

**P.O. Box 188
716 Indiana Street
Chinook, MT 59523
Telephone: 406-357-2466
Cell Phone: 406-262-4334
E-mail: dranstrom75@gmail.com**

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing in support of Dan O'Brien as the next District Judge of the Seventeenth Judicial District.

I first met Dan in 1994 when he joined the law firm he remains with today. Don Cole (now deceased) and Ed Amestoy have been excellent mentors to Dan, as has our retiring judge, the Honorable John McKeon. I have been both a defense counsel against Dan and have had countless helpful conversations with him as fellow prosecutors about pending cases in both of our neighboring counties.

In all my dealings with Dan, he has been courteous, fair-minded and always well-prepared. Dan is a person of integrity and in my judgment, has the most well-rounded level of experience of any applicant before the commission. I further submit that Dan has the proper temperament for this important position.

Accordingly, I sincerely ask that the commission forward the name of Dan O'Brien to Governor Bullock for his consideration.

Very truly yours,

/s/

Donald A. Ranstrom
Attorney at Law

B
BIDEGARAY
LAW

DANIEL B. BIDEGARAY
ATTORNEY AT LAW

September 13, 2016

Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

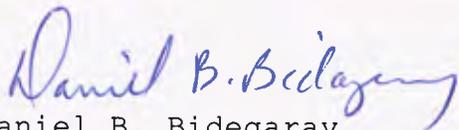
Re: Dan Raymond O'Brien

Dear Judicial Nominating Committee:

I am writing to urge the Commission to include Dan O'Brien as one of the applicants forwarded to Governor Bullock for the position of Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judge. I've known Dan since before law school and we were class mates in law school. I have worked with Dan on cases throughout my legal career. He is hardworking, intelligent, and has the right experience and disposition necessary to effectively serve as the next district court judge in the Seventeenth Judicial District. Growing up on the hi-line, and amicably working there throughout his legal career will also help him as the next district court judge. Dan is respected by his peers and the community he lives in. The public could not ask for a more qualified applicant.

Sincerely,

BIDEGARAY LAW FIRM, LLC



Daniel B. Bidegaray
Daniel@Bidegaraylawfirm.com

CHRISTOFFERSEN & KNIERIM, P.C.
Attorneys at Law

September 15, 2016

Office of Court Administrator
c/o Lois Menzes
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

RE: Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judge

Dear Administrator:

Dan O'Brien has applied for appointment as the District Court Judge for the Seventeenth Judicial District Court.

Dan O'Brien is an excellent attorney who has practiced in Northeast Montana for most of his career. He is a farm/ranch kid with strong roots in Northeast Montana. I find that he is a practical attorney who has a great deal of experience in many fields. I think a person of his background is well-suited to be District Court Judge in the Seventeenth Judicial District.

I recommend Dan for appointment as District Court Judge.

Sincerely,



LAURA CHRISTOFFERSEN

LC/km

cc: Dan O'Brien

Offices in Glasgow and Culbertson

Matthew W. Knierim
630 2nd Ave. So., Suite E
P. O. Box 29
Glasgow, MT 59230
Telephone: (406) 228-2487
Fax: (406) 228-2460
2matt@nemont.net

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Telephone: (406) 228-2487
Fax: (406) 228-2460
ksknierim@nemont.net

Laura Christoffersen
212 Broadway
P. O. Box 650
Culbertson, MT 59218
Telephone: (406) 787-5700
Fax: (406) 787-5842
2laurac@nemont.net

September 16, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

RE: Dan O'Brien – Seventeenth Judicial District Judgeship

To whom this may concern:

My name is Robert Galt, and I have lived in Malta Montana for the past 29 years. I was hired as a loan officer at the First State Bank of Malta. I have worked in many different capacities within the bank, and currently hold the position of President/CEO. I am also a member of the Bank's board of directors as well as the Bank Holding Company board. I have been involved in a wide range of organizations within Malta and Phillips County, and currently sit on the board for the Montana Bankers Association.

I have had the pleasure to know Dan since he began his career in Malta. Dan came to Malta to work for the Law firm that our bank has utilized for over 70 years. He became a partner and has had a fine career here in Malta. On many occasions I have needed to utilize Dan's expertise in conjunction with my day to day duties. Dan is prompt, but complete when issuing an opinion or giving our bank officers advise on how to proceed with a variety of issues.

It is from my work experience that I feel confident in saying that Dan would be a very capable and conscientious candidate for Judgeship. If his candidacy is accepted, I will look forward to doing all I can to see he is elected. His voice of reason is something that Montana's judicial system could benefit from.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, bgalt@fsbmalta.com, for any additional information you may need in regard to this matter.

Respectfully,



Robert J. Galt
President/CEO
The First State Bank of Malta



ATTORNEYS AT LAW Don R. Lee | Brian D. Lee | Luke Casey
phone 406.434.5244 fax 406.434.5246 | P.O. Box 790 | 158 Main Street, Shelby, MT 59474

leelawofficepc.com

September 21, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Nomination for the Seventeenth Judicial District Judgeship Vacancy

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter of support for Dan Raymond O'Brien in his desire to become the Montana Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judge. Although I do not know or have any experience in dealing with the other candidates for this judgeship, I do know and have experience in dealing with Dan and can say with absolute certainty that he has the temperament, experience and the open mindedness necessary to serve as a judge of the Seventeenth Judicial District Court. I have always found Dan to be fair and honest in my dealings with him and I believe Dan will make an excellent addition to the bench.

Sincerely;

LEE LAW OFFICE PC

By: 
Brian D. Lee

Malta, Montana
September 20, 2016

Governor Steve Bullock
Box 200801
Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Governor Bullock,

First of all, thank you for being an outstanding governor!
I am writing today, to tell you about Dan O'Brien,
another outstanding man, vying for Judge of Montana Judicial District 17.

My grandparents homesteaded in Valley county in 1908 and 1912.
I am a third generation farmer and Mr. O'Brien has served
as one of my lawyers for many years. He has written many
leases for me and has helped me with everything from water
rights to personal decisions. I have watched his brilliant
performance in court demonstrating excellent communication
skills both written and verbal. Dan is highly committed to
his profession, is very hard working, organized, diligent
and honest. Above all, Mr. O'Brien is very bright and quick
witted. He is good natured with a marvelous sense of humor.

I hope this choice will be clear for you, and you will
say something similar to what you did when you chose my
friend, Mike Moses for a judge in Billings. I believe you
said that it was a clear choice and one that you didn't have
to agonize over.

