in the spring of 2018 out of pure luck when needing representation. She represented us until our case settled in the fall of 2022. Michelle proved to be up for the challenge every time she was called on. Her knowledge and legal advice impressed us on a regular basis. Michelle was fair, honest, and not afraid to stand her ground. She always listened to our input and made our concerns seem relevant. Michelle is a great person and would be fair and honest in whatever she does in life!

We have no doubt that Michelle will make a great Judge and strongly support her appointment to the Thirteenth Judicial District for Yellowstone County.

Sincerely,

Chad and Jessica Rollson

Billstein, Monson & Small PLLC

1555 Campus Way, Suite 201 Billings, MT 59102 www.bmslawmt.com (406) 656-6551

April 24, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

Michelle Sullivan will be a fair, hard-working, and eminently competent judge if chosen to replace the Hon. Michael G. Moses as one of the district court judges for the Thirteenth Judicial District, Yellowstone County. I have known Ms. Sullivan since I began practicing law in Billings nearly sixteen years ago. I have worked alongside her in several matters and can attest to her expertise and work ethic.

Montana's judges preside over many different types of legal matters and face time pressures requiring an ability to quickly and competently gain an understanding of each case and the legal issues presented. I cannot think of any person better suited to meet those challenges with fairness, decency, and high ethical standards. Most importantly, Ms. Sullivan will be guided by the law without personal or political bias.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Monson



From: <u>Elizabeth A. Nedrow</u>
To: <u>NominateJudges</u>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michelle Sullivan

Date: Friday, April 28, 2023 9:54:11 AM

Attachments: <u>image001.png</u>

I am writing to convey my enthusiastic support for Michelle Sullivan, candidate for the vacancy for judge of the Thirteenth Judicial District (Yellowstone County). I practiced law with Michelle for many years and have known her personally for more than that. She is brilliant, fair, patient, and kind. She also has deep roots in eastern Montana and will approach the job with a public service mentality.

Best regards, Beth



Beth Nedrow

Partner

HOLLAND & HART LLP [hollandhart.com]

401 North 31st Street, Suite 1500, Billings, MT 59101

enedrow@hollandhart.com | T: (406) 896-4635 | M: (406) 690-9353

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This message is confidential and may be privileged. If you believe that this email has been sent to you in error, please reply to the sender that you received the message in error; then please delete this email.

 From:
 rlorenz@ejguzalaw.com

 To:
 NominateJudges

 Cc:
 "Edward J. Guza"

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Michelle Sullivan **Date:** Monday, May 1, 2023 4:27:13 PM

Ms. Slusser,

Edward J. Guza and Ryan Lorenz of E.J. Guza & Associates in Bozeman, Montana recommend that you appoint Michelle Sullivan to the vacant position in the Thirteenth Judicial District Court. We have had the privilege of working with Ms. Sullivan and find her to be hard-working, diligent, and honest in her work as a lawyer. These qualities are essential to being a good judge and we think the citizens of Yellowstone County would be lucky to have Ms. Sullivan join the bench.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Thank you,

Edward J. Guza Ryan Lorenz 25 Apex Dr. #A Bozeman, MT 59718 (406) 586-2228



Associate Attorney
www.ejguzalaw.com [ejguzalaw.com]

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Billstein, Monson & Small PLLC

1555 Campus Way, Suite 201 Billings, MT 59102 www.bmslawmt.com (406) 656-6551

May 1, 2023

Gov. Greg Gianforte Attn: Hannah Slusser, Governor's Office PO Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620

Re: Letter of Support – Michelle Sullivan

Dear Gov. Gianforte:

I write to support the appointment of Michelle Sullivan to serve as District Court Judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District. I have known Michelle since I began practicing law in September of 2018. During that time, she has mentored me through several matters involving litigation, civil procedure, and general issues arising from the practice of law.

Michelle has earned an appropriately sterling reputation by representing her clients in a clear-eyed, yet compassionate manner. Yellowstone County will be a better place with Michelle Sullivan as District Court Judge. Please appoint her to replace outgoing Judge Michael Moses.

