

Jordan Gross, Professor 32 Campus Drive Missoula, MT 59812-6552 (406) 243-2559 jordan.gross@umontana.edu

August 17, 2020

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 Recommendation for Michele Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am a member of the faculty at the University of Montana School of Law. I write in support of Michele Levine's nomination to a Cascade County District Court Judgeship. Michele was a student in two of my courses while she was in law school - Environmental Crimes (Autumn 2011) and Professional Responsibility (Spring 2012). Due to small class sizes and frequent small group class discussions, I was able to get to know Michele well. Michele completed her Advanced Writing Requirement (AWR) project in my Environmental Crimes class. The AWR is a capstone graduation requirement that includes an in-depth legal research and writing project, an oral presentation, and significant instructor and peer feedback. AWR projects afford instructors an opportunity to observe students' legal writing, research, and oral advocacy skills at a level not always possible in regular course work.

Based on my work with Michele, I know that she has the work ethic, dedication, and legal skill set to become an outstanding trial court judge. Michele possesses excellent legal writing and oral communication skills. She completed all her projects and presentations on time and her work product was always high quality. Michele also has the right temperament and values to serve as a trial court judge. In class, in small groups, and one-on-one, Michele consistently demonstrated the highest level of collegiality, professionalism, integrity, and attention to her ethical obligations. In my experience, Michele also has enough confidence to know what she does not know. If necessary, she will reach out for any training or mentorship she might need to become an effective judge.

Michele will work hard, learn quickly, and ask for help when she needs it. She is empathetic, kind, collaborative, and civil. I urge you to give her nomination your highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Jordan Gross



Roland B. Durocher | Jeffrey G. Winter | Channing J. Hartelius (of counsel)

August 27, 2020 *via regular mail & e-mail: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov*

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

8th Judicial District Judge Position; Re:

Support for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Commisioners:

I am writing to express my support for Michele Reinhart Levine to fill the vacancy in the Eighth Judicial District Court left by the retirement of the Honorable Gregory Pinski.

I have lived and practiced law in Cascade County since 1994. I maintain a busy civil practice with active litigation in every department of the District Court in Cascade County. I have a great deal of respect for our judges, and the way they handle a very busy docket. However, in spite of their efforts, the current health crisis, combined with the priority of criminal cases, has made the civil docket get pushed back and delayed at an alarming rate. With all of the backlog being created by the pandemic, it will be critical for Judge Pinski's replacement to have a strong background in civil litigation like he does. The best candidate to step into his position, and help lessen the pandemic's impact on civil justice, is Michele Reinhart Levine.

I have become acquainted with Michele through the local bar and

Lois Menzies August 27, 2020 Page 2 of 2

statewide organizations. Even though she and I disagree on political issues, being a judge ought not be political. I believe Michele has the broad range of experience, particularly as a legislator and an attorney, to respect the law, and her role as a District Judge. I have no doubt that her integrity and moral compass will ensure she follows the law, and provides justice. That will enable her to make fair, timely decisions in the busy criminal and family law cases, while also allowing her to provide timely justice to civil litigants.

Respectfully,

Roland B. Durocher

Hartelius, Durocher & Winter, P.C.

DAVID ARONOFSKY

3909 Lincoln Road Missoula MT 59802 406-531-6857 aronofskyd@mso.umt.edu

August 26, 2020

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

Re: Michele Reinhart-Levine Letter of Support

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am especially pleased to recommend Michele Reinhart-Levine for the vacant Eighth Judicial District judgeship. I have known Michele for many years. She was an outstanding law student of mine in multiple courses when I taught at The University of Montana Law School, and I thought then she should join the bench. I also knew and worked with Michele when she was in the Montana Legislature while in law school. I mentored her then and after she graduated, and I have enjoyed following her successful legal career. Michele has great interpersonal skills which every judge should have, along with a very strong work ethic, a sharp legal mind, excellent writing skills, exceptional professional ethical principles, and an overall sense of what our legal system is intended to be in terms of providing even-handed justice for all. Michele has one other attribute I want to stress, namely a thorough understanding of both statutory interpretation and how statutes fit into our federal and state constitutional framework based on her legislative experience. As the UM Law School Legislation faculty member between 1994 and 2013 until I retired, I always stressed the fundamental importance of this principle for all lawyers to grasp, and Michele amply demonstrated her mastery of it in the various courses I taught her. Among my many former Montana law students, I rate Michele at the top in terms of what I hope to see in our judges. Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

David Aronofsky, J.D., Ph.D.

Saird J. Armofsky

The University of Montana General Counsel & Law Faculty (Retired)

Montana Bar No. 3386

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 8:04 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: John Heenan <john@lawmontana.com> Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2020 12:23 PM

To: MT Supreme Court, **Cc:** Michele Reinhart-Levine

Subject: [EXTERNAL] 8th Judicial District judge vacancy

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I would strongly urge you to pass along Michele Reinhart-Levine and nominate her to the Governor to fill the judicial vacancy in the 8th Judicial District. I have known Michele for many years and consider her a friend. In every interaction, Michele is smart, reasonable, and practical, all great qualities in a judge. Michele is someone who cares about people as demonstrated by her significant work representing injured workers. In my experience, district court judges need to be able to work with people as many of the cases they handle involve unrepresented litigants. As demonstrated by Michele's application, Michele is a "people person" who would serve the 8th Judicial District and Montana well as a judge. She has also handled a wide variety of cases in both civil and criminal, something that will allow her to "hit the ground running" as a judge. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Best,

John Heenan HEENAN & COOK 1631 Zimmerman Trail Billings, MT 59102 (406) 839-9091



24 First Avenue East • Suite B P.O. Box 899 • Kalispell, MT 59903-0899 406-752-7550 Fax: 406-257-0411

Randall S. Ogle e-mail: rsogle@owtlawoffice.com
Darrell S. Worm* e-mail: dsworm@outlawoffice.com
Samantha P. Travis e-mail: samantha@owtlawoffice.com

*Also admitted in California

August 28, 2020 Sent via E-Mail

Judicial Nomination Commission c/o Lois Menzies Office of the Court Administrator mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

> Application of Michele Reinhart Levine for Cascade County District Court Re. Judgeship

Dear Nomination Commission,

I am writing in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's candidacy for district court judge in Cascade County. I first met Michele over a decade ago socially, when I was a law student and she was our community's local representative to the Montana legislature. I also know Michele through professional legal associations in Montana. She is kind, hardworking, fair, and thoughtful. She knows that each person's case is the most important case to them. She will give each party due consideration. She will study the facts, review the law, and apply the law to the facts.

Given that I frequently represent civil litigants across Montana who are experiencing substantial delays in the justice system, it is my hope that Michele will also assist civil litigants in receiving expedicious hearing and trial dates and swift well-reasoned orders to achieve just and timely resolution to their legal matters. I also believe Michele's background in complex civil litigation will be an important asset in her role as district court judge. I am aware she has also handled criminal cases. Her wide diversity with exposure to many areas of the law would come in handy, if she were to be appointed to the position. She is also a busy lawyer mom, like me. We know how to manage time, balance work and family life, and do what needs to be done, even if that means coming in early or staying late, or working from home after the children go to bed.

I encourage you to please include Michele's name in the list of attorneys forwarded to the Governor for his consideration.

Sincerely,

/S/ Samantha Travis Samantha P. Travis



Phone: 406-969-3100 Fax: 406-281-7373

Email: colin@gerstneradamlaw.com

August 28, 2020

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

Re: Application of Michelle Reinhart Levine for the 8th Judicial District Vacancy

Dear Members of the Commission:

I am pleased to write this letter in support of Michelle Reinhart Levine's application for appointment to the vacancy at the Eighth Judicial District. Michelle would be a great addition to the bench.

Michelle and I were classmates in law school, and I got to know her well during that time. During law school, Michelle was always able to put aside her personal views when analyzing a legal issue, whether it was in torts or constitutional law. She was smart and eager to learn new concepts and areas of law. I've had further occasion to work with Michelle in practice. She is kind, generous, and always willing to help out.

Michelle will make a terrific district court judge. I have no doubt that she will faithfully apply the law to cases before her and treat everybody who comes before her with respect. She has the intelligence, integrity, work ethic, and judicial temperament that we all expect of judges. Michelle would be an excellent choice to fill the vacancy at the Cascade County District Court.

Sincerely,

Colin Gerstner





Caitlin Boland Aarab, Attorney cbaarab@bolandaarab.com

August 28, 2020

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

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

I write in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application to fill the Eighth Judicial District Judgeship vacancy occasioned by Judge Pinski's resignation.

I have known Michele since 2010 when she was a law student, a legislator, and a fellow in the Attorney General's Office of Consumer Protection. In the years since, we have charted similar paths. We both became attorneys, married attorneys, began practicing civil law on the plaintiff's side in Great Falls, and became mothers. As I have walked along a parallel path to Michele's, I have seen how each new role she inhabits only increases her compassion, her sense of civic duty, and her work ethic. Michele believes to her core in equality and justice before the law, but unlike many others who share those principles, she has always been willing to step into a leadership role and be accountable to her community to help implement the principles she holds dear. She has the temperament and work ethic to make an excellent district judge.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Sincerely yours,

Caitlin Boland Aarab BOLAND AARAB PLLP

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Sunday, August 30, 2020 7:59 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Attachments: image001.jpg

From: Michael Doggett <mike@doggettlawoffice.net>

Sent: Saturday, August 29, 2020 1:15 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on 8th Judicial District Judge Nominations

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing to provide my endorsement for both Michele Levine and David Grubich as nominees forwarded by the Judicial Nomination Commission to the governor for the district court position in the 8th judicial district.

