

August 23, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Theresa Diekhans, and her application for Judgeship. Theresa has had many experiences, both personal and professional, that have prepared her for becoming a judge.

She has practiced law in a private practice. She worked as a Deputy County Attorney in civil representation, where she advised commissioners, focused on abuse and neglect cases, and dealt with juvenile prosecution. She was the Assistant Attorney General for the Child Protective Unit. Currently she is working on the other side of the law as a Public Defender for the State of Montana.

Theresa is fair-minded. I believe her experience of being on both sides of the law gives her an insightful perspective. Theresa respects and understands the law, and that the notion of a judge is to be a neutral mediator.

On the personal side, I admire Theresa's personal integrity. One example of this is when she lived with her mother and helped take care of her as she was dying of cancer.

I believe that Theresa will make a capable and honorable judge.

Respectfully,

Michelle Stubbs

24 Watson Lane

Great Falls, MT 59404

406-868-9259

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 7:57 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Diekhans

From: Stacy Diekhans <s18diekhans@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 12:21 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Judicial Nomination Commission

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this e-mail in support of Theresa Diekhans to replace Judge Pinski. Theresa has the ability to see both sides of every discussion. She is fair and balanced. She believes in the judicial system and would hold herself to the highest standards in the position of Judge. She understands that she is a steward of the judicial system and no one person is above that system. She is a Great Falls native and has the best interest of this community and the State of Montana at heart. I truly think Theresa would make an excellent, fair and balanced judge. Thank you for your consideration.

Stacy M. Kingsland, M.D.

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Monday, August 31, 2020 8:13 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Diekhans

From: janet <jkdw1966@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, August 31, 2020 11:00 AM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: [EXTERNAL] judicial nomination commission c/o Lois Menzies

I am writing in support of Theresa Diekhans for district judge. Theresa has been serving our state in the judicial system for several years. She has always looked for justice for all people. Theresa has always been a caring women as demonstrated while she took care of her mom and dad all while serving our community. I truly believe that her values of caring and fairness will help make her an excellent judge.

Thank You,
Janet White
Great Falls, Montana

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:go.microsoft.com) for Windows 10

Statement in Support of Theresa Diekhans for 8th Judicial District Court Judge

I have worked for the past year at the Havre OPD as Public Defender under the supervision of our Regional Director, Theresa Diekhans. Under Theresa, I have learned more than just criminal defense. Theresa has taught me how to pause and how to listen.

Theresa was born and raised in a close family on her parents' farm in Great Falls. She grew up with loving parents and a mother who listened to her children. Theresa's mother passed this quality on to Theresa. The farm is gone, but the values deeply instilled in Theresa show in her diligence and commitment to her long work hours and heavy workload.

Theresa is competent, fair, and consistent; the qualities I always hope for in a judge. Theresa has 17 years of experience, both prosecuting and defending, and it shows in her ability to quickly identify issues and a workable resolution. Theresa speaks her mind even when it is not what parties want to hear, always with compassion so that those of us less experienced can master the concepts. Theresa always makes time for her team, making her long workdays even longer. She is always there for us.

Theresa's compassion, competence, down-to-Earth common sense, and strong ethic will contribute to her excellence as a District Court Judge. I cannot think of another person who would make a better judge than Theresa Diekhans.

Sincerely,

Penelope Oteri

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

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing in support and recommendation to the Judicial Nomination Commission for Theresa Diekhans (Current Region 6 Regional Public Defender) for the District Judge position to fill the vacancy of Honorable Judge Pinski.

My name is Steve Diekhans and Theresa is one of my five sisters. She is a dedicated contributor to our extended family and cherished by her numerous nieces and nephews. She is dedicated to her faith and values evident in her dedication to her church and as previous board member in the Big Brothers & Sisters as well as a member of the Children and Youth Alliances of Montana.

Theresa has 17 years of experience serving the community as an attorney, prosecutor, and public defender. She is respected by many of her peers and citizens alike. She is passionate and committed to our legal system. She will provide unbiased, impartial, intelligent, and wise judgement in every aspect needed for this position.

Theresa Diekhans is proud and maintains high integrity for her community and its citizens. She has taken the initiative to work tirelessly and educate herself representing both the prosecution and defense in our judicial system.