Thank you for your consideration of Mr. Dan O'Brien.
It just sounds right! Dan O'Brien, Judge of Montana Judicial
District 17. He is the best choice.

cc: Judicial Nominations Committee

Sincerely,
Cullen Bohard
(406) 654-2835

Cole, Amestoy & O'Brien

ATTORNEYS AT LAW, PLLP

Edward A. Amestoy, P.C.
Dan O'Brien, P.C.
Donald D. Cole, (1925-2011)

(Tel) (406) 654-2541
(Fax) (406)654-2542

P.O. Box 1280 • 113 South 2nd St. West
Malta, Montana 59538-1280

September 21, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005
mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

RE: Dan O'Brien - Application for Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judgeship

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter in support of the application of Dan O'Brien for the District Court Judgeship for the Seventeenth Judicial District.

I am the Phillips County Attorney and also have a private law practice in Malta, Montana. Dan came to work with me in June of 1994 and has worked with me as Deputy County Attorney and my law partner in private practice ever since.

I work with Dan every day. He takes his responsibility to represent his clients very seriously. I have always found him to be well prepared and knowledgeable of the law. Dan is well respected among local attorneys for his fairness. I believe Dan is the best candidate for the position. He will bring to the bench his experience in both the civil and criminal matters and will have the respect of the attorneys who are practicing before him.

Sincerely,



Edward A. Amestoy,

Cole, Amestoy & O'Brien, PLLP
EA/pk

OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE
Phillips County
Office 406-654-1118 Fax 406-654-3333

Gayle Stahl
Justice of the Peace

Phillips County Courthouse
P.O. Box 566
Malta, Montana 59538

9-22-16

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Manzie's
Office of Court Administrator
BX 00305
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: DAN O'Brien - Seventeenth Judicial
District Judgeship.

To Whom it may concern:

My name is Gayle Stahl and I live here in Phillips County, Malta Montana. I've been a Justice of the Peace for 32 years.

I have worked with Dan O'Brien for many years. He's been the Phillips County Deputy Attorney, City Attorney for the city of Malta for many years.

I think he would make a great District Court Judge. He's always been fair and impartial to everyone. He's a great family man and as

asset to Phillip's County.

I think its very important for a District Court Judge to have trial experience. He brings that too the table.

With Judge John Treker retiring I think he should be replaced with a person from Phillip's County.

I highly recommend Dan O'Brien to be appointed the next District Court Judge for the 17th Judicial District.

Thank you
Jay Stall

Ronald S. Efta

Attorney at Law

Ph: (406) 706-2431
Fax: (406) 706-2625
Email: wcaefta@midrivers.com

P.O. Box 300
Wibaux County Courthouse
Wibaux, MT 59353

September 26, 2016

Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of the Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Commission Members:

I send you this letter in support of Dan O'Brien who has applied to fill the vacancy which will be created by the resignation of Judge McKeon in the Seventeenth Judicial District. I have known Dan for at least 20 years. He has all the attributes a judge should have.

Dan has a great deal of experience with criminal cases which make up a large part of a district judge's work. During Dan's time as the deputy county attorney in Phillips County, he has also maintained an active civil practice. He has the well rounded experience necessary for the types of cases a district judge will encounter.

In addition to his knowledge and experience, perhaps one of Dan's greatest attributes is his even disposition. He has exactly the temperament that a district judge should have. He would be willing to listen and consider the arguments of both sides of any case and treat all litigants with courtesy.

I believe that Dan's selection as one of the finalists to be forwarded to the Governor would be of great benefit to the people of the Seventeenth Judicial District and the State of Montana.

Very sincerely yours,



Ronald S. Efta

RSE:kam



Malta Public Schools

"Home of the Mustangs & M-ettes"

"A Tradition of Excellence"

SUPERINTENDENT

Kris Kuehn
PO Box 670
Malta, MT 59538
Ph: 654-1871
Fax: 654-2205
kkuehn@malta.k12.mt.us

**HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR**

Scott B. King
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sking@malta.k12.mt.us

MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

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sbleth@malta.k12.mt.us

ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

Theodore S. Schye
PO Box 890
Malta, MT 59538
Ph: 654-2320
Fax: 654-2326
tschye@malta.k12.mt.us

September 23, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59260-3005
mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

RE: Dan O'Brien – Application for Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judgeship

Dear Judicial Commission:

Please accept this letter of support for Dan O'Brien's application for the District Court Judgeship for the Seventeenth Judicial District.

I have been the Superintendent of Schools for the Malta School District for the past thirteen years, and have known Dan from nearly my first day in Malta. He is well respected as an attorney in Phillips County, is a dedicated family man, and has been heavily involved in the community of Malta for as long as I have known him.

In every dealing I have had with Mr. O'Brien, I have found him to be well reasoned, timely and conscientious. The Malta School District has relied upon his legal counsel on a number of occasions, and always received sound advice.

I am more than happy to write this letter of support for Mr. O'Brien, and can think of nobody more qualified, nor ready, for the challenge of judgeship than Dan O'Brien.

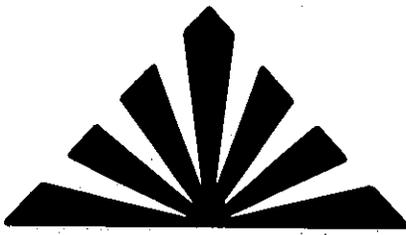
Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Kris Kuehn
Superintendent
Malta Public School

TELEPHONE 406/654-2221
1-800-852-4047

FAX 406/654-2229
ACCESS 24 1-866-862-8070



FIRST SECURITY BANK

P. O. BOX 730 • MALTA, MONTANA 59538
www.firstsecuritymalta.com

September 26, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
Office of Court Administrator
P O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

RE: Daniel Raymond O'Brien
Seventeenth Judicial District Vacancy

I am writing to endorse Daniel Raymond O'Brien for the position of Seventeenth Judicial Court Judge. Over the 20 years I have known Dan, I have developed appreciation and respect for him on both personal and professional levels. He has worked with me on several civil cases and also personally with community service projects.

I was the sponsor for Dan to join the Malta Rotary club. He has excelled in the Rotary club, holding the offices of president, secretary, treasurer and has had the honor of becoming a Paul Harris Fellow.

Dan was born and grew up on the Hilline. He knows this area and its people well. His background in Malta, being a small community, has made him well versed in various types of judicial law. I have always found Dan to be articulate, thoughtful and intelligent. He has the understanding of the compassion and integrity required to be a judge. I know he will be an excellent judge and enthusiastically endorse him.

Sincerely,

Denis M Bolland
Vice President Lending

**THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
STATE OF MONTANA**

Michael G. Moses, District Judge
Deanne M. Breshears, Judicial Assistant
Phone: 406.256.2911



PO Box 35028
Billings, Montana 59107
Fax: 406.256.2970

September 27, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission c/o Lois Menzies, Office of Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Application of Daniel O'Brien – 17th Judicial District Court

Dear Members of the Commission:

It is my understanding that you are now accepting comments with regard to applicants for the judgeship recently vacated by the Honorable John C. McKeon. It is my privilege to provide this letter in support of Dan O'Brien.