Michele Levine has distinguished herself as an effective advocate and someone who genuinely cares about the struggles of everyday Montanans. Michele has developed such an expertise in personal injury law that I often ask her questions about specific doctors or medical professionals practicing in Great Falls and Helena. Prior to law school, Michele was a legislator and has a diverse background that will serve the court well. Michele has the temperament required to be a district court judge.

David Grubich would make a good judge. David is a veteran of the air force and a former police officer. He has the practical experience necessary to take over Judge Pinski's veteran's court. David is competent and also has a great temperament that will serve the Court well.

Ultimately, it will be up to the governor to decide who will serve the remainder of Judge Pinski's term, but Michele and David should be among the names for the governor to choose from.

Michael C. Doggett

DOGGETT LAW OFFICES, P.L.L.C.
2120 S. Reserve St., #130

Missoula, MT 59801
(406) 442-1160 (Tel)
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mike@doggettlawoffice.net



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Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Sunday, August 30, 2020 8:01 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Amanda Anderson <shamp.amanda@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, August 28, 2020 4:27 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment for Michele Levine, candidate for the 8th Judicial District

Hello,

I write today on behalf of Michele Reinhart Levine.

I am a law school classmate of Michele's and I know her personally. Michele has the necessary traits to fairly review cases in her court and she is qualified for the open bench position. She is a competent writer and she's not afraid to speak up and take charge of a situation. She asks thoughtful and relevant questions. Michele is a hard worker and does not give up easily in the face of adversity.

Michelle would make a very fine judge.

Regards,

Amanda Anderson

Bozeman

DALPIAZ / associates

LAW FIRM / EST. 1999 August 27, 2020

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

Re: Michele Levine, Eighth Judicial District Court Judge Nomination

Dear Judicial Nemination Commission:

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It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of a truly outstanding professional, Ms. Michele Levine. She has my nomination for the position of Eighth Judicial District Court Judge. By way of introduction, I am a workers' compensation attorney in Missoula and have been practicing for 21 years. Based on my experience working with Ms. Levine and my admiration for her as an attorney, the purpose of this letter is to urge you to appoint her.

First, she is pleasant and professional in all written and verbal correspondence. Her warm and engaging personality allows her to establish strong rapport with clients and colleagues alike. By doing so, she positions herself to confidently and effectively communicate necessary information, diagnose problems quickly, and take proactive steps toward their resolution. She is exactly the type of person the district court would be lucky to have. She is innovative, motivated, and her enthusiasm is contagious.

Secondly, her impressive resume is a testament to her dedication to exceed expectations and grow as a professional. Ms. Levine possesses an exceptional legal mind and an ability to grasp the issue quickly. She is also diligent, hardworking, and thoughtful. She has no tolerance for unprofessional conduct or grandstanding and is a fine judge of character and credibility.

I thank you for your consideration of Ms. Levine and for your service on the Commission. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Leslae J.E. Dalpiaz

LJED/ab

222 E PINE | P.O BOX 8291 | MISSOULA, MT 59807 | P: 406.549.9200

F: 406.728.0790 | ASTASO@DALPIAZLAW.COM

September 1, 2020

Via Email - mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

Re: Michele Reinhart-Levin Letter of Support

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

My name is Jeffrey B. Smith. I am a partner at Garlington, Lohn & Robinson, PLLP. I was admitted to practice in Montana on October 6, 2009 and have been in good standing since admittance.

I am writing this letter in support of Michele Reinhart-Levine's appointment for the District Court Judge position in Cascade County. During my eleven years of practicing law at Garlington, Lohn & Robinson, PLLP, I have worked with and against a very diverse group of attorneys. I have also represented clients in civil matters across the entire State of Montana. From this experience, I have learned the best attorneys and judges possess a strong work ethic, an enthusiasm for attention to detail and an unbiased opinion.

I have known Michele since shortly after she was admitted to practice law in 2012. During this time, I have been opposing counsel to Michele on numerous Workers' Compensation cases. She has proven to be a very hard working, energetic and objective attorney. Michele's skills as an attorney would make her a great Judge.

Very truly yours,

GARLINGTON, LOHN & ROBINSON, PLLP

Jeffrey B. Smith

Direct Line: (406) 523-2585 Email: jbsmith@garlington.com

3034005

From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Tuesday, September 1, 2020 7:47:07 PM

From: Sharon Stearns <catrionab90@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, August 31, 2020 9:08 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] 8th Judicial District judge vacancy

Sharon Stearns 3016 8th Ave S Great Falls, MT August 31, 2020

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

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing to express my support for judicial candidate Michele Levine for the Eighth Judicial District judgeship. I have known Michele for several years since her family moved across the street from me. Since moving to the neighborhood, I have gotten to know Michele and her family (our children are the same age). She is always willing to help host neighborhood gatherings (socially distanced of course) and have fun activities for the kids. From my personal interactions with her, I believe she is a kind and thoughtful person. She is a very good listener and I feel like she would make a great judge. She wants to give back to her community in a significant way. I have heard her speak with passion about bettering our city and helping people who find themselves in the unfortunate position of dealing with the judicial system. She has the skills to do this job effectively and with compassion while balancing her family life. I personally support seeing more women in the role of judge and I think this is a step towards more inclusion and diversity into the judicial system so it can work better for all members of the community not just a select few. Please consider Michele for this position; she has all the qualifications that I believe would make a great judge in Great Falls.

Sincerely,



OUR FILE

MI051-001

September 2, 2020

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 Michele R. Levine

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

Please accept my highest recommendation for the Judicial Nomination Commission to forward Michele Reinhart Levine's name to Governor Steve Bullock. I highly recommend her as a candidate for the District Court Judgeship for the 8th Judicial District in Cascade County to replace retiring Judge Greg Pinksi.

I have been associated with Michele Reinhart Levine in the practice of law since she graduated from Law School in 2012. As a shareholder in the firm, I was wholeheartedly in favor of hiring her to be employed by us. She had an outstanding and diverse resume. Prior to law school, she graduated from Carroll College with honors. She served in the Montana Legislature for three terms. She also has the unique experience of working with local city and county governments in Missoula. She had excellent academic credentials from the Alexander Blewett School of Law at the University of Montana.

Since being employed by us, she has demonstrated excellent legal and interpersonal skills. She is intelligent. She learns novel legal concepts immediately. She is extremely hard working and dedicated. She devotes the required hours to complete her legal tasks. After five years as an associate attorney, and having proved her ability to work independently in the representation of injured workers, she was offered and accepted a shareholder status in our firm.

Michele is very judicious. She looks at both sides of an argument and carefully considers her decisions. She is even tempered, collegial, and efficient in her legal work. Michele is genuinely enthusiastic about her life, family, work, community involvement, and interests. Aside of the practice of law, she is an excellent spouse of Bill Levine and mother of two young daughters. She carefully balances her work life and personal life activities.

LINNELL, NEWHALL, MARTIN & SCHULKE, P.C.

Richard J. Martin

J. Kim Schulke

Stacy Tempel-St. John

Michele Reinhart Levine

Megan L. Miller

Norman L. Newhall, Retired

Office Manager:

Tammy Turner

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Kindra Martin

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120 - 1st Avenue North

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www.FairClaimLawyers.com

Judicial Nomination Commission September 2, 2020 Page 2

I have enjoyed working with Michele in her litigation in the Workers' Compensation Court, as well as representing injured people in personal injury claims. She has a good court room presence. I have appeared with her in court hearings regarding complex civil matters. I also observed her thorough trial preparation and performance regarding a multi-day bench trial before the Workers' Compensation Court in Helena, before Judge David Sandler. She is very confident and thorough in her research and legal analysis, both in briefs and in oral argument.

Michele is very concerned about having safe communities and does care for all people. She can be both warm hearted and tough as nails. She will treat people with respect, but she also has the stomach and temperament to handle unpleasant facts and persons. She has a passion for public service and that passion compelled her to apply for this position. She has volunteered on a number of local boards and committees as part of her commitment to our community. Her character is exemplified by honesty, high ethics, and a zeal for the rights of her clients.

Michele Reinhart Levine would be an excellent jurist as a District Court Judge in Cascade County. She is also one of the few candidates that can navigate the gauntlet of this process. If selected, she is well prepared to navigate the process going forward. She also has the skills, experience, knowledge, relationships, and the extensive network necessary to organize a formidable campaign for the position. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Martin

rmartin@fairclaimlaw.com

(406) 454-5803

RJM/jb

Cc: Michele Reinhart Levine

ELIZABETH A. BEST District Judge

Telephone: (406) 771-3950 Facsimile: (406) 771-6549



Cascade County Courthouse 415 2nd Avenue North - Rm. 203 Great Falls, Montana 59401

DISTRICT COURT EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

August 31, 2020

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

Re: Eighth Judicial District -Dept. A

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

I have known Michele Reinhart Levine for about a decade, first as a colleague and then as a lawyer appearing in my courtroom. She is bright, articulate, engaging, and industrious. She genuinely likes and cares about real people. She is also brave. While her recent experience may be focused on a narrow slice of the law, workers' compensation, she is more than prepared for the work of a district court judge.