Sincerely,

Frans Andersson



VIA EMAIL

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

Re: Michelle M. Sullivan Letter of Recommendation

Dear Ms. Slusser:

I am writing in support of Michelle M. Sullivan in her application to fill the imminent vacancy in the Thirteenth Judicial District Court with the retirement of the Honorable Michael G. Moses.

I have had the opportunity to work extensively with Michelle for approximately the last 10 years. The types of matters have included estate/trust administration, guardianship/conservatorship, real estate and business disputes. In those matters, I have most often co-counseled with Michelle but on occasion she has been a court appointed fiduciary whose obligations and decisions may or may not be aligned with my client's preferred outcome.

Michelle's demeanor is the type that I appreciate in a district court judge. The first hope and expectation is that parties and legal counsel can resolve matters in good faith. If that fails, Michelle will be ready, willing and able to make a firm decision that objectively applies law to facts.

In addition to co-counseling with Michelle, I have referred numerous matters to Michelle. Michelle has never been interested in a perspective client's politics. Michelle is interested only whether the client has a legitimate legal need and whether the law provides that client with recourse.

With no disrespect intended to the other important types of law being practiced on a daily basis, we need more jurists that have Michelle's civil defense, probate/trust and transactional background. Frankly, Michelle's type of experience is badly needed at both the district court and Montana Supreme Court level.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew T. Billstein



John J. Russell Michael P. Heringer Guy W. Rogers Scott G. Gratton Kelly J.C. Gallinger* Jeffrey T. McAllister Jon A. Wilson Seth A. Cunningham Shane A. MacIntyre Adam M. Shaw Christine M. Cole Brett C. Jensen*

315 N. 24th Street | PO Drawer 849 | Billings, Montana 59103-0849 Phone: 406.248.2611 | Fax: 406.248.3128

Robert L. Sterup rsterup@brownfirm.com

Catrina A. Clausen

May 1, 2023 *Via e-mail*

nominatejudges@mt.gov

Retired Rockwood Brown John Walker Ross Margy Bonner **Re:** Michelle Sullivan

Of Counsel Robert L. Sterup To Whom It May Concern:

I write to highly recommend Michelle Sullivan for District Court Judge. I worked with Michelle for a number of years on highly complex commercial litigation. Michelle is competent, diligent, professional, and very well suited to a Judgeship, with a track record of the highest ethical standards. She boasts the intellectual and personal demeanor that would make her extremely well-suited to the task.

Sincerely,

/s Robert L. Sterup

Robert L. Sterup

*also licensed in North Dakota



Michael P. Heringer
Guy W. Rogers
Scott G. Gratton
Celly J. C. Gallinger*
Jon A. Wilson
Seth M. Cunningham
Shane A. MacIntyre
Brett C. Jensen*
Nathan A. Burke
Alex J Ames
Zachary A. Hixson
Michael P. Sarabia
John R. Knisely

Of Counsel Robert L. Sterup

Kai B. Thorsgard*

Retired Rockwood Brown John Walker Ross Margy Bonner John J. Russell

*also licensed in North Dakota 315 N. 24th Street | PO Drawer 849 | Billings, Montana 59103-0849 Phone: 406.248.2611 | Fax: 406.248.3128

Kelly J. C. Gallinger kgallinger@brownfirm.com

April 27, 2023

VIA E-MAIL

Hannah Slusser Governor's Office P.O. Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620 nominatejudges@mt.gov

Dear Ms. Slusser:

RE: Michelle M. Sullivan - Application for District Court Judge

Please consider this letter to you my recommendation of Michelle Sullivan for appointment as a District Court Judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District. I have had the pleasure of knowing Michelle since we attended law school together at the University of Montana School of Law. Michelle was an intellectual powerhouse in law school graduating at the top of her law school class in the year 2000. Following law school, I had the privilege of practicing against Michelle in private practice when she joined the firm of Holland and Hart in Billings, Montana.