I have known Dan O'Brien since April of 1999. He was the Deputy County Attorney in Malta, Montana; I was practicing law in Billings, Montana. We found ourselves on opposing sides of a serious Fish and Game matter that ultimately found its way to the Montana Supreme Court in 2001. Since that time our paths have crossed on numerous occasions.

In my judgment, Dan O'Brien is one of the finest prosecuting attorneys in the state of Montana. He is intelligent. He exercises outstanding prosecutorial discretion.

He is prepared, reliable, reasonable, practical, professional, and has outstanding legal instincts. He is a person of great integrity and character and his word is as good as gold. He has in my view what it takes to have judicial temperament that will make him an outstanding judge in the 17th Judicial District. Dan O'Brien is a gentleman and I give him my highest recommendation for this important position.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael G. Moses". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Michael G. Moses
District Judge

MGM/dmb

LAW OFFICES OF
TERRANCE L. TOAVS, PLLC
TELEPHONE: (406) 653-1624

September 26, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Application of Dan O'Brien for District Judge
Seventeenth Judicial District Vacancy

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter to convey my strong support for Dan O'Brien as the next judge of the Seventeenth Judicial District. Dan has the expertise, experience and temperament to be an excellent judge.

My office is located in Wolf Point, Montana, and I have been practicing law on the High Line for approximately 20 years. My interest in writing this letter is that the Seventeen Judicial District is a neighboring district to mine, and I handle many, many cases there.

I have handled numerous cases with Dan O'Brien on the opposing side, both in his capacity as Deputy County Attorney and as a private civil attorney. In addition, myself and other members of the local bar often seek out Dan's services to mediate disputes. Dan is hard working, knowledgeable, honest and has a unique way of cutting through to the key issues. Though we have been in some heated situations, I have never seen Dan upset. He always maintains a pleasant demeanor and shows understanding in situations where many others would not.

Additionally, Dan is very familiar with the unique issues which are present on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation and the surrounding communities in Phillips and Blaine County. Dan grew up in Poplar, Montana, which is within the exterior boundaries of Fort Peck Indian Reservation. The Seventeenth District largely encompasses the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. For the past two decades, he has successfully maintained good relationships and has earned the support of the community. He is highly respected among both on and off the reservation, which is no accident.

In my opinion, Dan O'Brien is uniquely qualified for the position of Seventeenth Judicial District Judge, and I support his appointment wholeheartedly.

Sincerely,
/s/ Terrance L Toavs
Terrance L. Toavs

Katherine M. Bidegaray
415 4th Street SE
Sidney, MT 59270
(406) 480-9227
kbidegaray@gmail.com

September 26, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Nomination of Dan O'Brien to District Court Judgeship – Seventeenth Judicial District

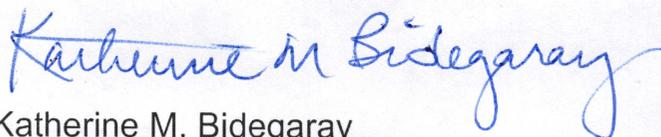
Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

The purpose of this letter is to urge you to nominate Dan O'Brien as the next District Court Judge for the Seventeenth Judicial District.

Dan's answer to question 54 of his application for the position reveals that he understands what qualities are important in a good judge. Since the moment I met Dan in 1994 when he began working in the same law firm as my childhood friend, Edward Amestoy, he has proven he possesses all of those qualities. He is professional, reliable, prepared, polite, considerate, decisive, sensible, and courageous. He has the proper demeanor to be an excellent District Court Judge in that he is calm, patient, attentive, yet firm and direct. He realizes that being a judge requires courage to make tough decisions timely even if they are unpopular. His work experience demonstrates he has the necessary courage. Dan has lived his life as an exemplary citizen and attorney. He would be an excellent addition to the Montana judiciary.

It is my honor to support the nomination of Dan O'Brien to fill the District Court Judge vacancy in the Seventeenth Judicial District. He would be a great judge.

Sincerely,



Katherine M. Bidegaray
District Court Judge

C: Dan O'Brien



Office of the Sheriff of Phillips County

Scott Moran, Sheriff

314 S 2nd Ave W.

P. O. Box 1090

Malta, MT. 59538

Phone: 406-654-2350

Fax: 406-654-1213

27 September 2016

Office of Court Administrator
c/o Lois Menzes
Box 203005
Helena, Mt. 59620-3005

Re: Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judge

Dear Nominating Committee:

I am writing this letter of support for Dan O'Brien Deputy County Attorney of Phillips County to be nominated for the vacated position of Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judge. I have worked with Dan for the nineteen years that I have been with the Phillips County Sheriff's Office both as a Deputy and now as the Sheriff.

Dan has always displayed high moral and ethical standards in dealing with victims of crime as well as those who are accused of perpetrating those crimes. In addition to his experience in criminal matters, through his private practice he also has expertise in civil law.

I encourage that the commission forward Dan's name to Governor Bullock for consideration.

Sincerely



Scott Moran, Sheriff

September 25, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005
mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

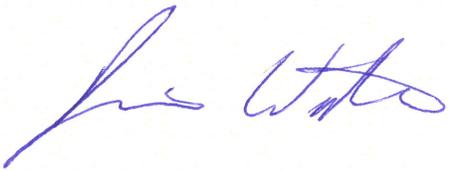
RE: Dan O'Brien – Seventeenth Judicial District Judgeship

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter in support of the application of Dan O'Brien for the District Court Judgeship for the Seventeenth Judicial District.

I am a business owner in Malta, MT and have known Dan for over 10 years. As a business owner I have used the services of Dan and his law firm for business and personal matters and have always been satisfied with his knowledge and professionalism. I have also gotten to know Dan outside of work and have seen his great sense of pride for the community he lives and works in. For these reasons along with knowing Dan's work ethic I believe Dan would be a great District Judge. Dan is my recommendation for the position of Seventeenth District Court Judge.

Sincerely,



Eric Wilke

Joann Heser
Court Reporter/Secretary
Roosevelt County Courthouse
Wolf Point, MT 59201
(406) 653-6272
Fax (406) 653-6207

DAVID CYBULSKI

District Judge
Fifteenth Judicial District
100 West Laurel
Plentywood, MT 59254
(406) 765-3457

Norma Paulson
Judicial Assistant
100 West Laurel
Plentywood, MT 59254
(406) 765-3457
Fax (406) 765-2602

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to give you my two cents worth on some of the candidates for Judge in the 17th Judicial District, John McKeon's position. I have been the District Judge in the adjoining district for over 20 years. I am interested in your selection because the substitution rule, and how parties react to the choice for District Judge, will affect my workload. Likewise, because of that rule I have done a lot of work over the years in that district, and have some familiarity with the lawyers there.