Theresa Diekhans has all the credentials, experience, and wisdom to be successful in this position. As her brother, I am proud and amazed at the integrity, dedication, and commitment she has demonstrated and performed in her past and current roles as a legal professional.

It is with honor, respect, and belief that I recommend Theresa Diekhans for consideration for this District Judge position.

Respectfully,

Steve Diekhans

Travis G. Grove
1816 1st Ave N
Great Falls, MT 59401
September 8, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005 Helena, MT 59620-3005
Re: Letter of Recommendation Nomination of Theresa Diekhans
Dear Commission Members:

I would like to recommend Theresa Diekhans for the 8th Judicial District Court Judge position. I have known Theresa my whole life. Theresa has always worked hard no matter what she was doing, to include her volunteering at our church.

Theresa has worked in various sides of the legal system, she worked for a Private Law Firm, then became a Deputy Cascade County Attorney and mainly worked as a Civil Attorney. Theresa then worked for the Attorney General's Office as a Youth in Need of Care Attorney, where she would work to reunify families. If the Families could not be reunified for, whatever reason, she would have to work to remove the parental rights of the offending parents, which I know was hard for Theresa, but she would put do her job.

Theresa then began working for the Montana Public Defenders Office here in Cascade County, where she was representing clients in criminal matters, she eventually was promoted to the Havre OPD Regional Director.

Theresa has worked as a Civil Attorney, Prosecuting Attorney and a Defense Attorney which I believe gives her an insightful view on the types of cases she would see as a District Court Judge. I believe from her past employment Theresa would be a firm, but fair judge and she would listen to each case as it was presented before she passed any type of Judgment.

Sincerely,

Travis Grove

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Travis Grove', written over a horizontal line.

From: [Menzies, Lois](#)
To: [Cook, Kevin](#)
Subject: Public Comment -- Diekhans
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 6:29:36 PM

From: Lisa Diekhans <mustanglisa8@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 5:10 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Judicial Nomination for Theresa Diekhans

Office of Court Administrator,

I am writing this letter in support of Theresa Diekhans for Eighth Judicial District Court Judge.

I have known Theresa for most of my life. First from grade school in Great Falls, and then as a sister-in-law, as I married her brother, Mike. For as long as I've known her she has been very passionate for what she believes in and what she thinks is important. She is a defender of the judicial system and how it is set up. I have no doubt that Theresa would uphold the Law from the bench and would judge with complete integrity and not take her position lightly. She is a person that cannot be "bought" or swayed.

Please consider Theresa Diekhans for District Court Judge. She has my full support!!

Sincerely,
Lisa Diekhans

September 14, 2020

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

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing to express our support of Theresa Diekhans for appointment as District Judge, in the Cascade County District Court – 8th Judicial District. We have known Theresa for over 10 years as members of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Great Falls, Montana. She is an intelligent and articulate individual, showing care and compassion for her fellow citizens.

Theresa has 17 years of experience as a lawyer, serving in private practice, as Assistant Cascade County Attorney, and as Public Defender. Her broad experience gives her a thorough and unbiased perspective as a lawyer.

We believe Theresa would be a most qualified, fair, just and honorable judge for the 8th Judicial District.

Respectfully,

Handwritten signatures of Mike and Linda Mettam. The signature for Mike is on top, and the signature for Linda is below it.

Mike and Linda Mettam
413 34th Ave. NE
Great Falls, MT 59404
(406) 771-1191

From: [Menzies, Lois](#)
To: [Cook, Kevin](#)
Subject: Public Comment -- Diekhans
Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 5:16:59 PM

From: Toni Brandt <brandtnorthern@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2020 1:57 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Theresa Diekhans

To Whom It May Concern

I know Theresa Diekhans through her role in the Hill County Public Defender's Office and find her to be a very knowledgeable, informed, and compassionate human. These attributes, along with her many years of experience will make her a worthy and impartial judge. I support her judicial nomination without hesitation and cannot think of a better candidate for the Montana Supreme Court.