Michele has demonstrated true respect and compassion for the powerless. I have watched her quickly familiarize herself with a *pro bono* case, assess the needs of a client she just met, use the substantive and procedural law she needed to advance that client's interests, and follow through to get results. She is not easily discouraged, and she is fearless. She is an eager and able learner. I have no doubt that she will swiftly make herself well versed in any area of the law presented to her. She is an excellent writer. She is industrious and energetic. She is well organized. She has demonstrated a keen ability to keep many plates in the air at once.

She has the respect of lawyers, leaders in Cascade County and across Montana. Her unique background gives her a wide and deep understanding of separation of powers, and the responsibilities of each branch of government. She has earned respect each time she has served the public.

ELIZABETH A. BEST District Judge

Telephone: (406) 771-3950 Facsimile: (406) 771-6549



Cascade County Courthouse 415 2nd Avenue North - Rm. 203 Great Falls, Montana 59401

DISTRICT COURT EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

We need thoughtful, intelligent, decent judges in our district courts. We need judges who define success not in terms of advancing their careers, but in terms of providing access to the courts, substantive due process and prompt justice to Montana citizens, regardless of their perceived power, importance or status. Any Montana lawyer will tell you that we need judges with these traits who can, and will, get the work done. Michele will do that. She will, as the Army puts it, "chop the wood in front of her." She will not shirk difficult decisions or procrastinate. She has the makings of an excellent judge. I urge that you send her name to the Governor for his strong consideration.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Best District Court Judge

6 Bear Paw Place Great Falls, MT 59404 September 3, 2020

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

sent via email to: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

RE: Application of Michele Reinhart Levine for a position as an 8th Judicial District Judge

Dear Ms. Menzies:

I am writing in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application to fill the District Judge seat being vacated by Judge Gregory Pinski effective October 2, 2020.

I am an attorney residing in Cascade County for the past 30 plus years. I have been licensed in Montana since 1979. Prior to moving to Great Falls, I practiced in Flathead County. I currently serve on the Cascade County Zoning Board of Adjustment with Michele, who has been serving as our Vice Chair. In addition to my direct contact with Michele, she and I have acquaintances in common whom I know and trust, who also speak highly of her work and professionalism.

During the time I have had the pleasure of working on the Zoning Board with Michele I have found her to always be extremely well prepared for all our meetings. She contributes insights from her experience that allow the Board to better serve its function. In her capacity as Vice Chair she has been called on to direct meetings and always does so fairly and impartially, facilitating the Board's ability to deal with difficult issues equitably and impartially. It has been a pleasure to serve with Michele and serve the community together.

I firmly believe Michele Reinhart Levine has the temperament and demeanor to function as a District Judge without prejudice and with an open mind. Michele has the skills and determination to maintain order and see that her Court functions fairly and in an orderly manner consistent with the law and the high standards we expect our Courts to reflect.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles W. Kuether

GREGORY S. MUNRO ATTORNEY AT LAW Missoula, Montana

September 3, 2020

3343 Hollis Street

(406) 493-5361

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

Re: Judicial Candidate, Michelle Reinhart-Levine

Judicial Commission Members:

I am most pleased to recommend that you nominate Michelle Reinhart-Levine to fill the District Court vacancy created by Judge Pinski's resignation in Cascade County. I have known Michelle since she entered law school over a decade ago and know of her professional practice and reputation in the legal community. I observe that she has the personal qualities, professional skills and legal knowledge that we want in our judges.

The fact that Michelle was a highly active member of the Montana House of Representatives during her entire law school tenure is an indicator of her abilities, competence, focus and endurance. Michelle proved adept at balancing school, the legislature and her personal life. In her law school classes, I observed that she is a hard worker by nature, completed all projects timely and never asked for an extension of time on any work.

Even as a law student, Michelle demonstrated superior skills in written and oral communication. In my classes, she drafted a wide range of professional practice documents and was highly competent in all of her professional skills work.

Michelle came to law school with high intelligence and superior skills in interpersonal communication. She is a keen analytical thinker. She works well with others, is respectful of others, and demonstrates tact and diplomacy even when issues arise.

I would rate Michelle's judgment and ethical sense as impeccable. Her experience in jobs, law school, law practice, the legislature and the public sphere in general have equipped her with a maturity and confidence that would be a real asset to her on the bench.

Having followed Michelle's professional practice and reputation for the last eight years, I am confident that her standards are still excellent, and she would be a credit to the judiciary in Montana. I encourage the Commission to forward her name as your top-rated nominee for the Eighth Judicial District position in Cascade County.

Sincerely

Gregory S. Munro



Paul D. Odegaard Mark M. Kovacich Ben A. Snipes Andrew J. Miller Ross T. Johnson Lucas A. Wallace*
Greg E. Overturf
Leanora "Lea" Coles
Benjamin J. Langford

Of Counsel: Tom L. Lewis J. David Slovak Jay P. Dufrechou

September 8, 2020

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

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing in support Michele Reinhart Levine's application for the judicial vacancy in Montana's Eighth Judicial District. I first met Michele in December 2014, shortly after I began working for the Crowley Fleck firm. At that time, I had opportunity observe Michele zealously prosecute complex and hotly-contested chemical exposure case before the Workers' Compensation Court. In the years that followed, I was frequently opposing counsel on many of Michele's workers' compensation matters. In that context, I always found Michele to be conscientious, well-prepared, and highly persuasive. She was an extremely effective advocate for her clients.

In recent years, I have been able to see a different side of Michele though her involvement with the Montana Trial Lawyer's Association. In that capacity, Michele is always willing to lend her expertise when members encounter difficult legal issues. She has consistently demonstrated incisive legal reasoning and insight into issues facing the plaintiffs' bar.

A good judge should have the ability to consider both sides of any issue and reach the correct decision under the law. Furthermore, given the workloads shouldered by our District Courts, the committee should nominate someone who has demonstrated the motivation and work ethic that will be needed to give every litigant due consideration and a fair hearing. Michele Reinhardt Levine has those qualities in spades. I have no doubt that she would make an excellent and fair District Court judge. Therefore, I wholeheartedly support her application for the Eighth Judicial District vacancy.

Sincerely,

ODEGAARD KOVACICH SNIPES, PC

LUCAS A. WALLACE

lucas@mtlawyers.com

Menzies, Lois

From:

Kottel, Deborah <deborah.kottel@uprovidence.edu>

Sent:

Tuesday, September 8, 2020 10:52 AM

To:

MT Supreme Court,

Subject:

[EXTERNAL] Comment Michele Reinhart-Levine

Kottel, Deborah has shared a OneDrive for Business file with you. To view it, click the link below.

[uprovidence-my.sharepoint.com]

Judicial Nomination Commission - Michele Reinhart Levine.docx [uprovidence-my.sharepoint.com]

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

Re: Michele Reinhart -Levine

It is an honor to comment on Michele Reinhart-Levine's application for appointment to the District Court vacancy in Cascade County. I first met Michele as a freshman legislator in the Montana House of Representatives. We served together for the 2007 and 2009 legislative terms. I was impressed by her wide grasp of policy issues that impact Montanans. She was articulate and thoughtful. But most importantly she was able to work well with both sides of the aisle. She always listened and processed the differing opinions and views of all parties. She had an uncanny ability to craft solutions that met their differing needs. I have had the opportunity to work with her as a mediator and have found her to be well prepared in every case. Her community service work is an indication of her commitment to all who live in this community.

I believe Michele has the judicial temperament and qualities that will serve the community well should she be appointed to the District Court vacancy in Cascade County. From her work in the legislature and as a practicing attorney, I believe she will work well with the other Judges to make our 8th Judicial District court efficient and fair in serving the community's legal needs.

Deborah Kottel 6470 Heaven's View Ln. Great Falls, Mt. 59404 September 8, 2020

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

Regarding: Letter of Support Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

Michele Levine worked as a Ranger in Yellowstone Park for four seasons while attending college. I was her district supervisor for two of those seasons, have followed her career and remain a personal friend.

You have Michele's impressive application. I have read many of her letters of recommendation for her application as District Court Judge for the Eighth Judicial District. Every word of those recommendations is true.

The Michele I know is inspired by public service. She is gifted with wicked-smart intelligence. She is energetic, efficient and purpose-driven. She is compassionate. She is tough. She is articulate.

The work ethic she demonstrated while working as a Ranger has only increased during her work as an attorney.

She knows what she doesn't know but is an incredibly guick learner. She will find the answers.

Michele has the unique perspective of having served three terms as a Representative for Montana House District #97. She knows the law from both sides. She knows how to run a campaign and win.

In addition to all that, Michele has integrity. She truly stands out in my book. Our Montana District Court system would be enhanced having her serve as Judge. I urge you to forward Michele Reinhart Levine's application to the Governor for his consideration.

Thank you for your time~

Colette Daigle-Berg NPS Supervisory Park Ranger-Retired Gardiner, Montana

Eve Franklin, RN MSN 930 Flowerree Street Helena, MT

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

Re: Public Comment in support of Michele Levine's application for district court judge

To the Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am contacting the Commission to express my strong support for Michele Levine to serve as district court judge for the Eighth Judicial District.

I served in Governor Brian Schweitzer's administration as Mental Health Ombudsman for the State of Montana, and Health Policy Advisor to the Governor, as well as serving in the Montana Legislature for 17 years.