I have done cases there and in my own district involving attorney Pete Helland of Glasgow. He does his work, is reasonably prepared, and has both common sense and an understanding of the law. I have never seen him take an unreasonable position, or otherwise try to distort the facts or the law. He has always been professional, prepared, courteous, and competent.

Likewise, I have had some work involving Dan O'Brien, although since he is in Malta, he has done less work in my district. Like Pete Helland, he has always been professional, prepared, courteous, and competent.

Both of these Gentlemen would be acceptable choices in my view.

I have not had enough to do with any of the remaining applicants to form an opinion, other than to comment that if I haven't seen them over the years, they probably haven't done enough rural Montana courtroom work to be best for the position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Cybulski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D".

David Cybulski
District Judge – 15th Judicial District

Sept 30,2016

To Whom it May Concern:

I am Art Lundstrom from Malta writing in support of appointing Dan O'Brien for the Seventeenth Judicial District Judgeship.

I was born and raised in Malta graduating Malta High School. I started Art's Furniture & Carpet here in Malta 40 yrs ago and still in business today. I have known Dan over 20 yrs and have I been involved in a lot of civic organizations and some with Dan. I can assure you he is a Honest,Trustworthy and very Professional.

Thank You,



Art Lundstrom

UGRIN, ALEXANDER, ZADICK & HIGGINS, P.C.

NANCY P. CORY
JORDAN Y. CROSBY
DAVID J. GRUBICH
MARK F. HIGGINS
ROBERT F. JAMES
MARY K. JARACZESKI

JOHN D. ALEXANDER
(RETIRED)

ATTORNEYS AT LAW
#2 RAILROAD SQUARE, SUITE B
P.O. BOX 1746
GREAT FALLS, MONTANA 59403-1746
TELEPHONE (406) 771-0007
FAX (406) 452-9360
E-MAIL uazh@uazh.com,
Website <http://uazh.com>

CATHY J. LEWIS
KEVIN C. MEEK
MARK D. MEYER
ANDREW T. NEWCOMER
ROGER T. WITT
GARY M. ZADICK
JAMES R. ZADICK

NEIL E. UGRIN
1945 - 2007

September 28, 2016

Via Email MTsupremecourt@mt.gov

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

RE: Dan R. O'Brien/Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judgeship

Dear Members of the Commission,

I am pleased to write this letter in support of Malta Attorney Dan R. O'Brien's application to be appointed State District Court Judge for the Seventeenth Judicial District Court. My legal practice has included the representation of various City and County governments, and it has been primarily in that capacity that I have had the pleasure to work with Dan. I can state without hesitation that Dan O'Brien is a first rate attorney and outstanding individual. The citizens of the Seventeenth Judicial District would be greatly served by this hardworking, highly ethical individual.

Even though I have had considerable first-hand experience with Dan's legal work, I thought it appropriate to fully review his application for this important position. What that application reflects, in my view, is a well-balanced career and life, with a wealth of experience that could only be an asset to the demanding role of a District Court Judge. I know from personal experience that Dan has practiced extensively in all three counties making up this judicial district, and am certain that the connections he has made throughout that territory will serve him very well on the bench. His application reflects a quite varied legal practice, and if you couple his civil experience with his prosecution of felony and misdemeanor criminal cases, and child abuse and neglect cases, what you have in Dan is a unique skill set which sets him apart from other

applicants. His frequent interactions with juries over the years will be an invaluable asset for a Judge.

It is also apparent that Dan O'Brien is an exemplary citizen. His application reflects much volunteer work in his community. He has served honorably in the military. Obviously legal research and writing skills are a significant asset to a District Court Judge. Dan has spent a major portion of his legal career doing both, and from my personal experience, that work has been of a high quality. If you take a look at paragraph 54 of his application, where he lists the assets he believes are important in a District Court Judge, the numerous qualities Dan has identified are clearly qualities he himself possesses. I am particularly gratified to read Dan's views on the need for a judge to be fair and impartial, which we all know is essential to our system of justice. There has been nothing in my experiences with this individual over the years which causes me to doubt in any way that he would interpret and apply the law to the best of his abilities, without regard to personal biases or the identities and/or status of the parties and attorneys. To me, at least, that is the most important consideration of all.

No doubt the commission will review other applications by fine individuals. In closing, all I can state is that if Dan O'Brien is given the opportunity to serve in this capacity, I am virtually certain that he will make a fine, and long-serving, District Court Judge. I thank you for your consideration of this letter, and would be happy to answer any questions from the Committee concerning Dan. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark F. Higgins', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the left and a vertical line extending upwards from the top of the signature.

Mark F. Higgins
mfh@uazh.com

MFH/rkj

86 Bonnie Street
Glasgow, MT 59230
Ph. (406)228-9250

September 23, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

This letter is in support of Dan O'Brien as the next 17th Judicial District Judge.

Upon graduation from law school in 1982 I moved to Glasgow to practice law. Initially I was involved in a partnership and later I had a private practice. In January 1995 I was elected Valley County Attorney and retired from that office in August 2009.

I first got to know Dan through the Montana County Attorney Association. Dan was the part-time Deputy County Attorney for Phillips County; a position that he has continued to hold to the present. Over the years I have had numerous conversations and meetings with Dan; most of which concerned criminal cases and county civil and administrative issues. He was always helpful and willing to dig for answers if he did not know the answer or was unsure.

He is always mindful of the heavy responsibility that face county attorneys. Understanding that a prosecutor has tremendous power but that the prosecutorial duty carries with the important aspect of being fair and doing the right thing. He is respectful of a defendant's rights and seeks to treat the person fairly under the law. He knows that winning, while a laudable end, is not the ultimate goal; seeking justice for all involved (witnesses, victims and defendants) is the true end.

In addition to his deputy duties, he as has a private practice. Like most attorneys in a rural practice his cases have involved a multitude of issues. The breath of his experience will serve him well in a judicial decision making role. I believe that his honesty and integrity are beyond reproach and he has the proper temperament to make decisions involving peoples' lives and their personal and business dealings.

I strongly urge the Commission to forward Dan's name to Governor Bullock for his consideration and appointment of Dan as our next District Judge of the 17th Judicial District.

Sincerely,



Kenneth L. Oster
Attorney at Law

 **CAPP & JENKS, P.C.**
ATTORNEYS AT LAW 

J. WAYNE CAPP

JACK JENKS

WCAPP@CAPPJENKSLAW.COM

JJENKS@CAPPJENKSLAW.COM

105 S.W. HIGGINS, STE 1
MISSOULA, MT 59803

TEL: 406-549-2322
FAX: 406-549-2707

September 26, 2016

Montana Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Ms. Lois Menzies
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

RE: 17th Judicial District Court

Dear Members of the Commission:

It is my pleasure to write in support of Dan O'Brien for District Court Judge for the 17th Judicial District. I have known Dan since 1991 and he would be an excellent choice for District Court Judge.