Toni Brandt
Northern Land & Realty Co.
Mobile 406-945-1675
Fax 406-265-2255

From: [Menzies, Lois](#)
To: [Cook, Kevin](#)
Subject: Public Comment -- Diekhans
Date: Thursday, September 17, 2020 8:47:10 PM

From: Karen Diekhans <kdiekhans@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 9:01 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: [EXTERNAL] District Judge position

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing on behalf of Theresa Diekhans, for the District Judge position to take the place of the honorable Judge Pinski. Theresa is currently the Region 6 Regional Public Defender. I have known Theresa for all my life, for she is my older sister. Theresa has always been very passionate about being a lawyer, whether it be as a prosecutor or as a defender. She takes our legal system very seriously and has the upmost integrity. I think Theresa would be an asset as a Judge in our District Courts because of her beliefs in the system and she will always do and make the right decisions based on the legalities. I have to be honest, her and I have actually gotten in a couple arguments, because I think with my feelings as she always thinks about the law and what the law states. Theresa also has a lot of compassion for people and if she thinks she can help them, she will do whatever she can to get people back on the right track. When she was the County attorney she was involved in a lot of child abuse cases and would help the parents become better parents. She is not judgmental and does not let any outside influences, influence her decisions. Theresa is strong willed and takes pride in being her own person and doing what's right whether or not she knows some people will agree with her or like her decisions.

Theresa has always been a big part of her communities and has done a lot of volunteer work. She was involved in Big Brother and Big Sisters, and she was on the Montana child abuse response team. She is well respected by her peers, family and colleagues. I highly recommend Theresa for the District Judge position, I believe she would make a great and honorable Judge..

Karen 

From: [Menzies, Lois](#)
To: [Cook, Kevin](#)
Subject: Public Comment -- Diekhans
Date: Monday, September 21, 2020 8:58:56 PM

From: Karen Alley <kalley642@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 2:33 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment for T. Diekhans

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies

To whom it may concern:

I write in support of Ms. Diekhans. She has a wide legal background and is particularly well-versed in dependency and neglect and youth court proceedings. I have, at times, relied on her knowledge and experience in those sorts of proceedings, particularly when we are seeking to resolve those sorts of cases. I have also found her experience in ICWA matters to be particularly of assistance. Even when she and I are on opposing sides of the case, she has had no issue in lending her expertise.

I have observed her advocate for her clients, seeking the best outcomes for them. She is very invested in her work with the public defender's office. From my experience working with her, I believe she has the ability to be balanced and fair. I further believe she is committed to ensuring justice is maintained in the court system.

Generally, I find Ms. Diekhans has a good humor about her and I have had no issues discussing cases candidly with her. I think she is well-suited for the bench.

Thank you,
Karen M. Alley
Hill County Attorney

Karen M. Alley
Hill County Attorney
Hill County Courthouse
315 4th Street
Havre, MT 59501
(406) 265-5481 ext. 2423

****Please update your address book to my new email address: alleyk@hillcounty.us ****

Please note: Montana has a very broad public records law. Most written communications to or from County Employees and Officials regarding County business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your e-mail communication may be subject to public disclosure.

To whom it may concern,

It is with great pleasure that I would recommend Theresa Diekhans for the next Judge of the 8th Judicial District. I have known Theresa since 2003 and she is a leader who thrives on challenges. Theresa possesses all the qualities to be an excellent judge. First of all she has the experience for the job. She has been a practicing attorney for close to 20 years in both civil and criminal law. She has worked for the Cascade County Attorneys Office and the Attorney Generals Office as counsel in Youth in Need of care cases. She worked in the Office of the State Public Defender as counsel for juveniles and parents in Youth in Need of Care cases as well as criminal proceedings. She currently is the Regional Public Defender in the Havre office. Secondly, Theresa is a very patient person. She will listen to all perspectives before making a decision. She is very compassionate towards people and will always let them have their say. Third, Theresa is very time efficient. She works hard and manages her caseloads in a timely fashion. She would bring that same work ethic and time management to the bench.

In closing, Theresa is a professional with the integrity and resume necessary for the job of Judge. Theresa will work tirelessly for justice. She has the leadership skills to carry out the task. For the following reasons, please consider Theresa to be the next judge in the 8th Judicial district.

Sincerely,

Jason Kindsvatter

JAMIE L. MOORE

September 21, 2020

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

RE: 8th Judicial District Court Judge Applicant, Theresa Lynn Diekhans

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing to you in support of Theresa Lynn Diekhans, one of the applicants for the Eighth Judicial District Court Judge. I have had the pleasure of working with/for Theresa for a year and a half at the Havre Regional Office of the State Public Defender.