I use the term privilege to describe Michelle as opposing counsel because she is a talented attorney, a consummate professional, and I have always been required to bring my A game when litigating with Michelle. Over the years, I have been impressed by Michelle's acute attention to detail and the thoroughness of her legal analysis and briefing. Michelle will work tirelessly on any cases before her and will treat each person before the Court with empathy and compassion, while also upholding and enforcing the law and doing what is necessary to keep the judicial process moving.

Michelle is well-versed in the nuances of the law and will be able to undertake her duties as a District Court Judge from day one. Michelle also has a strong work ethic grounded in her Eastern Montana upbringing. Finally, Michelle is respected among her fellow attorneys in the Bar, and I have no doubt this respect will extend to an appointed position on the bench.

For these reasons, Michelle Sullivan would be an excellent choice for appointment to the Thirteenth Judicial District Court: she has the intellect, work-ethic, and integrity to be a first-rate Judge. If selected, Michelle will be an invaluable addition to the Thirteenth Judicial District Court and to the Montana Bench.

Sincerely,

KELLY J. C. GALLINGER

KJCG

From: Christopher Morris
To: NominateJudges

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Application of Michelle Sullivan

Date: Thursday, May 4, 2023 1:24:15 PM

Members of the Judicial Nomination Committee:

I submit this information in strong support of Michelle Sullivan to replace the Honorable Michael Moses in the Thirteenth Judicial District. She truly is one of the smartest people I have ever met and will translate that knowledge into a well rounded judge. We first crossed paths in 1998 when she was the teaching assistant for my contracts class in law school. We have remained friends ever since.

I believe she will bring an unbiased approach to the bench where she will decide the case based upon the law and not the politics of the day. If she were to personally disagree with a rule of law, she would still follow it.

Over the last 25 years we have kept in regular professional and personal contact. I have seen how she conducts herself with others and that is only at the highest level of professionalism.

Thank you, Christopher A. Morris Chief Deputy County Attorney Yellowstone County From: <u>Ariel Overstreet-Adkins</u>
To: <u>NominateJudges</u>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michelle Sullivan - letter of support

Date: Thursday, May 4, 2023 9:21:02 AM

Governor Gianforte,

I am writing in enthusiastic support of Michelle Sullivan to fill the vacancy in the Thirteenth Judicial District (Yellowstone County). I have been opposing counsel and co-counsel with Michelle in several cases. I find her to be level-headed, even keeled, and practical. She is highly intelligent and diligent. She has excellent court-room presence and is a skilled legal writer. Michelle seems to relish putting the puzzle pieces together in contested matters. She has been generous with her time and knowledge when I have asked to run something by her as a solo attorney. These are all attributes that will make Michelle an excellent judge. I am certain she will be an asset to the judiciary and to Yellowstone County if selected to serve as District Court Judge.

Ariel Overstreet-Adkins
Attorney/Owner
BLUEBIRD LAW

100 N 27th St., Ste 350
PO Box 1798
Billings, MT 59103
(406) 206-5959
ariel.adkins@bluebirdlawmt.com
http://bluebirdlawmt.com/ [bluebirdlawmt.com]



From: <u>Elizabeth Varela</u>
To: <u>NominateJudges</u>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Nomination for Michelle Sullivan for 13th Judicial District Court Judge

Date: Thursday, May 4, 2023 9:48:31 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this e-mail as my strongest recommendation and nomination that you appoint Michelle Sullivan for the vacant judge position in Yellowstone County District Court. I have known Michelle Sullivan for several years. I have worked with her on two intense and complex cases. Michelle is extremely smart, thoughtful, and professional. Michelle is a practical problem solver. She is an excellent lawyer and will make an even better judge. She is fair and will follow the law to a "T." Ms. Sullivan will not create her own version of the law from the bench; she will interpret and apply the law as the law is intended to be applied.