It was in my legislative role that I developed a professional relationship with Ms. Levine, serving together in the Montana House of Representatives in 2007. At that time I had served for 9 sessions as a legislator from Great Falls and it was Ms. Levine's first session. I watched with admiration as she negotiated the legislative process with a seriousness of purpose and a level of confidence not typical for a first term legislator. She earned the respect of veteran legislators from both sides of the aisle who noted both her strong work ethic and her command of complex material. She carried legislation in multiple specialty area including environmental issues such as regulation of gray water, weed management, and subdivision regulation; human services, guardianship and commitment law, and higher education. She was an effective legislator successfully shepherding an impressive number of bills through the legislative process.

In order to be effective in moving a legislative agenda forward, one has to bring together disparate interest groups and stakeholders and earn the trust of other legislators. Ms. Levine was able to accomplish just that, achieving her legislative success through thoughtful analysis of issues, respecting differing perspectives, and ultimately bringing stakeholders together by identifying common ground and shared goals. She eschews partisan politics and instead focuses on problem solving and developing solutions. Ms. Levine possesses a keen intellect, the ability to identify problems and resolve conflict, and a profound sense of fairness. In her professional role I have witnessed her drive and tenacity, as well as her compassionate nature.

Raising her young family in Great Falls, Ms. Levine has a strong stake in ensuring the health and safety of the public. She has demonstrated a strong commitment to community and established herself as an individual willing to give generously of her time and skills to enhance the

public good, serving on several local boards dedicated to community development and human services. In my professional experience with Ms. Levine I have witnessed her passion for public service and I am confident that she will serve the Eight Judicial District with integrity and a commitment to excellence. I respectfully request that her name be forwarded to the Governor to be included in his deliberations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Eve Franklin

Eve Franklin

eve.franklin.54@gmail.com 406-799-0184

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Tuesday, September 8, 2020 9:11 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Alex Rate <alex.rate@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 5, 2020 1:55 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in support of Michele Reinhart-Levine for 8th Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter of support in my individual capacity, and not on behalf of any group or organization. I strongly support Michele Reinhart-Levine for the Cascade County District Court position that is currently open. I know Michele to be an outstanding litigator, a champion of justice and an advocate for marginalized individuals and communities. She has donated freely of her time and is committed to fair processes and a level playing field for all.

During the 2018 election cycle Michele volunteered to monitor elections in Cascade County. In that capacity she was able to ensure that "line support" (providing nourishment and encouragement to individuals waiting to cast their ballot) was free and unfettered. I appreciated her willingness to proactively address potential issues and come up with creative work-arounds to difficult problems. That same problem-solving mentality will serve her well on the bench.

In short, Michele would make an outstanding district court judge. Please contact me if you have any questions. Regards,

Alex Rate
Bar #11226
Alex.rate@gmail.com
406-224-1447

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Tuesday, September 8, 2020 9:11 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Kelly Rosenleaf krosenleaf@childcareresources.org

Sent: Friday, September 4, 2020 5:03 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] public comment/reference for Michelle Reinhart Levine

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission,

Michelle Reinhart Levine would be an excellent judge; I have known Michelle since she ran for legislature in Missoula as I lived in her district. She was in law school, which seemed daunting on its own, and yet she ran a successful campaign and was a dedicated legislator. Michelle was well respected by her peers from both parties while at the legislature. She found common ground thus was able to move legislation forward. I witnessed her respect for members of the public who travelled to Helena to testify, and at community meetings that were sometimes contentious. Michelle tackled a wide range of issues at the legislature including banking, land use planning, natural resources, and local government. I have a particular interest in human services and found Ms. Levine to be a good listener.. She was easily re-elected to a second and third term.

Upon graduation from law school Michelle moved to Great Falls where she began her legal practice. I have the greatest respect for Michelle's dedication public service. She performs pro bono family law for which there is a tremendous need. Single parents with low incomes cannot access MT's Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Program unless they have a parenting plan and are either receiving payments or cooperating with Child Support Enforcement. Unfortunately, many parents are unable to afford the legal costs associated with obtaining a parenting plan. The pro bono work Michelle does not only protects both parents, helps clarify expectations, and allows parents to obtain the child care scholarship benefits necessary for them to enter and remain in the workforce. Recently Michelle sought information about the administrative rules associated with parents starting school age programs or conducting home school as a result of the pandemic. This proactive approach assures that her clients will not inadvertently stumble in to legal complications.

Michelle is committed to community service. I recently attempted to recruit Michelle to a statewide board of directors. I was unsuccessful because Michelle is already serving on two other boards.

I urge you to support Michelle Reinhart Levine's appointment to the Eight Judicial District Court and to forward her application to the Governor for consideration.

Kelly Rosenleaf
Executive Director

Child Care Resources 406-728-6446

Direct: 406-532-8333

www.childcareresources.org [childcareresources.org]

Does your family have a special circumstance where your child is unable to attend child care/school and needs in-home care? Funding is available here [childcareresources.org]!

Do you operate a school-age program or want to start a new program? Grants are available here!



Jamie Holman-Ronholdt 113 39th Ave NE Great Falls, MT 59404 (406) 788-4193 Jamie.L.Holman@gmail.com

September 8, 2020

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

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

My name is Jamie Holman-Ronholdt and I have known Michele Reinhart Levine for about 8 years. We were members of the Great Falls Junior League and both served on the Junior League board together.

I am writing to show my support of Michele for the application to fill the Eighth Judicial District Judgeship vacancy.

Working with Michele on various projects over the years, I have seen firsthand her dedication to our community and the people who reside here. She has excellent standards and work ethics. When Michele was in charge of a project, it was completed on time and to the upmost perfection. She had the respect of all of the Junior League members, including mine.

I have resided in Great Falls for the majority of my life. I believe Michele would bring the right amount of empathy, ethical principles and equal judgement to Cascade County's judicial system. Her logical thought process, detailed oriented attitude and attention to an on-time schedule is exactly what our court system needs at this time of consistent backlogs and overwhelmed courtrooms.

I believe Michele would make an excellent Judge. She is an avid listener, a great researcher, and always comes with an open mind. She will be able to listen to both parties, research the unknown, and come the best conclusion possible for the persons involved and our community as a whole. She will always have the bigger picture at heart and that is exactly what we need in our judicial system.

Sincerely,

Jamie Holman-Ronholdt



Paul D. Odegaard Mark M. Kovacich Ben A. Snipes Andrew J. Miller Ross T. Johnson Lucas A. Wallace Greg E. Overturf * Leanora "Lea" Coles Benjamin J. Langford Of Counsel: Tom L. Lewis J. David Slovak Jay P. Dufrechou

September 9, 2020

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

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine - Cascade County Judicial Position

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

My name is Ross Johnson, and I am a civil attorney in Great Falls, Montana. I have had the pleasure of knowing Michele Reinhart Levine since the first day of law school. After only a few classes it was apparent that Michele has a desire to learn the practice of law as well as a strong work ethic. Never shy to provide an answer to a tough question posited by a professor, it also became apparent that Michele is also thoughtful, intelligent, and a great communicator.

I also have had the opportunity to watch Michele as she fought for her clients. It is clear Michele cares deeply for others and has a strong moral compass for what is just. All these qualities I deem to be of the utmost importance when considering who should serve as judge. While Michele has spent most of her practice working for injured Montanans, she is a very principled person who would assess any situation thoughtfully and levy a fair result. I have no doubts Michele would work tirelessly on her case load, which would be quite substantial in Cascade County, to decide even the most complex matters in a swift and well-reasoned manner.

I provide my full support to Michele Reinhart Levine for Cascade County Judge.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Ross T. Johnson

RTJ:dak

mtlawyers.com

T: 406.222.2222 F: 406.259.3232 **Billings** 550 N. 31st Street, Ste 200 Billings, MT 59101 **Great Falls** 21 3rd Street North, Ste 301 Great Falls, MT 59401 **Helena** 845 Great Northern Blvd. Helena, MT 59601



Andrea Fox

307 1st Ave. E., #4 P.O. Box 9621 Kalispell, MT 59904 Telephone (406) 204-0757 Facsimile (406) 890-6722 afox@mtfoxlaw.com

September 8, 2020

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

Re: Michele Reinhart Levine judicial nomination

Dear Lois,

I am writing a letter of support for Michele Reinhart Levine. I have known Michele since law school and I think she would be an excellent candidate for this position.

Michele has always been an outgoing and energetic front runner in school and in her field. Her attitude and demeanor would make her a great candidate for this position.

Intellectually, Michele has always been a standout and would be able to easily handle the academic rigors of the judiciary. Undoubtedly her experience in the legal field would give her the background necessary to excel as a judicial candidate.

As a family law practitioner, one thing that strikes me the most about Michele is that as a dedicated family woman and professional, and would likely bring those experiences to bear as a judge in terms of making good family law decisions and approaching cases with efficiency. An efficient judge is paramount when it comes to family law, and an understanding of children and family is of utmost important when dealing with domestic relations cases. Unfortunately, judges must deal with MANY family law matters nowadays, and I think Michele would make excellent family law decisions.

I think Michele would be a wonderful judge and I fully support her nomination for the position.

Best Regards,
/s/ Andrea Fox
Andrea Fox
Attorney at Law

Dear Commissioners,

It is my honor to recommend Michele Reinhart-Levine as a worthy candidate to fill the vacant District Court Judge position in the Eighth Judicial District in Cascade County.