I first met Dan when we were classmates in law school and he immediately impressed me with his work ethic and his interest in not only learning the black letter law, but also how to apply the law. I attribute his strong work ethic to his agricultural background and growing up in northeast Montana.

After graduation from law school, Dan and I both landed our first jobs working in Malta. There I got to observe first-hand his research and writing skills along with his trial skills as the Deputy County Attorney. A small-town practice requires a broad range of legal skills given the wide variety of civil and criminal cases that come across your desk. That broad experience makes Dan the best choice for District Court Judge.

I also believe Dan is the best choice for District Court Judge because of his even temperament and ability to step back and view a case from different perspectives. I know that as a District Court Judge he would run a firm, but fair, courtroom and treat the practicing attorneys and their clients with respect.

Dan has, through-out his career, demonstrated a commitment to his local community via his involvement in various service organizations. That community service speaks volumes about his character and commitment. His leadership roles in those community organizations also reflects the respect of his fellow community leaders.

The 17th Judicial District encompasses three rural agricultural counties. It is important to select a judge that understands the local issues and has the knowledge and background to serve

Montana Judicial Nomination Commission

September 26, 2016

Page Two

the residents of those counties. Dan is the best choice because of his agricultural background, his legal knowledge and his breadth of experience in both the civil and criminal areas of the law.

Thank you for your consideration and I strongly encourage you to consider Dan for the open vacancy on the 17th Judicial District Court.

Sincerely yours,


Jack Jenks

cc: Dan O'Brien, Esq.

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620

September 26, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission:

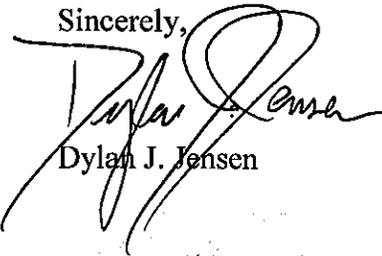
I am writing to express my support for Dan O'Brien, a candidate for the 17th Judicial District Court Judge. I am the Valley County Attorney and, prior to my appointment to that position, I was Deputy County Attorney. During my time as deputy, I had the brief privilege of having Dan serve as my supervising attorney.

While working with Dan I was continually impressed with his incisive approach to our work. Dan is uniquely talented as a problem solver and, on several occasions, it was Dan's guidance that helped me find previously unseen paths to resolve challenges. Dan considers all angles of issues and always succeeds in finding the most efficient and effective approach to deal with the same.

Additionally, Dan is personally restrained and unerringly patient. Occasionally I would find myself stymied and at an impasse, only to present my problem to Dan, who without frustration could resolve it. Dan's prudence and forbearance are personal qualities that would put stand him in good stead as judge. Dan has been and continues to be a valued mentor, and is always available as a professional resource to me. His guidance has helped me to become a better attorney and has convinced me he would be a superb jurist.

As such, I again respectfully urge the Commission to give Dan due consideration as a judicial candidate, and once more voice my full support of his appointment.

Sincerely,



Dylan J. Jensen

September 26, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

RE: Dan O'Brien-Seventeenth Judicial District Judgeship

Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

This is a letter of support for Dan O'Brien who is seeking to become District Court Judge for the Montana Seventeenth Judicial District. We have known Dan on both a professional and personal basis since we moved to Malta in 2000.

We have utilized Dan's legal advice over the years with regard to various farm and personal matters, including estate planning, title research, and purchase/sale transactions. He has always been prompt, courteous and knowledgeable in these matters. We have appreciated his attention to detail and his follow-up to make sure the transactions are completed timely and properly. Dan's integrity is well-known in the area and does his job with utmost level independence and discretion. On a personal level, Dan is active in our community with his involvement in swim team, youth baseball and other community activities. He has always been willing to devote his time to help with activities to make our community a better place.

Growing up on a farm in north-east Montana has helped provide Dan with the work ethic that will be necessary as a District Court judge. Dan's work at Cole, Amestoy & O'Brien has given him the opportunity to work on a wide variety of cases in which he has had to apply and follow the law without allowing his personal feelings to interfere.

We feel Dan would make a great District Court judge and we hope the Commission will recommend Dan O'Brien to Governor Bullock for this position.

Sincerely,


Brian and Vicki Eggebrecht

CHRISTOFFERSEN & KNIERIM, P.C.
Attorneys at Law

September 26, 2016

Office of the Court Administrator
c/o Lois Menzies
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Subject: 17th Judicial District Judgeship

Dear Ms. Menzies:

I have no hesitation in supporting the nomination of Dan O'Brien for filling the judge's position being vacated by John McKeon. Dan is local, knows the area, and I think would be fair and honest in handling the court's business.

Sincerely,


MATTHEW W. KNIERIM

MWK/dd

Offices in Glasgow and Culbertson

Matthew W. Knierim
630 Second Avenue South, Suite E
P. O. Box 29
Glasgow, MT 59230
Telephone: (406) 228-2487
Fax: (406) 228-2460

Katie S. Knierim
630 Second Avenue South, Suite E
P. O. Box 29
Glasgow, MT 59230
Telephone: (406) 228-2487
Fax: (406) 228-2460

Laura Christoffersen
212 Broadway
P. O. Box 650
Culbertson, MT 59218
Telephone: (406) 787-5700
Fax: (406) 787-5842

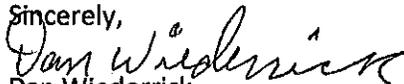
Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

RE: Dan O'Brien – Seventeenth Judicial District Judge

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dan Wiederrick and I am writing this letter in support of Dan O'Brien to fill the 17th Judicial District Judge vacancy. I am a retired rancher and lifelong resident of Malta, Phillips County. I have known Dan personally for many years and I know him to be a respectful and kind person, who is well-respected in the community. I believe that Dan is an honest and professional person and would make an excellent judge who would be an asset to the Court System.