Finally, Ms. Sullivan is a great human being who cares about her clients, colleagues, and even opponents. She treats people fairly and with respect. Michelle is extremely qualified. Please appoint her.

If you have questions or need more information about Ms. Sullivan, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you

Liz Varela



Elizabeth M. Varela VARELA LAW FIRM PLLC

401 North 24th Street Billings, Montana 59101 Phone: (406) 534-4872

The preceding email message and any attachments are for the sole use of the intended recipient(s), may be confidential, and may be protected by the attorney-client privilege. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender immediately.



David P. Legare

P.O. Box 1080 Billings, MT 59103-1080 (406) 294-9450 Fax (406) 294-9451

dplegare@legarelaw.com

May 2, 2023

VIA Email

State of Montana Attn: Hannah Slusser Governor's Office PO Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620 nominatejudges@mt.gov

Re:

Michelle Sullivan, Applicant for District Judge Position

(Thirteenth Judicial District)

To whom it may concern:

Michelle Sullivan is well qualified to assume the responsibilities of a district court judge. Her skills are evidenced by her list of accomplishments. She also possesses two essential qualities for a good judge: 1) she cares about people; 2) she cares about the law. Consequently, she can make difficult decisions, when necessary, to correctly apply the law with discernment and compassion.

I have known Michelle for several years. I am currently working with her on several difficult cases. Based on my observations, she has demonstrated an astute grasp of Montana law, a strong work ethic, and good moral character with a sincere desire to help people and advance the practice. Those are all great qualities for a judge.

Finally, as a trial attorney, I want a judge to know the rules of procedure and evidence. I want a judge who knows how to apply the rules to secure a just, speedy and inexpensive determination of a case. Michelle understands how to apply the rules of procedure and evidence. Her experience will serve everyone well in the Thirteenth Judicial District. I strongly recommend her for the position.

Sincerely,

DPL/dis



West Law Hinn, P.C. 361 N. 27th 8 (vo., 86) (0.010 no., 911 ft for a 1252 3838

Billings Laurel Missoula www.westlawfirm.pr>

May 4, 2023

SENT VIA EMAIL

Office of the Governor Governor Gianforte Attn: Hannah Slusser P.O. Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620-3005 nominatejudges@mt.gov

RE: Letter of Support for Michelle Sullivan

Dear Governor Gianforte and Members of the Advisory Committee:

I am writing in support of Michelle Sullivan's candidacy for district court judge. I believe that she will be the best candidate to fill the upcoming vacancy in the Thirteenth Judicial District Court.

I have been practicing law in Montana since 1977. I started West Law Firm, P.C., in 1982 in Billings, Montana. During my career, I have practiced in front of many judges in the district courts and courts of limited jurisdiction in Montana. A judge must possess the necessary experience, wisdom, and temperament to effectively render judgment that is not only based in law but serves justice for the parties involved.

In my experiences knowing Michelle, I have found her to be competent, reasonable, and approachable. Our paths have crossed based upon representation of civil clients. I have found Michelle to be an appropriate adversary in representing her clients in our opposing cases.

My observation of Michelle is that she has the ability to see the "big picture." This type of thinking is paramount for the person sitting as a district court judge. Michelle has respect for the law and an analytical mind to determine what outcome serves not only the parties, while adhering to the best judicial standards, in the best way possible.

I believe that Michelle would serve our public well and provide a service that should be expected of a judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District. For the foregoing reasons, I believe that Michelle would be an excellent choice for district court judge. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Jock B. West

West Law Firm, P.C.

LAW OFFICE OF W. CORBIN HOWARD

Grand Building, Suite 250 100 North 27th Street BILLINGS, MONTANA 59101 (406) 248-9244 - FAX (406) 333-0626 corbinhoward@corbinhoward.com

May 4, 2023

Sent Via Email

Honorable Greg Gianforte Attention: Hannah Slusser P.O. Box 200801 Helena, Montana 59620

Re: 13th Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I urge you to appoint Michelle Sullivan as District Judge for the 13th Judicial District Court. I know Michelle. I have worked with Michelle in the past, and am working with Michelle on an ongoing a complex family law case. Michelle is very knowledgeable and clearly focused on resolving issues – if possible by negotiation. In common parlance, she's not given to using "red tape" to make things more difficult to get to the end.