I have known Michele since 2007 when she was my seatmate in the Montana House of Representatives. My knowledge of her skill set is more relative to her as a legislator and public servant than as an attorney, but I also wrote a letter of recommendation for her to be admitted into the University of Montana Law School. I believe the qualities she showed as a capable elected official and effective legislator would apply well as the same personality traits desirable in a good District Court Judge. My high opinion of Michele is informed by my own service as Deputy Clerk of the Montana Supreme Court, Legislator, Director of the Montana Crime Lab, and in my present position as an Administrative Law Judge for the State of Montana who works with pro se litigants and licensed attorneys daily. From that experience I am confident Michele would make a good judge.

I will focus my comments on my work with Michele in the Montana House of Representatives, where as a Legislator her empathy for citizens regardless of income or party affiliation, her ability to quickly grasp complicated scenarios, and her willingness to mediate conflict to solve problems was evident. I saw her practice these skills as one of the most effective legislators during her service. As I recall she passed (not just introduced) more bills than any other Freshman legislator in the 2007 session. Passing a bill in a tightly divided legislature is one of the best testaments I know of for a person who works hard and is smart and strategic.

After 2007 Michele attended Law School and has become a successful attorney in private practice in Great Falls. At the same time, she is a dedicated mother and spouse. She should be recognized for her ability to serve her community and the State of Montana well for these last decades. Over the years she has practiced before the Workers Compensation court and numerous District Court Judges displaying an excellent court room demeanor which would serve the public well from the bench.

Finally, as the father of an eighteen-year-old daughter, I think it is appropriate to appoint more women to the District Court bench, especially women of the high moral caliber and with the excellent legal skills of Ms. Levine.

Sincerely,

Dave McAlpin, Administrative Law Judge and former State Representative

716 Power Street

Helena, MT 59601

David L. MERL

September 9, 2020

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

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine, applicant for the Eight Judicial District.

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

My name Is David Van Son, I am a Battalion Chief with Great Falls Fire Rescue and have been on the department for 25 years. I am submitting this letter of support for Michele Reinhart Levine for her nomination to the Eight Judicial District.

With Michele's past experience as Representative of House District 97 I feel she has a good understanding of the legal system in Montana. She also has experience working as a student attorney in the Missoula County Attorney's Office and is currently representing workers in Montana as an attorney in Great Falls.

I recently lost a Brother fire fighter and dear friend of mine to occupational cancer. Michele worked tirelessly with representatives of the International Association of Fire Fighters, physicians that specialize in epidemiology, and others to secure a worker's compensation death benefit for my friend. By doing so, Michele not only helped his family during this troubled time, but she also honored his 17 years of dedication to the City of Great Falls as a fire fighter after he succumbed to occupational cancer.

Last October three members of Great Falls Fire Rescue were on a routine call and were tragically struck by a drunk driver under my watch. Two of the three members suffered severe injuries and one still has not returned to work. When the workers compensation system was not providing for these individuals Michele stepped in. She has successfully secured the treatments and rehabilitation for the members on my shift, allowing one member to return to the streets in May so he can continue to serve the community of Great Falls and providing continued treatment for the other so someday soon he too can return to work.

Michele has proven to be a hard worker, is dedicated to the rights of others, and is a positive role model within our community. For those reasons and the reasons stated above I am positive that Michele Reinhart Levine would serve the Eighth Judicial District with honor and integrity and I am proud to give her my support for the position

Respectfully submitted,

David Van Son

PO Box 7256 Great Falls, MT 59403 Phone: 406-868-2643

September 9, 2020

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

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine, applicant for the Eight Judicial District.

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

On behalf of the 64 members of the Great Falls Fire Fighters IAFF Local 8, I am submitting this letter of support for Michele Reinhart Levine for her nomination to the Eight Judicial District.

With Michele's experience as a Representative of House District 97 for three terms, working in the Missoula County Attorney's Office, being a part of the National Park System, serving in the Conservation Corp and currently representing workers as an attorney in Great Falls, we feel that she has the dedication and ability to honorably serve in the capacity of Eight Judicial District Judge.

Michele has proven her dedication to serving others. She successfully secured a worker's compensation death benefit for one of our members that we tragically lost to occupational cancer. And when our Union approached Michele to assist with two of our members that were tragically injured on the job when they were struck by a drunk driver, she was there for us. She has successfully secured the treatments and rehabilitation for our members as they recover from this horrific workplace injury. Her timeless dedication to helping the community secure their rights does not go unnoticed.

For the reasons stated above, the members of Great Falls Fire Fighters IAFF Local 8 are honored to express our support to Michele Reinhart Levine for the nomination of Eight Judicial District Court.

Respectfully submitted,

David Van Son President; IAFF Local 8

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 8:58 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Thad Adkins <thad_adkins@hotmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, September 9, 2020 3:54 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment Eight District Vacancy

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

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing to support the selection of Michele Reinhart-Levine for the current judicial vacancy in the Eight Judicial District.

Although we both grew up in the same Montana county, I didn't get to know Michelle until college, where I was repeatedly impressed with her warmth, thoughtfulness and intelligence.

As a state legislator Michele perfected the art of listening, and there is perhaps no other skill more important for an effective judge. She also understands the considerations that are involved in statutory construction, and is familiar with the history of many of the legal foundations she would be called upon to interpret.

Above all, she possesses the integrity and good character that would make her an ideal member of the judiciary. I strongly encourage the Committee to recommend Ms. Reinhart-Levine for selection for Cascade County District Court Judge, and thank you all for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Thad Adkins Helena, Montana



Paul D. Odegaard Mark M. Kovacich Ben A. Snipes Andrew J. Miller Ross T. Johnson Lucas A. Wallace*
Greg E. Overturf
Leanora "Lea" Coles
Benjamin J. Langford

Of Counsel: Tom L. Lewis J. David Slovak Jay P. Dufrechou

September 11, 2020

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

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing in support Michele Reinhart Levine's application for the judicial vacancy in Montana's Eighth Judicial District. I first worked with Michele, shortly after I began working for Montana State Fund in 2015. I was frequently opposing counsel on many of Michele's workers' compensation matters. In that context, I always found Michele to be conscientious, well-prepared, and highly persuasive. She was an extremely effective advocate for her clients.

Michele is well respected on both sides of the bench and always willing to work matters out and see both positions. A good judge should have the ability to consider both sides of any issue and reach the correct decision under the law and I believe Michele Reinhardt Levine can do this. I support her application for the Eighth Judicial District vacancy.

Sincerely,

ODEGAARD KOVACICH SNIPES, PC

Lea Coles, Attorney lea@mtlawyers.com

DUCKWORTH LAW OFFICE, P.C. ATTORNEY AT LAW

E. KIEL DUCKWORTH kiel.duckworth@gmail.com

11 MAIN STREET SE RONAN, MONTANA 59864 www.duckworthlawoffice.com TELEPHONE: 406-676-3395 FACSIMILE: 406-676-3396

September 11, 2020

SENT VIA EMAIL ONLY

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

RE: 8th Judicial District Nominee Michelle Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I write this letter in support of judicial applicant for the 8th Judicial District of Montana, Michelle Reinhart Levine. I attended law school (2011 graduate) at University of Montana with Ms. Reinhart Levine (2012 graduate). I have not had occasion to litigate against her, because our practices are aligned, but I know that many others have and speak highly of her advocacy. I can, however, speak directly to her character, morals, and commitment to public service from my experience with her during law school and in legal circles.

Ms. Reinhart Levine is an honest, straightforward and morally grounded advocate. She is a straight shooter and carries herself within outstanding moral boundaries. In addition, she has a deep passion for public service, and though she's been very successful in private practice, I believe her true passion lies in public service. She has proven her commitment to public service through her three terms as a State Representative. She would be an excellent candidate, in my opinion, for the 8th Judicial District opening, due to the combination of her legal expertise and true passion for public work.

a Samuelle Control

I support Ms. Reinhart Levine's nomination, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for considering this letter.

Sincerely,

E. Kie Duckworth

KD/ked File September 11, 2020

From: Lois Baker Member of Kairos Youth Homes Board 3432 13th Ave. S. Great Falls, MT 59405

To: MT Supreme Court Montana State Government

Members of the Supreme Court:

I am writing in support of Michele Reinhart-Levine for District Court Judge in Cascade County. I have known Michele for the last 5 years and worked with her on the Kairos Youth Homes board. I have found her to be reliable and competent every month when we meet to discuss business matters relating to the youth homes in Great Falls. She has volunteered to help in every way possible to make sure that the children we deal with have the best possible facility and adults supporting their lives. She thoughtfully examines the data that the staff presents to us and makes logical decisions about matters of finance and staffing. I find her compassionate and caring about the needs of the children. She is realistic in dealing with what we have to work with and keeping the best interest of the children and staff in mind. She listens to all facts and is fair to all sides. Her community service is a priority to her and is handled with the quickest turn around.

Two years ago, my son who was a fireman, died in the line of duty here in Great Falls. Michele helped my daughter-in-law finalize the workman's compensation case so she would have financial help for she and her two children. It was such a relief to have the legal support that was so competent and time sensitive.

I admire Michele and her commitment to making our community a better place. I highly recommend your consideration to appoint Michele Reinhart-Levine for this vacancy in the Cascade County Court.