Sincerely,


Dan Wiederrick

cc: Dan O'Brien

BOSCH, KUHR, DUGDALE, MARTIN & KAZE, PLLP

A Professional Limited Liability Partnership

BURTON O. BOSCH (1931-2007)
JOHN B. KUHR (1931-2003)
BRADLEY E. DUGDALE (bdugdale@bkdlaw.org)
RONALD MARTIN (1937-1998)
JAMES M. KAZE (jkaze@bkdlaw.org)
KEITH A. MARISTUEN (kmaristuen@bkdlaw.org)
BRIAN LILLETVEDT (blilletvedt@bkdlaw.org)
STEPHEN R. BROWN (sbrown@bkdlaw.org)
MARY ANN MOOG MCLAREN (mmoog@bkdlaw.org)

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS
335 FOURTH AVENUE
P.O. BOX 7152
HAVRE, MONTANA 59501

TELEPHONE
(406) 265-6706

TELEFAX NUMBER
(406) 265-7578

September 29, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

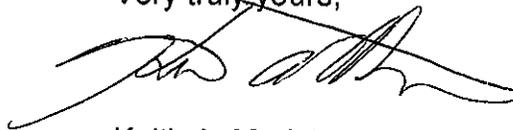
RE: Dan O'Brien-Application for Seventeenth Judicial District Judgeship

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am sending this letter in support of the application of Dan O'Brien for the District Court Judgeship for the Seventeenth Judicial District.

I have practiced law in Havre, MT for just over 38 years. During many of those years I served as Trustee for the State Bar of Montana for the Area that included the Seventeenth Judicial District. I am originally from Malta, MT and have spent considerable time there. I have known Dan O'Brien since he came to Malta, MT. Dan O'Brien has been active in his local bar activities and is well respected by his peers. Dan O'Brien is punctual and courteous to those he works with. I think Dan O'Brien would be a good choice for this position.

Very truly yours,



Keith A. Maristuen

KAM/eh

Judicial Nomination Commission

C/O Lois Menzies

Office of Court Administrator

P.O. Box 203005

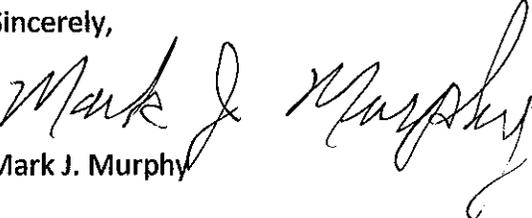
Helena, MT 59602-3005

Re: Dan O'Brien – Application for Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judgeship

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

For more than twenty years, I served as a traveling prosecutor in Office of the Attorney General and have known Dan for most of that time. In 2000, I assisted the Phillips County Attorney's Office in the prosecution of a homicide that occurred in Phillips County. Dan and I tried the case together to a full jury. The case had a number of technical issues that required substantial preparation. There were two victims in the case. One who was deceased, of course, and a second who suffered the most horrific injuries to any victim I have seen in a victim who survived. These traumatic injuries required the highest level of compassion in the preparation and presentation of this victim's testimony to the jury. Dan was an intelligent, hard working and professional partner in the presentation of this case, but it was his compassion to this traumatized victim that truly distinguishes him. Dan's work ethic and professionalism will make him a good judge; his compassion will make him a great judge. I am proud to recommend Dan for the Judge of the Seventeenth Judicial District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark J. Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".

Mark J. Murphy

Retired

**CITY OF MALTA
PO BOX 1300
MALTA, MT. 59538**

Crossroads of the Hi-Line
406-654-1251

Shyla L. Jones, Mayor
William Hicks, Councilman
David Rummel, Councilman

Lorie R. Bond, Clerk/Treasurer
Bonnie Wiederrick, Councilperson
James Sintler, Councilman

September 26, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing this letter of support for Malta City Attorney Dan O'Brien's application for the district judgeship of the Seventeenth Judicial District. Mr. O'Brien has been the City of Malta's city attorney for twenty-one years and is an asset to the community. Mr. O'Brien has always been there when the City of Malta was in need of his legal advice. He has always been pleasant to work with and is polite, considerate and a person of integrity. Mr. O'Brien is excellent at finding a fair resolution that works best for all parties involved. In my opinion, Mr. O'Brien would make an excellent District Judge.

Respectfully,

Shyla L. Jones
Mayor City of Malta

THIEL LAW OFFICE, PLLC

327 WEST PINE
P.O. BOX 8125
MISSOULA, MT 59807
(406) 543-1550
www.thiellaw.com

MATTHEW B. THIEL, ESQ.
matt@thiellaw.com

September 30, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
Email: MTsupremecourt@mt.gov

RE: Letter in Support of Dan O'Brien, 17th Judicial District Court

Dear Commission Members:

I write in support of Dan O'Brien's application for appointment to the 17th Judicial District Court. I have known Dan since 1990, when we started law school at the University of Montana. During law school, I knew Dan as both a friend and study partner. During our careers, I have consulted with Dan on a few cases and I have associated him on an estate litigation case in the 17th Judicial District. Dan is a hardworking and well-respected attorney with significant experience in both civil and criminal law. Dan is conscientious, kind, humble, and fair minded. He possesses excellent people skills and has a demeanor grounded in reason and common sense. Dan is well connected with his community and will be a dedicated public servant.

I am confident Dan has the skills and dedication to high standards to make an excellent District Court Judge. He will be an asset to the Judicial system. I respectfully request that the Commission include Dan on the list of candidates forwarded to Governor Bullock for consideration.

Sincerely,

THIEL LAW OFFICE, PLLC



Matthew B. Thiel

cc: Dan O'Brien

September 29, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620

Re: Dan O'Brien's application for 17th Judicial District Court Judgeship

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing this letter in support of Dan O'Brien for the position of 17th Judicial Court Judge. I first met Dan in my capacity as head bookkeeper for a local business, Saco Dehy, Inc., when Dan acted as our company attorney.

After several years with Saco Dehy, Inc., I was raised to the position of Head Manager – a position which I held for eleven years. During that time I had many direct dealings with Dan in his capacity as the company attorney. I always found him to be very thoughtful and to offer sound advice. He was timely with his responses and acted very professionally. Our Board of Directors, along with many in the community, had great respect for Dan as an attorney.

Dan and his family are also known to me personally. They are caring people who take great pride in their community. They are well thought of and respected as human beings.

It is my pleasure to recommend Dan O'Brien for the position of Judge of the 17th Judicial District. He is ethical, hardworking, intelligent, and professional. He would make a superb District Judge.

Sincerely,



Bobbi Menge
PO Box 223
Saco, MT 59261
406-527-3248



CHMS, P.C.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

P.O. Box 1239
41 South First West
Malta, Montana 59538
406-654-1575
FAX 406-654-2689
800-767-2467

October 3, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena, MT 59260-3005

RE: Dan O'Brien – Application for Seventeenth Judicial District Judge Vacancy

Dear Judicial Nomination Committee:

I am writing in endorsement of Daniel Raymond O'Brien for the position of the Seventeenth Judicial Court Judge. Over the last 20 years, Dan and I have worked with many mutual clients. He has given his clients sound and well prepared advice. His professional attributes carry over to his steadfast involvement in civic organizations and local groups.

With Dan being born and raised on the Hi-Line, with strong roots in Northeast Montana, he knows the area and his background would serve him well.