Beyond her extraordinary knowledge and technical skills as an attorney, two additional qualities stand out. First, she has a wonderful judicial temperament. Second, Michelle is a very good writer. Much of the credibility of our judicial system depends on judges being able to put their decisions in writing in a manner that is both understandable and persuasive. The ability to explain a decision involving the "legalese" of complex statutes and regulations is an art. Michelle's got this ability in spades.

Thank you.

16.11

Sincere

W. Corbin Howard

LORENZ LAW FIRM

ROBERT A. LORENZ

3936 AVENUE B, SUITE A2 BILLINGS, MONTANA 59102 (406) 869-8668

May 2, 2023

VIA E-MAIL (nominatejudges@mt.gov)

Honorable Greg Gianforte Attn: Hannah Slusser P.O. Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620

RE: Letter of Support for Michelle Sullivan

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am pleased to unequivocally recommend Michelle Sullivan to fill the position of District Court Judge for the Montana Thirteenth Judicial District.

I have known Michelle since 2000, when she began as a new attorney at my old law firm, Holland & Hart. I have always known Michelle to be a top-notch and highly intelligent lawyer with an admirable work ethic. Someone who is liked and admired by everyone she works with. Michelle is also unfailingly even-tempered, respectful and courteous to everyone she deals with. I also note that, since she started out in 2000, Michelle has had a varied legal career as both a big firm attorney representing business and as a small firm attorney representing individuals in a number of substantive areas, including family law. I believe that this breadth of experience makes Michelle ideal for the District Court.

I believe that Michelle Sullivan would be an excellent choice for District Court Judge and I whole-heartedly support her for that position.

RALOrenz

Sincerely,

Robert A. Lorenz



Joseph M. Raffiani, Attorney at Law P.O. Box 3394, Billings, MT 59103 303 North Broadway, Suite 705, Billings, MT 59101 Phone: (406) 839-9363 Fax: (406) 839-9364

May 3, 2023

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

Re: Thirteenth Judicial District Court Vacancy

To whom it may concern:

I write to express my enthusiastic support for Michelle Sullivan's nomination to serve as a District Court Judge in the Thirteenth Judicial District. As a fellow law school colleague, I have had the pleasure of working closely with Ms. Sullivan and have witnessed firsthand her dedication, intelligence, and commitment to justice.

Throughout our time in law school, Ms. Sullivan demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the law and a deep understanding of its complexities. Ms. Sullivan consistently impressed our peers and professors with her insightful legal analysis and persuasive argumentation. Ms. Sullivan's exceptional legal skills and ability to think critically and creatively make her an ideal candidate for a judicial position.

In the intervening years, I have also come to personally witness Ms. Sullivan's affirmation of all of her best qualities and qualifications. Moreover, I have been consistently impressed by Ms. Sullivan's commitment to public service and her dedication to improving the lives of those around her. Whether through her involvement in community organizations or her pro bono legal work, she has consistently shown a deep commitment to helping others and making a positive difference in the world.

As a District Court Judge, I have no doubt that Ms. Sullivan would continue to bring these same qualities to the bench. Ms. Sullivan's fair-mindedness, dedication, and legal acumen make her a

perfect fit for this position. I have no doubt that she would serve with integrity and honor, always striving to ensure that the law is fairly and justly applied to all who appear before her.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly endorse Michelle Sullivan's nomination to serve as a District Court Judge. I believe that Ms. Sullivan would be an exceptional addition to the bench and would serve the community with distinction. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if there is anything I can do to further support her nomination.