Though I have only worked with Theresa a short time, I have seen her character shine through over the last several months with the COVID pandemic. This unique situation has required her to be a strong leader. She managed to stay up to date on the ever changing policies, especially in the infancy of the pandemic. Implementing changes on a continual basis, keeping her staff well informed, as well as upholding new policies in the office. She has been compassionate with the needs of her clients and her staff as new issues arose with lockdowns and quarantines.

The response Theresa has had with the changing policies during the pandemic, reflects her ability to uphold the changing laws and penalties made by the legislature and the opinions of the Supreme Court.

Theresa takes the time to listen to an issue completely, look at all scenarios, and research if necessary. She is tactful with approaching conflicts and can usually deescalate a situation very quickly.

Theresa has worked both as a prosecutor and criminal defense attorney. She has specialized in Youth in Need of Care cases. Theresa appreciates all positions involved in the courtroom. Having worked in both fields, I believe that Theresa has the knowledge required to effectively preside over matters. For these reasons I highly recommend Theresa for the Eighth Judicial District Court Judge appointment. Thank you, for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie Lynn Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jamie" and last name "Moore" clearly legible.

Jamie L. Moore
Administrative Assistant
Office of the State Public Defender

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

September 22, 2020

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

RE: Theresa Lynn Diekhans - Eighth Judicial District Court Judge Application

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am Dan O'Brien. I practice in Malta, Montana. I also serve as the deputy county attorney. I am writing in support of Theresa Diekhans for the position of District Judge. I have known Theresa for many years. I know that her experience as a Deputy County Attorney for Cascade County and as a Public Defender gives her an understanding of the challenges that judges in that district face every day. She's tough, but always polite and respectful to her clients and opposing attorneys. Theresa is the regional administrator for the Havre office of the Public Defender. She is responsible for staff, attorneys, and contract attorneys from Fort Benton to Wolf Point. On top of that, she has her own case load of clients. I believe she's done a great job. If she can do that job, she can be a district judge.

I urge the Commission to include Theresa as one of the applicants forwarded to the Governor.

Sincerely,



Dan O'Brien
Cole, Amestoy & O'Brien, PLLP

From: [Menzies, Lois](#)
To: [Cook, Kevin](#)
Subject: Public Comment -- Diekhans
Date: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 9:47:33 PM

From: Stephanie McKnight <slmcknight87@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 7:45 AM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: 8th Judicial Judgeship Vacancy

To the Judicial Nomination Commission,

I'm writing this email to express my support for Theresa Diekhans' application for District Court Judge. Over the past year, I've worked with Theresa as an attorney in the Region 6 Public Defender Office. She has been a great Regional and has continued to implement office policies that save both time and money, including continuing electronic files and promoting the use of new technology.

As my superior, she has made herself available and is easy to talk to if ever I had a question or concern. I've worked with her on cases and have seen her interactions with clients. On more than one occasion, she has gone above and beyond her job requirements to ensure a client receives non-legal resources to help them succeed and avoid further entanglement in the legal system.

Her understanding of the myriad of issues faced by clients make her a good fit for a judge. I believe she would be fair and straight forward as she doesn't try to sugarcoat the bad, but instead tries to focus on finding a solution.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on such an important decision.

Stephanie L. McKnight, Esq.

From: [Menzies, Lois](#)
To: [Cook, Kevin](#)
Subject: Public Comment -- Diekhans
Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 8:33:20 PM

From: Vince & Patty Kolar <hlazyj@3rivers.net>
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 10:07 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: [EXTERNAL] re: District Court Judge nominations

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

From: Patty Kolar
P.O. Box 171
Raynesford, MT 59469
406-738-4433

Greetings,

It is with great pleasure I submit this letter of support for Theresa Diekhans for the nomination of District Court Judge for Cascade County. Theresa was born and raised in Cascade County and that familiarity of the area, both in rural and populated areas, make her an ideal candidate for this position. I believe Theresa's experience as a prosecutor as well as a public defender gives her a unique talent set to see both sides of the law. She is able to empathize with those who come before her, yet is unafraid to make the tough decisions to uphold the law. Theresa possesses a strong work ethic and works tirelessly in whatever capacity of the law she is employed. Her strong moral character is something that cannot be questioned and will provide a great role model for all her constituents. You cannot go wrong in choosing Theresa for this coveted position. Please feel free to contact me with any questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Patty Kolar