Sincerel	y	,

Lois Baker

From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Sunday, September 13, 2020 9:54:42 PM

From: James Taylor <James.Taylor@cskt.org> **Sent:** Friday, September 11, 2020 1:33 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Eighth Judicial District Vacancy- Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Ms. Menzies,

I am writing in support of the application of Michele Reinhart Levine for the vacant position in the Eighth Judicial District. In 2005-2007 I taught at UM Law School, and several summers thereafter I ran the summer school and clinical program at the Law School. It was there I met Michele. As a fellow Carroll College and UMLS graduate, I have stayed in contact with her over the years and she has always impressed me with her interest in the law, her ability to reason, and her fairness in approaching any situation. I have followed her legal career and legislative career since her graduation and I offer my whole hearted recommendation of Michele for the position of District Judge. She is a rising star as a civil litigator and would be a welcome addition to the judiciary. She has an excellent temperament for a judicial position, and the people of Montana would be well served with her contributions from the bench. Thank you for considering my comments. Stay safe.

Jim Taylor

Managing Attorney Tribal Prosecutors Office P.O. Box 278 Pablo, MT 59855 406-675-2700, ext. 1176

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

James.Taylor@cskt.org



LEGAL SERVICES

Phone: (406) 243-6213

Fax: (406) 258-0450

Klaus D Sitte, Of Counsel

University Center, Room 116 32 Campus Drive Missoula, MT 59812

September 13, 2020

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

Email: <u>mtsupremecourt@mt.gov</u>

Re: Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission Members:

This letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for her application for the Eighth Judicial District Court judgeship. Michele and I first became acquainted when she served in the Montana Legislature prior to entering law school. Later, while attending law school, Michele became a member of the ABIII Law School Negotiation Team when I served as coach. We spent many hours together in practice and on-the-road competition during the time Michele was a member.

You will, of course, find Michele articulate, capable and qualified. Her résumé details the depth of her qualifications. Her varied background, especially her legislative experience, provide a solid framework for her common sense and good judgment. While on the Team, Michele was a quick study, an important prerequisite for adjusting to the challenges of assuming a district court judgeship. She was able to rapidly assimilate the necessary skills to navigate the nuances between interests and positions. The skills she has accumulated over the last nearly 20 years will serve her well in dealing with the challenges any new judge will face.

During her time on the Team, Michele was under the regular and persistent scrutiny of teammates, competitors, and judges. She developed an ability to express good insight, while accepting some difficult and poignant critique. The ability to withstand outside pressures and even disparaging remarks, while exercising her own good sense, will serve her, and Montana's citizenry, well.

Letter to Judicial Nomination Commission

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine

September 13, 2020

Page 2

Serving as a District Court Judge is one of the most difficult jobs in Montana. Judges need to be dedicated, thoughtful and patient. Michele has demonstrated those characteristics throughout her working life. We can be confident she will do so as a District Court judge for the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Klaus D. Sitte

Klaus D. Sitte



Sydney E. McKenna • Justin Starin ATTORNEYS AT LAW

September 15, 2020 Via U.S. Mail and e-mail mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

RE: Michele Reinhart-Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission Members:

This letter is in regard to Michele Reinhart-Levine's application to succeed District Judge Greg Pinske.

I know Michele from our work for injured workers, and from the Montana Trial Lawyers Association. I have attended meetings with Michele and found her to be energetic, smart, and reasonable in her dealings with other attorneys. She is hardworking and takes her clients and their causes very seriously. She has a broad civil practice and is therefore able to adapt to various legal cases. I believe Michele will work hard to do a good job and treat people who appear before her fairly and with respect.

In conclusion, I recommend Michele Reinhart-Levine to you for this important position. She has the qualifications, fitness, and character to serve Montana as a district court judge.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter, and for your hard work on the commission.

Sincerely yours,

Sydney E. McKenna

SEM/kd

HUNT & FOX PLLP

Attorneys at Law

James G. Hunt Patrick T. Fox 310 East Broadway St. Helena, MT 59601 Telephone: (406) 442-8552 Facsimile: (406) 495-1660 ihunt@huntlaw.net pfox@huntlaw.net William E. Hunt, Sr. (1923-2016)

September 15, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission c/o Lois Menzies Via email: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Re: Letter supporting Michele Reinhart Levine for Eighth Judicial District Judgeship

Dear Judicial Nomination Committee:

I write this letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's judicial appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Over the last three legislative sessions, I have observed Michele, a former legislator, testify on numerous occasions before various legislative committees. Michele's expression, both orally and in writing, of her position on proposed legislation was compelling. She was well-prepared, attentive to detail, and emanated a deep understanding of the relevant issues. Distinctly, Michelle has the ability to comprehend and explain in a way that is understandable to non-lawyers the various considerations that together form "the law," i.e., history, economics, policy views, legislation, case law, etc., and their combined effect on human beings in the real world.

I have also had the opportunity to work with Michele professionally given the overlap in our practice areas and in the context of a mutual professional association. Despite her busy practice and family life, Michele freely gives of her time to assist colleagues with legal issues and is active in law-and community-related activities apart from her practice. It is apparent to me Michele is a capable and hard-working lawyer who approaches her obligations to her clients seriously and with compassion.

Given my experiences with Michele, I believe that, if appointed to the bench, she would: apply the law correctly and fairly, treat the parties and lawyers before her with kindness and respect, and capably render decisions with appropriate consideration to the Constitution, the Legislature's intentions as embodied in Montana's statutes, and to *stare decisis*. Michele's perspective, competencies and work-ethic would serve the busy dockets of the Eighth Judicial District well.

Sincerely,

PATRICK T FOX



Paul D. Odegaard Mark M. Kovacich Ben A. Snipes Andrew J. Miller Ross T. Johnson Lucas A. Wallace Greg E. Overturf * Leanora "Lea" Coles Benjamin J. Langford Of Counsel: Tom L. Lewis J. David Slovak Jay P. Dufrechou

September 15, 2020

Sent 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: Nomination of Michele Reinhart Levine for Eighth Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Commission Members:

I have known Michele Reinhart Levine for nearly a decade. As an attorney, Michele demonstrates vigor and work ethic that sets her apart from others in the profession. Michele's substantial litigation experience has equipped her as a highly skilled professional. Through her career, she has demonstrated that she has the legal mind and temperament necessary for this incredibly busy judicial position.

Among her peers, Michele's work ethic is stands out. She continues to have the motivation to take on the substantial workloads necessitated not only for a thriving law practice, but for a diligent jurist. Michele has demonstrated the qualities necessary for an effective judge and elected official. Her dedication to the practice and her thoughtful demeanor will be of substantial public benefit to Cascade County.

Without reservation, I highly recommend Michele for appointment to the Cascade County District Court judiciary. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ben A. Snipes

BAS:mcw



JEFFREY S. FERGUSON LAW OFFICE, PLLC Attorney at Law



September 11, 2020

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

RE: Eighth Judicial District Court, Department A

To Whom It May Concern:

While I have not been lucky enough to have many cases with Michelle Levine, the one I did have with her I was very impressed. Ms. Levine was very knowledgeable and very professional in the pro bono divorce case that she was assigned through our local law clinic.

Michelle treated that client I am sure just like she does all her other clients and provided her client very thoughtful and competent legal advice. This ultimately in our case lead to a resolution reached outside of court which was in both of our clients best interest.

I believe Michelle Levine would bring that same kind of thoughtfulness and professionalism with her as a District Court Judge.

Very Sincerely,

JEFFREY S. FERGUSON

Attorney at Law

JSF/df

Telephone: (406) 453-3275 E-mail: office@fergusonlawgf.com Facsimile: (406) 453-0252



Thomas Murphy, Attorney Charla Tadlock, Attorney Matthew Murphy, Attorney Tommy Murphy, Attorney Lou Joi Poelman, Paralegal Shawnda Winter, Paralegal Catherine Garrett, Paralegal Aubrey Williams, Paralegal Leslie Murphy, Assistant April Raines, Assistant

September 11, 2020

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

RE: Appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

Murphy Law Firm supports Mrs. Michele Reinhart Levine's application for Eighth Judicial District Court Judge.

Mrs. Levine is a respected attorney in Great Falls, and she is a dedicated public servant. Mrs. Levine previously served three terms as a Montana State Representative for House District 97. Mrs. Levine worked tirelessly during this time advocating for the benefits of all Montanans.

Mrs. Levine is extremely smart, and she is committed to upholding the highest calling of her profession. She supports the rights of Montanans to judicial access, and she would be able to follow the mandate of fair and impartial justice. Mrs. Levine has many excellent qualities that would equip her for the challenging position of District Court Judge. She is compassionate, listens well, hardworking, thorough, and thoughtful. We believe Mrs. Levine would be an excellent judge.

Please submit Michele Reinhart Levine's name to the Governor for appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Murphy

Charla K. Tadlock

Matthew J. Murphy

Phomas M. Mridaly

Sincerely.

LINNELL, NEWHALL, MARTIN & SCHULKE, P.C.

RICHARD J. MARTIN
J. KIM SCHULKE
STACY TEMPEL-ST. JOHN
MICHELE REINHART LEVINE
MEGAN L. MILLER

WAYNE E. LINNELL, Of Counsel NORMAN L. NEWHALL, Retired

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KINDRA MARTIN BRITTNEY ROTHROCK ANGIE WHITEMAN

OFFICE MANAGER: TAMMY TURNER

PARALEGAL STAFF:

OUR FILE MI018-002

September 14, 2020

VIA EMAIL ONLY - mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

Re: Michele Reinhart Levine

Candidate for appointment to Montana Eighth Judicial District Court

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

Please accept this correspondence as a recommendation for the Appointment of Michele Reinhart Levine to the Montana Eighth Judicial District Court. As one of Michele's law partners I am very pleased to provide this letter.