Joseph M. Raffiani Attorney at Law From: Robert Engle To: **NominateJudges**

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michelle Sullivan reference Thursday, May 4, 2023 5:02:49 PM Date:

Good Day,

Please accept this letter of recommendation for Michelle Sullivan appointment to the thirteenth judicial District court. My name is Robert Engle and I taught High School social studies at Forsyth Public Schools. It was my first year at Forsyth and I was introduced to Michelle Millhollin by a student in my class. Michelle was enrolled in the second senior Government class. Michelle was active in a number of class activities. She was in the school plays and Speech and Drama. She was definitely a leader in the senior class and in the school. In those days teachers applied grades on grade cards in the teacher lounge. As a new teacher in the school I asked other teachers about students I had in class and invariably I would ask "what do you think of Michelle Millhollin". Every staff member had glowing words to describe Michelle. Dedicated, driven, highly intelligent, a leader and respectful to classmates and adults. It was not a surprise when she was named Valedictorian of the senior class.

Of course I was happy to learn she was going to attend the University of Montana, my alma mater, class of 1977. Is it no surprise that she graduated number one in her law class the second one to do so from Forsyth. The first was Walter Dean Jr., who graduated number one in the law class of 1937. She did not stop there. Michelle continued her higher education attending Montana State earning a MBA degree, and no surprise ranked number one that class as well. Michelle entered into a private law practice and again is it no surprise she has become a very successful attorney.

Michelle is highly qualified for the thirteenth judicial district judge position. With over twenty five years practicing law she has valuable experience, the type of experience needed for this honored position in our judicial system.

Being a district judge has its challenges and is one of the most important appointment duties of the governor. There is no doubt that she is up for this challenge and will apply the laws of the state judiciously and fairly.

Respectfully,

Robert Engle

Former teacher 39 years in public education



Ms. Slusser,

As the application process wraps up related to the pending vacancy in the Thirteenth Judicial District, I strongly encourage you to consider Michelle Sullivan. Mrs. Sullivan's career is marked with deep experience in representing individuals, businesses and municipalities in a myriad of legal proceedings, giving her the valuable experience needed to best serve the Thirteenth Judicial District.

I am most encouraged about Mrs Sullivan's record in prioritizing the law and upholding the constitution over promoting partisan politics, something the vast majority of Montanans I know feel is badly needed at the moment.

Thank you for your work in moving this process along, please feel free to reach out if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Todd Buchanan

(406) 294-3000

May 5, 2023

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

Via Email

Dear Governor Gianforte and Members of the Advisory Committee,

I am writing to support Michelle Sullivan to be appointed as a district court judge. She is a superior candidate, and very well qualified to serve in the Thirteen Judicial District Court.

I have known Ms. Sullivan for nearly a year and found her to be acutely knowledgeable of the law, objective and thoughtful of every aspect as it links to the legal process and judicial system.

Ms. Sullivan views the law and judicial system through an objective and nonbiased lens. She is the exact person we need in this role. Montana and its citizens will be well served with her timely approval and ability to be a fair and knowledge judge.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jess Peterson
President/CEO Western Skies Strategies
J2 Bar Land & Livestock

4030 Thunder Ridge Road Billings, MT 59101

406.850.1592



James M. Ragain 3936 Avenue B, Suite A-2 Billings, MT 59102 Telephone: 406.651.8888 E-mail: jim@MtWyLaw.com Licensed in Montana David M. Clark 900 Big Horn Avenue P.O. Box 667 Worland, WY 82401 Telephone: 307.388.6400 E-mail: dave@MtWyLaw.com Licensed in Wyoming

May 5, 2023

Hannah Slusser Governor's Office PO Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620

Re: Letter of Support - Michelle Sullivan

Dear Ms. Slusser:

I am very pleased to write this letter in support of Michelle Sullivan for judge of the Thirteenth Judicial District. Michelle and I have worked together on several significant cases. Her work has always been top quality and efficiently performed. She has a very broad legal background and approaches her work with respect for both sides of a dispute. More importantly, she is great with people and has the perfect demeanor to make a great trial court judge.