I encourage that the commission forward Dan's name to Governor Bullock for consideration.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Martin A. Johnson, CPA

EZZIE'S WHOLESALE, INC.

47259 US HIGHWAY 2
P.O. BOX 1770
MALTA, MT. 59538-1770

TELEPHONE (406) 654-2331
1-800-892-6874
FAX (406) 654-2887

SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

JUDICIAL NOMINATION COMMISSION
C/O LOIS MENZIES
OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATOR
P.O. BOX 203005
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-3005

Re: Dan O'Brien – Seventeenth Judicial District Judgeship

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Lawrence Poulton, better known as Lary. I am writing this letter to support Dan O'Brien's bid to be appointed to the bench in the Seventeenth Judicial District. I have lived in Malta, Montana, since 1973 and have been in private business since 1983. In 2005, I purchased Ezzie's Wholesale, Inc. and we operate in the Central and Northeastern corner of Montana.

I have known Dan since he came to Malta in 1994. He has done legal work for us as a company and also on the personal side. I have found him to be prompt and professional in all of our dealings. My wife taught his children and Dan was involved in the education of his children. Dan is involved in several organizations in the Malta Area.

I feel that Dan O'Brien would do a very good job as District Judge and recommend that he be appointed to the position.

Sincerely,



Lawrence R. Poulton

BOSCH, KUHR, DUGDALE, MARTIN & KAZE, PLLP

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BURTON O. BOSCH (1931-2007)
JOHN B. KUHR (1931-2003)
BRADLEY E. DUGDALE
RONALD MARTIN (1937-1998)
JAMES M. KAZE
KEITH A. MARISTUEN
BRIAN LILLETVEDT
STEPHEN R. BROWN
MARY ANN MOOG MCLAREN

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS
335 FOURTH AVENUE
P.O. BOX 7152
HAVRE, MONTANA 59501

TELEPHONE
(406) 265-6706

TELEFAX NUMBER
(406) 265-7578

E-MAIL
blilletvedt@bkdlaw.org

September 29, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Application of Dan O'Brien for the Seventeenth
Judicial District Judgeship vacancy

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

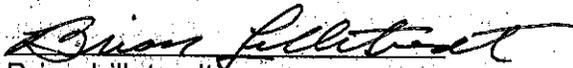
When I read Dan had submitted his application for the judgeship position I was pleased that an attorney with Dan's experience and knowledge was interested in serving on the bench. It is not an easy job. It takes someone with experience, integrity, a strong work ethic, an even temperament and a commitment to follow the law, even when it's not most popular thing to do. I believe Dan will bring all of these traits to the bench.

I have been practicing law on the hi-line for 38 years and have known Dan since he began practicing law in Malta. I have been involved in both civil and criminal matters when Dan was on the opposing side and I always felt Dan was a strong advocate for his client; but he never crossed the line and let his emotions overrule his common sense.

The public's perception of our judicial system is based largely upon the day to day work done by our District Court Judges. Judge McKeon set the bar very high when he became the Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judge and I believe Dan's character, communications skills, work ethic and down to earth sense of fairness will continue to instill confidence in the justice system in this District.

Your committee is tasked with recommending a member of our ranks to the Governor's office for appointment to the bench. I strongly urge you to forward Dan's name to our Governor for appointment to this position. The people who appear before him and the state of the judiciary will be well served if you do.

Sincerely,


Brian Lilletvedt



City of Helena

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
City of Helena
James E. Smith
316 N. Park Avenue
Helena MT 59623
(406) 447-8410
E-Mail: jsmith@helenamt.gov

September 28, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Letter of Support for Daniel O'Brien.

Greetings from Jim Smith, writing in support of Mr. Daniel O'Brien's application for District Judge in the 17th District of Montana.

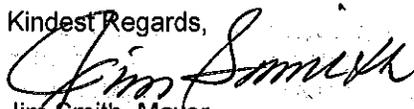
I write as a layman and can only speak to Dan's personality and character, rather than his legal qualifications and abilities. I have, however, read Dan's application and he certainly appears to be well qualified for the Office he is seeking.

I have known Mr. O'Brien ever since I began working for the Montana County Attorney's Association in 2001. He has been a regular at nearly every Continuing Legal Education seminar the Association has sponsored these last 15 years. In that context, I know Dan to be a most thoughtful, positive individual. He is respected by his peers and colleagues. I see him being sought out by county attorneys and deputy county attorneys frequently at the CLEs for his advice, insights and perspectives.

I would like to share one anecdote that to me says a great deal about Dan O'Brien. Between the 2011 and 2013 Sessions the Law and Justice Interim Committee (LJIC) spent quite a bit of time on criminal justice issues, which is their charge from the Legislature. I met and befriended a woman from Malta during that interim. This woman's teenage son had involved himself in a 'sexting' incident with a classmate. He was charged, found guilty, and spent time at Montana State Hospital. His Mother testified several times before the LJIC regarding the difficulties and shortcomings of the 'system' her son became involved with. Dan O'Brien was the prosecuting attorney. At one point, after I mentioned to the Mother that I knew Dan, she told me that he (Dan O'Brien) was the one person in the entire 'system' (made up of the police, defense attorney, probation officer, mental health counselor, judge, etc.) who had taken a genuine, personal interest in her son, even as he was prosecuting the case against him. That spoke volumes to me about Dan O'Brien. I trust this one example will be meaningful to the members of the Judicial Nominating Commission as well.

Thank you very much for opening this comment period, and allowing me to support Mr. O'Brien through this letter. Thanks in advance of the consideration I know it will receive. If you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call.

Kindest Regards,


Jim Smith, Mayor
Helena, Montana

406-443-1570 (O)
406-443-0606 (H)
406-949-1002 (C)

October 2, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Dan Raymond O'Brien, applicant for District Court Judgeship Seventeenth Judicial District

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing in support of Dan Raymond O'Brien as District Judge for the Seventeenth Judicial District.

I met Dan ten years ago when we moved to Malta and have shared office space with Dan and his partner for the past seven years. Dan is family oriented, active in the community and well respected. He treats others fairly and is open-minded, but most of all, he has a great sense of humor.

Dan was born and raised on the hi-line and has spent his career working in Northeastern Montana. He has the legal ability, experience and temperament to serve as judge. I believe Dan will make the right decisions even if they are not popular, and I have no doubt that he will be an excellent judge for our district. I encourage you to forward the name of Dan O'Brien to the governor for his consideration.

Sincerely,



Deborah L. Sjostrom
(406) 654-1451

KELSIE W. HARWOOD
ATTORNEY AT LAW
P.O. BOX 94
CHINOOK, MONTANA 59523

September 30, 2016

*Sent Via Electronic Mail

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005
mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

RE: Letter of Support for Dan O'Brien

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter to support Dan O'Brien for the Seventeenth Judicial District Court Judge. I am the Blaine County Attorney and I been fortunate enough to have Dan as a colleague to ask questions to and to discuss cases and issues with. He always takes the time to assist when asked. As an attorney in north central Montana, Dan has an understanding of the unique issues that may arise in our area.