Eric Owens

Deputy Blaine County Attorney

September 23, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing in support of Theresa Diekhans as a candidate for the open position on the Cascade County District Court. I have worked across from Theresa for about two years and have found that she is easy to work with, while still aggressively advocating for her clients. I have worked on a range of criminal cases across from Theresa, both misdemeanor and felony. Working in small offices on the hi-line we are tasked with wearing many hats and working cases of all kinds – including regular criminal matters, abuse and neglect cases, youth court matters, involuntary commitments, etc. – and it is clear that Theresa has developed a vast well of knowledge concerning all of these areas through her experience. Theresa excels at cutting through the fluff and getting down to brass tacks. I appreciate that she works hard to try and get her clients to see their cases in a realistic light, while also being sure to investigate every case carefully and check every lead for any possible procedural or substantive defense.

I have got to know Theresa well over the last two years and it is plain that she genuinely cares about her clients and their criminal cases. She is not just punching a clock. Theresa also wears the hat of supervisor and it is apparent that she has a great relationship with her subordinates, both attorneys and support staff. Theresa goes out of her way to accommodate her staff's personal needs while also ensuring that cases are handled efficiently, thoroughly, and expediently. She is fair and reasonable with her clients, her staff and opposing counsel.

Based on these qualities alone I believe Theresa would make a great District Court Judge.

Respectfully,

Eric Owens

From: [Menzies, Lois](#)
To: [Cook, Kevin](#)
Subject: Public Comment -- Diekhans
Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 8:31:57 PM

From: Nick Diekhans <1nickdiekhans1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 9:27 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Recommendation of Theresa Diekhans for Appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court

The Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am Nicholas Diekhans, Theresa Diekhans's nephew and a second year undergraduate student at the University of Southern

California. I submit this letter to recommend Theresa's appointment as a judge serving on the State of Montana Eighth Judicial District

Court. Having lived on the same farm as Theresa for most of my life, and knowing her very well, I can speak to her character and to her

love of the Judicial Branch of the United States. As my aunt, Theresa is supportive and loving. She has been a faithful supporter of

myself and all of my cousins at our athletic, academic, and other events. More importantly, I will never forget how often Theresa was at

my house taking care of my father when he was very sick with cancer. Being with her family and friends whom she loves brings Theresa

great joy, and any family event is incomplete without her. Theresa's character and personality is exceptional. But while necessary,

strong character and personality are not sufficient to determine a judge's potential effectiveness. In a time when many courts are known

to be conservative or progressive, and many judges throughout our nation have been criticized for making political decisions rather than

faithfully adhering to the law, it is necessary that judges be apolitical. Theresa, like anybody else, has political views, but her respect for

the law and the integrity of the Court infinitely outweighs any political considerations. Theresa regularly defends and explains the legal

system of the United States to friends and relatives. She will be a strong judge who believes in an independent and respectable

judiciary. The last consideration I have to offer is that Theresa has experienced and seen a lot of suffering throughout her life. Those

personal experiences give her great compassion, even for criminals. As a judge, Theresa will exercise compassion

and fairness in strict

accordance with the law, her duties, and her responsibilities.

Nicholas Diekhans

September 21, 2020

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

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend the appointment of Theresa Diekhans to the Eighth Judicial District Judge Seat. I have known and worked with Theresa for many years, as she was employed as both a prosecutor and as a defense attorney. I have the utmost respect for both her professionalism and her integrity.

As a Deputy Juvenile Probation Officer, I worked with Theresa on many cases regarding juveniles. She has always put the needs of the juvenile first and has been willing take into account the opinions of the youth, family, counselors, myself, and other interested parties regarding the best decisions for the youth in question.

As a Deputy Sheriff I worked with Theresa in the context of a prosecutor. She had an extensive knowledge of the law and worked tirelessly for the victims of crimes in both Cascade County and throughout the State of Montana.

Ms. Diekhans has gone over and above on each case that I have worked with her on. She has always kept both victims' and defendants' interests in mind and has been fair and empathetic to the needs of the community. I have absolutely no doubt that due to her years of experience on both sides of the isle and her active role in the community she would be a great asset to the 8th Judicial District and to the citizens of the State of Montana as a whole.

Respectfully,



Matthew W. Darlington, MS
Deputy Juvenile Probation Officer, 8th Judicial District
Teton County Deputy Sheriff, Retired