Sincerely,

James M. Ragain

JMR/lw



MATOVICH, KELLER & HUSO R.C. ATTORNEYS AT LAW

CAREY E. MATOVICH . GEOFFREY R. KELLER . KATHERINE S. HUSO . RYAN J. GUSTAFSON

May 5, 2023

Governor's Office of the State of Montana PO Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620

ATTN: Hannah Slusser

Re: Letter of Support for Michelle Sullivan – Thirteenth Judicial District

Dear Governor Gianforte,

We are writing to express our strong support for Michelle Sullivan for the position of District Court Judge of the Thirteenth Judicial District, Yellowstone County. In our many years of working with Michelle, she has consistently proven to be a hard-working, intelligent, fairminded, and professional attorney.

We strongly believe Michelle will make an excellent District Court Judge who will be committed to the law and not political bias. We also believe she will be able to make efficient and legally sound decisions in complex disputes. We highly recommend the appointment of Michelle to serve as the next District Court Judge of the Thirteenth Judicial District.

Respectfully,

Carry E. Natorich
Carry E. Matorich

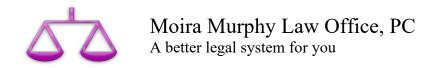
Geoffrey R. Keller

Katherine S. Huso

Katu Husr

Ryan J. Gustafson

Phy Rheller



April 24, 2023

Hannah Slusser Governor's Office PO Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620

Re: Letter of Support – Michelle Sullivan

To Whom It May Concern:

I write in support of Michelle Sullivan's application for the upcoming judicial vacancy in the Thirteenth Judicial District. Ms. Sullivan has acted as a medicator in numerous complex divorce cases, and she is a consummate professional. Ms. Sullivan is extremely knowledgeable about Montana law and works diligently to get cases settled. Ms. Sullivan has also been counsel for the opposing party on several family law cases, and she is prepared, appropriate, and available. I believe that Ms. Sullivan would make an excellent District Court judge.

Very Truly Yours,

Mora Marshy

Moira Murphy

Attorney at Law

GARY RYDER

Lawyer P.O. Box 1031 Miles City, MT 59301 Telephone: (406) 855-3978 E-Mail: gryder@rangeweb.net

May 8, 2023

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

RE: Submission of Support for the appointment of Michelle Sullivan to The

District Judge vacancy in the 13th Judicial District

Dear Hannah:

I wish to submit my support for the appointment of Michelle Sullivan to The District Judge vacancy in the 13th Judicial District.

Michelle is a Rosebud County native, educated through the Forsyth Public school system. Her hard work and determination led to her being the top of her Law School Class. Anyone who has graduated from The University of Montana Law School recognizes the quality of work, and determination required to reach that accomplishment.

The City of Colstrip received great assistance from Michelle over the last several years, in dealing with the challenges Colstrip has been facing. I am in complete agreement with the comments in the other recommendations such as those by Mark Parker about Michelle's personal qualities.

The Judiciary in Yellowstone County faces great challenges, and Michelle is qualified, capable, and up to those challenges.

Sincerely,

Attorney-at-Law/Retired Prosecutor/ Attorney for the City of Colstrip

Crist, Krogh, Alke & Nord, PLLC

Attorneys at Law

John G. Crist jcrist@cristlaw.com Telephone (406) 255-0400 Facsimile (406) 255-0697 The Securities Building 2708 First Avenue North, Suite 300 Billings, Montana 59101

May 5, 2023

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

Re: Michelle Sullivan – District Court Vacancy

To whom it may concern:

Please accept this letter as my endorsement of Michelle Sullivan for the District Court Judge position which is coming open in the Thirteenth Judicial District.

I have known Michelle for most of the 20+ years that she has practiced law in Billings. I have had occasion to work with her over the years and uniformly found her work to be of the highest quality and, just as important, she has always been a fair and reasonable lawyer to work with.