Prior to becoming the Blaine County Attorney, I had a few cases with Dan in which we represented adverse parties. He was always professional, reasonable, and considerate. His experience in both civil and criminal matters gives him the required skills and abilities for a judicial position.

I believe Dan has the experience and personality to make a fair, educated, and courteous District Court Judge.

Sincerely,



Kelsie W. Harwood

Honorable Nickolas C. Murnion
Rosebud County Courthouse
PO Box 107
Forsyth, Montana 59327
(406) 346-6109
Fax: 346-6160



Honorable Michael B. Hayworth
Custer County Courthouse
1010 Main Street
Miles City, Montana 59301
(406) 874-3335
Fax: 874-3442

Sixteenth Judicial District Court

September 30, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005
mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

RE: 17th Judicial District Court Vacancy – Letter of support for Dan Raymond O'Brien and Peter L. Helland

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing this letter in support of the Applications of Dan Raymond O'Brien and Peter L. Helland to fill the vacancy in the 17th Judicial District (Blaine, Phillips, and Valley counties). I am supporting both candidates because I consider both of them to be my friends and to possess the qualifications to be great judges for the Seventeenth Judicial District. I also want to note that both candidates will have big shoes to fill in filling the vacancy created by the resignation of the honorable John McKeon. I had the pleasure of practicing before Judge McKeon for 6 ½ years and was impressed with his diligence, intelligence, fairness, impartiality and work ethic. He will be missed and I hope that the citizens of Blaine, Phillips and Valley Counties appreciate his hard work.

Mr. Helland has practiced law for the last 15 years in Valley County with his office located in Glasgow, Montana. He also clerked for Judge Shanstrom in 1993 which would be great experience to be a District Court Judge. In my previous experience as Valley County Attorney I believe Valley County had the busiest docket of the three counties. Pete has experience in family law, criminal law, personal injury law and general civil matters. In addition to his practice as a criminal defense attorney, he was also the city prosecutor for Glasgow for a period of time and handled the criminal matters in Glasgow City Court. He has appeared in court in Dependent and Neglect matters and is familiar with that area of the law as well. My dealings with him in criminal matters were always professional and he was always prepared and well versed in the law applicable to each case. I believe he possesses the personality, decisiveness, integrity, work ethic and passion to do the right thing to be a great district judge.

Mr. O'Brien has practiced law for over 22 years as the Deputy County Attorney for Phillips County and has also maintained a busy private practice. His office and residence is located in Malta, Montana which is the middle county in the Seventeenth Judicial District and the county where Judge McKeon also resided. Although Valley County has the busiest docket, Blaine County was a close second in filings and travel would be easier from Malta if Mr. O'Brien was selected. I have known Dan for most of his 22 years of practice having met him at County Attorney functions when he was first appointed Deputy Phillips County Attorney. I always found Dan to be very knowledgeable about the county attorney matters which probably comprise over fifty per cent of what a District Judge does. He also has a private practice with experience in family law including dissolutions, parenting plans, adoptions, and guardianships which probably take up another twenty five per cent of a District Judges time because of all of the pro se litigants. When I began my appointment as the 16th Judicial District Court Judge on March 17, 2016, Dan agreed to provide services to Valley County as Interim County Attorney until they were able to appoint a successor. I believe that Dan also would be great District Judge because of his integrity, temperament, honesty, experience and common sense.

As a newly appointed District Court Judge for the past 6 ½ months I have a bit more insight into the qualities that a good judge needs. I believe that Dan O'Brien and Pete Helland both possess those qualities and that both candidates would make great judges. I urge you to forward both names to Governor Bullock for his consideration.

Sincerely,



Nickolas C. Murnion
District Judge

Cook, Kevin

From: MT Supreme Court,
Sent: Monday, October 3, 2016 4:02 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- O'Brien

From: Vivian Taylor [<mailto:vivtaylor151@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Sunday, October 02, 2016 11:53 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: Letter of support for Dan O'Brien

October 2, 2016

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing in support of Dan O'Brien as the next District Judge of the Seventeenth Judicial District.

I am a retired teacher with 32 years of experience, the retired Phillips County Superintendent of Schools with 14 years of experience, past member of the Phillips County Child Protection Team, resident of the Saco Community, the wife of the past Phillips County Justice of the Peace and ranch owner. Dan has been involved with his legal expertise in all of them. Dan was an advisor and counselor when I dealt with issues during my terms as the County Superintendent. Dan has helped the Saco Town Council with legal questions and town ordinances. Dan has been involved in family issues, child welfare and domestic issues. Dan has worked with ranch and agriculture issues.

When my husband became the Justice of the Peace in Phillips County, Dan was in his court room prosecuting cases as the Assistant County Attorney. My husband spoke highly of Dan with his brilliance, common sense, quick wit and sense of humor. They shared the same belief of respect for the judicial system. He would have written a letter of support for Dan also but he passed away in July.

The 17th Judicial District is a very rural area and we have two Indian Reservations within the boundaries of the District. Our livelihood is agriculture based. Dan is the perfect candidate for this position because he has an understanding of the rural people, of an agriculture community, and has lived and worked with the Native American people. He has worked with people from a variety of economic incomes and has dealt with them professionally, compassionately and with approachable demeanor.

Dan has a great interest in the community and helping with youth activities. Dan was the coordinator of the youth baseball when my grandsons were playing summer baseball. Dan supports his children's activities—swimming, basketball, football, and cross country as well as their academic and musical performances.

Please submit the name of Dan O'Brien to Governor Bullock for his consideration. Dan is the best candidate.

Sincerely,

Vivian Taylor

STATE OF MONTANA
TWELFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

Chouteau, Hill and Liberty Counties
Hill County Courthouse
315 Fourth Street, Havre, MT 59501
Phone 406.265.5481 • Fax 406.265.0160

HON. DANIEL A. BOUCHER
District Judge



ERIK RATHIE
Law Clerk

BETH HANNAH
Judicial Assistant

October 3, 2016

Ladies and Gentleman:

I am offering my support for Pete Helland and/or Dan O'Brien for the position of Judge in the 17th Judicial District Court – John McKeon's position.

Both of these gentlemen do their work, are prepared, and have both common sense and an understanding of the law. I have never seen either of them take an unreasonable position or otherwise try to distort the facts of the law. They are professional, prepared, courteous, and competent.

Either of these gentlemen would be an acceptable choice in my opinion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Boucher", written over a faint circular stamp.

Daniel A. Boucher
Twelfth Judicial District Judge