I have practiced law in Montana since 1981, first in Helena, and then, starting in 1987, in Great Falls. My practice has included administrative law, criminal law, civil litigation and workers' compensation.

Michele came to work for our firm in the fall of 2012, but by that time she had already established herself as an industrious public servant, having served in the Montana Legislature. She was only 26 years old when she ran for, and was elected to, the Montana House of Representatives, where she served three terms.

Michele brings an amazing amount of energy to every task she faces. She possesses an ability to assimilate and distill a huge amount of information into a useable format in a short time. One example of Michele's capacity for learning is the fact that she served in the Legislature while also attending law school.

Judicial Nomination Committee

Re: Michele Reinhart Levine – Candidate for appointment to Montana 8th Judicial District Court September 14, 2020

Page | 2

The enthusiasm for public service continues through her membership on the Cascade County Zoning Board and the other civic organizations in which she participates. She not only participated in those organizations, but became an officer as well.

Michele has pursued new and creative personal injury litigation strategies for our firm and has put those strategies to use in our civil litigation practice. She embraces new technology and its use to better serve our clients. Her clients like and respect her.

Once she became a shareholder in our firm, Michele learned about managing employees and a budget. She gives thoughtful consideration to the issues that arise in the operation and management of our law firm.

It is with mixed emotions that I recommend Michele for this critical appointment. I have enjoyed practicing law with her, working through legal and other issues with her and watching her young daughters grow up. I will miss that if she becomes a judge. On the other hand, she would bring enthusiasm, innovation and compassion to the bench and therefore I recommend her without reservation.

Sincerely,

J. Kim Schulke

kschulke@fairclaimlaw.com

J. tim Schulhe

(406) 454-5804

JKS/mp

cc: Michele Reinhart Levine

ATTORNEYS: Neal P. DuBois Eric D. Mills Phoebe P. Marcinek



DUBOIS MILLS, PLLC 104 4th Street N., Ste. 200 P.O. Box 1348 Great Falls, MT 59403 Phone: (406) 315.3242 Fax: (406) 727.1812

September 15, 2020

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

Re: 8th Judicial District Judge Position;

Support for Michele Levine

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the application of Michele Levine for the appointment to the vacancy left by Judge Pinski in the Eighth Judicial District Court, Cascade County. As Michele and I have both practiced in the same community for the last eight years, I have had the opportunity to get to know her.

You do not have to look at her lengthy resume, letters of recommendation or application to get a sense of her and her character. When you meet her, you will understand the absolute dedication, intelligence, hard-work and sense of fairness which she will bring to work with her every day as an Eighth Judicial District Court Judge.

She and I have had the opportunity to discuss the needs of both lawyers and litigants in this community. She is absolutely committed to getting orders out in a timely manner in order to keep cases moving along. Not only does she want the process to be fair for everyone, but she also wants to ensure that there is little to no judicial delay in issuing orders.

Somehow despite Michele's commitments as business owner, wife, mother, and outdoor adventurer she has found time to serve in the legislature, on the board of Kairos Youth Homes, Junior League of Great Falls, Carols' List, Cascade County Zoning Board of Adjustments and the Montana Board of Environmental Review.

Michele is the kind of lawyer who listens intently to both sides of all arguments, including those from opposing counsel. She understands that in order to serve justice and serve your client at the same time it is necessary to see both sides of any argument. This is what has

made her such a valuable member of our community. Michele would be an absolute asset to the judiciary.

Very truly yours,

DUBOIS MILLS, PLLC

Eric D. Mills

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

September 15, 2020

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing to highly recommend Michele Reinhart Levine as District Court Judge in the Eighth Judicial District. I have known Michele since she moved to Great Falls in 2012. Most recently, she represented my children and me with our claim for death benefits through Worker's Compensation after my husband's death in February 2019 from occupational cancer while serving as a firefighter. Michele works tirelessly for the individuals and families that she represents. She is honest and fair, as well as compassionate. She will make an excellent judge.

In March 2019, I was referred to Michele from another attorney who was assisting me with settling my husband's estate. Michele set up an appointment right away to discuss the possibility of filing a claim. She educated me on the process and timeline and ensured that I was fully informed before I consented to having her firm represent our family. I immediately felt at ease and had a good understanding of what would be involved. That is no easy feat in the depths of early grief. In addition, she assisted me in researching other benefits that my children would qualify for, including a college tuition waiver for children of parents who have died in the line of duty, and the Kid's Chance Scholarship for my college-age daughter. Michele consistently goes beyond expectations for her clients. With her dedication and strategic thinking, the insurer accepted our claim for death benefits. She is efficient and incisive. In fact, I have highly recommended her to other families in the fire department who have experienced occupational injuries and illnesses.

In addition to her work as an attorney, I have known Michele through her community involvement, including Junior League, Carol's List and Kairos Youth Services. She is a strong leader, and passionate about public service and making our community a better place for all people. Her experience, especially through her work with youth in foster care, will serve her well as a District Court Judge.

For these reasons, I highly recommend Michele Reinhart Levine for the position of District Court Judge.

Sincerely,

Jill Baker

1100 46th Ave NE
Great Falls, MT 59404
(406) 564-3602
Jill.BakerMT@gmail.com

BECHTOLD LAW FIRM, PLLC

317 East Spruce Street PO Box 7051 Missoula, Montana 59807 www.bechtoldlaw.net

September 14, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission Office of the Court Administrator PO Box 203005 Helena, MT 59620-3005

Via email only to: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Re: Letter of Support for Michele Levine for Eighth Judicial District Judge

Members of the Commission:

I write now in support of Michele Levine to be appointed as judge in Montana's Eighth Judicial District.

I have known Michele since 2006 when she first ran to be a state representative representing Missoula. She was a state representative while she was in law school, and after graduating, she moved to Great Falls to start practicing law. I know Michele to be a thoughtful, thorough, and smart advocate for her clients. She has consistently practiced law with the utmost respect for the rules of practice, both formal and informal, and has always been fair and honest. She is hardworking, efficient, and meets deadlines. Michele will be an excellent judge for the citizens of the Eighth Judicial District and all who come before her in the courtroom.

Although Michele practices primarily in civil law, mostly in a work comp setting, the Commission should not overlook her ability to preside over and adjudicate criminal trials and matters. She is a quick study and familiar with criminal practice from her time at the Missoula County Attorney's Office.

I strongly recommend that the Commission send Michele Levine's application on to Governor Bullock.

June of the Section of the Timothy M. Bechtold



September 11, 2020

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 Recommendation for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing to you in support of the nomination of Michele Reinhart Levine for the District Court Judgeship in the 8th Judicial District. I have known Michele since 1999, when we first became friends as undergraduate students at Carroll College, and Michele and I have remained in touch over these years. Throughout this time, I have been able to witness her extraordinary commitment to public service and to the greater good of our communities. Michele possesses many attributes I associate with an excellent judge. I hope you will send her name on to the Governor for consideration as I know she will be an asset in this position.

You can see from her application that Michele has an impressive record of experiences and accomplishments. I want to speak to her character and strengths. Michele is one of the most compassionate individuals I have ever met. One of my earliest memories of her is of a conversation we had in the hallway, just after a class in American Indian Studies, in which she teared up reflecting on the history of federal-tribal relations. She has always cared deeply for others and has directed her education and career towards using her energies, skills, and talents to improve the lives of others. This is the reason Michele wants to serve as District Court Judge. Everything Michele does is towards this end.

Michele is a gentle person, and yet she is strong—physically, mentally, and emotionally. She has never shied away from tough issues or unpleasant people. She possesses the ability to be direct and to hold others accountable. She was one of the youngest representatives when elected to the Montana State Legislature; this required thick skin and a particular combination of confidence and humility. Visiting her at the Capital, I recall being uncomfortable simply witnessing some of the interactions between various lobbyists, legislators, staff, and citizens. Michele could engage with anyone, on any topic. She is an excellent listener and communicator and can have meaningful dialog—including with those who have differing opinions or are even hostile towards her. Michele has a record of working well with a wide variety of people—from adversarial landowner/conservationist groups during her time with Northern Plains Resource Council

to all parties in domestic violence situations to grieving families in her current position with Fair Claim. And Michele has succeeded in high-intensity situations as well as thrived and found meaning in doing the day-to-day tasks that others may find mundane.

Michele has integrity. She campaigned for and served as a state representative all while attending law school, which certainly speaks to her focus and drive, time-management skills, and passion for law. But even more so, it speaks to her commitment to do everything she can to better the lives of others, and to do it well, with a clear conscious. I remember that after long days at the Capital, while I was heading home to sleep, Michele would begin a night of reading up on the issues and pouring over proposed bills. Some of Michele's colleagues were out socializing, taking shortcuts to gaining ground in the legislative process. Michele was home doing her research. She engaged in the necessary conversations needed to get things done, but she came to those conversations armed with information. Michele is prepared to do the right thing, in the right way, even if it takes time and energy to do so.

Clearly, I could go on. These are just some of the traits Michele possesses that will serve her well in this judgeship and serve us well as community members. I have enormous respect for Michele, and I trust her. She is intelligent, honest, hard-working, ethical, and empathetic. For these and many other reasons, I highly recommend her for the District Court Judgeship in Cascade County.

Best,

Jamie Dolan, Ph.D.