My practice has focused on commercial litigation and employment law, representing almost exclusively businesses, including many of Montana's largest companies. Ms. Sullivan has done similar work as a significant part of her practice, giving her a perspective which is somewhat rare among Montana's district court judges. This perspective should be represented on the bench.

Of equal importance is the time she has spent on family law and probate matters. These issues occupy a significant portion of the dockets of every district court judge in Montana, and I have every confidence that she will handle these matters fairly and expeditiously.

Please give Michelle your most careful consideration and then give her the job.

very thiry your

John G. Crist

BY EMAIL

State of Montana Governor's Office Attn: Hannah Slusser PO Box 200801 Helena, MT 59620 nominatejudges@mt.gov

RE: Judicial Nomination Michelle Sullivan, 13th Judicial District

Ms. Slusser and Nominating Committee Members:

I have had the privilege of knowing and working with Michelle Sullivan throughout the course of our lifetimes. Having known her for such a long duration, I am not surprised to be writing this letter of support as she seeks appointment to the bench.

Michelle is an incredibly intelligent person who has proven herself throughout the years to be very focused, hardworking, reliable, extremely thoughtful and always very well prepared. I have seen her excel at everything she has put her mind to from a very early age on.

In addition to our time spent together through our childhood and college years, I have also had the great opportunity to work with Michelle on several occasions in her capacity as an attorney. While I served as the director of a judicial advocacy non-profit in Billings, Michelle donated pro bono time to our organization providing legal services regarding employment law, contract law and other matters.

Later when I became a business owner, Michelle was retained and worked on property matters, corporation matters and personal estate matters for myself and my spouse. On numerous occasions I have experienced meeting with Michelle regarding a matter on which I had questions, then coming back for a second meeting to have her present the current case law along with suggestions and next steps.

During my prior 13 years working in the legal field, I had the opportunity to work with many attorneys and judges covering a variety of legal cases while also meeting a wide variety of personalities. I have spent a significant amount of time in the courtroom working with individuals who are experiencing the worst days of their life. I have seen, first hand, how a client's motivation to invest themselves in the decisions and sometimes the services offered through the court is often shaped by their view of the judge sitting on the bench. When taking these factors into consideration, I am convinced Michelle will excel as a judge.

For all the reasons stated above Michelle is a great attorney, but being a great judge requires having a temperament that is suited to the work. Michelle is one of those individuals who possesses a balance in

her life. She has an incredible intellect and a good sense of humor, is organized in thought and is empathetic and yet she is someone you can expect will be fair and even firm. Throughout our years together we have not always seen eye to eye, but she has always been the first person you wanted to work alongside and I have never once doubted her honesty.

This public comment is not meant to serve as a colleague's review of her past legal work but as the letter I hope that will tell you who she is as a person. Michelle is the person you want making the hard decisions. She is the one who will elevate those around her and will serve honorably during her time on the bench.

Thank you for taking the time to review and consider my remarks.

Sincerely,

Angela Campbell
Former practicing attorney in Wisconsin
Owner, Rusty Dog Antiques
PO Box 861
Forsyth, MT 59327

1555 Campus Way, Suite 201 Billings, MT 59102 (406) 656-6551 shane@bmslawmt.com

May 4, 2023

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

Via email only: nominatejudges@mt.gov

RE: Thirteenth Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I write to express my support for Michelle Sullivan's candidacy for appointment to the vacant position of District Court Judge of the Thirteenth Judicial District, Yellowstone County. I have known Michelle for more than two decades, and I have worked directly with her as a colleague much of that time.

I believe Michelle would make a great judge. She is intelligent, hard-working, and fair. She has a well-rounded litigation background that makes her suitable for a judicial role. I trust her to make timely decisions based on the facts and the law, and she would do so in a professional and courteous manner. Perhaps more importantly, I think Michelle would bring a pragmatic approach to resolving everyday issues that compose the bulk of a judge's workload.

Yellowstone County would benefit greatly from Michelle's experience and talents.

Sincerely,

Shane P. Coleman