Associate Professor and Chair Department of Sociology

Director of Gender Studies

Jamie Oolan

Carroll College

From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 6:42:25 PM

From: Vincent Pavlish <vinnie@judnichlaw.com> **Sent:** Monday, September 14, 2020 9:55 AM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michelle Reinhart-Levine

Lois Menzies and Judicial Nominating Committee,

I am writing in support of Michelle Reinhart-Levine, applicant for the Eighth Judicial District Court bench in Cascade County. I am a trial attorney in Missoula, working for the Judnich Law Office. Currently, I represent injured Montanans primarily in Missoula, but I have also appeared with them on criminal and civil matters throughout the state.

I met Michelle while I was an undergraduate at UM, and I believe she was working on her masters degree. We both worked in and around politics at the time, and I found her to be engaging and thoughtful about the complex problems the government was working to solve back then. I have continued to know her off-and-on since that time as a legislator, law student, and now as an attorney.

Because we work on the same side of civil law, I have not had the chance to see Michelle at work as a lawyer. I did see her work as a legislator on issues that were critically important to me at the time she was there. I found her to be a creative and forceful addition to the legislative body, and I think that same creativity and force would be a boon to the Great Falls bench. She has the right temperament and experience for the job, and I think we would be better off to put her back to work for us all.

Michelle was an excellent legislator, and I think she would be a fine judge. From my experience, I recommend that you pass her name along.

I appreciate your time and consideration of my thoughts.

Vinnie

--

Vincent Pavlish
Judnich Law Office
501 S. Russell Street
Missoula, MT 59801
(406) 721-3354
vinnie@judnichlaw.com

From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 6:43:04 PM

From: Tim McKittrick <kitty@strainbld.com> Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2020 11:46 AM

To: MT Supreme Court, Cc: Michele Reinhart-Levine

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Reinhardt-Levine

Dear Commission,

As you know the Eighth Judicial District is extremely busy. Michele is engaged in a very busy law practice and at the same is raising two young children. She is succeeding in both endeavors. That speaks volumes.

I have read other public comments. To avoid redundancy, I agree with comments concerning her work ethic and professionalism.

Michele has run and won an election. If she receives the appointment, I'm a confident the electorate will vote to retain her.

Sincerely Timothy McKittrick McKittrick Law Firm PC

Sent from my iPhone



CHARLIE SMITH
Crowley Fleck PLLP
Thornton Building
65 East Broadway, Suite 400
Butte, MT 59701
406-221-2430
cksmith@crowleyfleck.com

September 16, 2020

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 re the Judicial Nomination Commission.

Michele Reinhart-Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

My name is Charlie Smith and I am a partner at Crowley Fleck PLLP. I am in the Butte office and I have known Michele Reinhart-Levine for years. I am honored to write this letter of support in favor of her nomination to the 8th Judicial District Court Vacancy in Cascade County.

Michele and I are about the same age, and both UM law grads. Upon joining the bar, we hit it off immediately because she is so genuine. I work with Michele in the Work Comp industry daily; she usually represents an injured worker, while I have the insurance company. We have had countless cases together—notice I say "together" and not "against each other." That is because Michele is a pleasure to cross in the legal arena. She is incredibly knowledgeable, and always responsive and understanding, but most of all: she is just a great person, and I think that should be the primary litmus test for a Judge. Meet her and you will get it.

Michele exemplifies public service, and loves the diverse areas of the law and diverse people. She truly is a "people person." Michele has the great combination of packing the brain-power to analyze complex legal issues, while also being able to work together to problem solve in ways which better serve people in the Court system. She lives for justice, fairness, and equality—sounds like a superhero slogan but it's true. There is no doubt in my mind that Michele will tackle the civil docket, which often gets left behind, and particularly criminal cases and youth in need of care cases. I strongly recommend you consider her nomination.

Charle K Smith





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

Email: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Re: Michele Reinhart Levine Letter of Support

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I strongly support the nomination of Michele Reinhart Levine to fill the pending 8th Judicial District Court judge vacancy.

I am an attorney and managing partner of Cromwell Law, PLLC in Bozeman, Montana. I first became acquainted with Michele in 2006 when she worked in Missoula and I was a first-year law student. At the time Michele was entertaining a run for State Legislature. Her energy and spark set her apart and she became an inspiring role model for young female legislators, regardless of political affiliation, across the State.

It's clear from her long history of nonprofit and public service that Michele cares deeply for her fellow Montanans and thinks critically about how to best serve the public. Her enthusiasm is infectious, and she always goes out of her way to lend a hand to those in need.

The entire time that I have known Michele, she has always been unafraid of a challenge. As a young woman, she served in the State Legislature and supported causes that positively impacted all Montana women, even if she faced pushback. During law school she did not hesitate to take on the extra obligations such as competing with the Negotiations Team and receiving a Certificate in Natural Resource Conflict Resolution, all while completing her coursework with honors. Michele continues to serve the public on the Kairos Youth Service Board and the Cascade County Zoning Board, balancing her extra duties with her work in private practice and her role as a mother to young children.

Michele is kind, fair, intelligent, impartial and pragmatic. She understands the obligations and responsibilities of the role of a District Court Judge and she is up for the challenge. I cannot think of a better person to serve Cascade County as the next District Court Judge than Michele.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Audrey Cromwell Cromwell Law, PLLC

September 14th, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

We are very honored to write this letter of support of Michele Reinhart Levine for the position of Judge of the 8th Judicial District Court, Michelle was a band student of ours from grades 5 -12. Michele was a very dedicated and talented student. She was highly intelligent and exhibited great leadership skills especially during her high school years. She was selected to the Montana All State Band on the bass clarinet and was a highly decorated long distance runner.

Michelle was the rare student who did what was right just because it was the right thing to do. Unlike many high school students, she was not swayed by peer pressure. She led by example and and served as a great role model. We recall Michelle practicing "random acts of kindness" and encouraging others to do the same long before "random acts" was popular. She was and is very kind and compassionate and the type of person who acts to support the greater good of all.

One event that really made an impression on both of us occurred a few years after Michelle graduated from high school. We were driving in Yellowstone Park and came upon a bear jam. Many people had stopped to take pictures and watch the bears. We observed a park ranger herding people down the mountain as well as encouraging traffic to keep flowing. She did this in a manner that was authoritative yet without yelling or getting angry. She encouraged the ones that would have preferred to remain too close to the bears to follow her because of the need for safety. At the same time, she carried on conversations and answered questions from the inquisitive tourists. We decided to go over and tell what a great job she did with the crowd. (not all rangers are so successful and poised) We were very pleased to see that the exemplary ranger was Michelle.

In our opinion, Michelle is a fantastic candidate for the 8th Judicial District Judge position. We ask that you give her the most serious consideration. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Patricia and Paul Gates Instrumental Music Teachers, Livingston School District, retired Members of the Bozeman and Billings Symphonies, retired

LAWRENCE A. ANDERSON

ATTORNEY AT LAW. P.C.

300 4th Street North
P.O. Box 2608
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Toll Free (888) 707-8466
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E-Mail laalaw@me.com

September 16, 2020

VIA FED EXPRESS AND E-MAIL: bmclaughlin@mt.gov

Judicial Nomination Commission c/o Beth McLaughlin Office of Court Administrator 301 S. Park, Suite 328 Helena, MT 59601

Re: Letter of Recommendation for: Steve Bolstad, Michele Levine, David Grubich

Dear Commission Members:

During the last 45 years practicing law in Great Falls, we have had numerous district court judges. Some of these people were well-respected lawyers who had extensive broad-based experience before ascending the bench, while others did not.

What distinguishes the good district court judges was not their broad experience in the practice before ascending the bench. Rather, what distinguishes the good district court judges is how they used the extraordinary power of their offices.

Prior broad professional experience is not in itself a predictor of how one will perform as a district court judge. However, prior experience does give one an indication of how prospective judges will use the power of their offices. But there are other means to determine how one will use the power of their offices. How one treats the service providers in their daily lives can be a good indication of how one will use power. And how prospective judges have used whatever power they have in their jobs often provides a good indication of how they will use judicial power.

None of the people in this applicant pool have prior broad professional experience that will enable one to assess how they will use the power of judicial office in the manner in which it is supposed to be used. Other than the personal recommendations that accompany their applications, we have no idea how they will use their judicial power.

¹ An informal list from memory includes: R.J. Nelson, Paul Hatfield, Truman Bradford, Bill Coder, John McCarvel, Joel Roth, Marge Johnson, Bob Goff, Tom McKittrick, Ken Neil, Julie Macek, Dirk Sandefur, Greg Pinski, John Kutzman, Elizabeth Best, John Parker.

I am acquainted with three applicants who have power and who have used it in a measured, proper way. For this reason, these applicants should have their names passed on to the governor for his consideration.

- 1) Steve Bolstad presently serves as a city court judge. The people who appear in his courtroom have been charged with engaging in publicly irresponsible behavior. These people are often the weakest and least powerful citizens among us. Yet, Steve treats the people in his courtroom with respect, humanism, and without cynicism. That is a hard thing to do in his job.
- 2) Michele Levine presently serves on Cascade County's zoning board. Regulatory boards, generally, are apt to be controlled by the interest that the board seeks to regulate. In the case of zoning boards, the real estate and development industries regularly appear before zoning boards; and as a result, zoning boards typically end up promoting the interests of the real estate and development industries. It is hard for regulators not to align their interests with the interests they are regulating, because the regulated interest constantly appears before the board. Yet, Michele has consistently resisted this pressure while serving on the Cascade County Zoning Board. This is a hard thing to do in this job.
- 3) **David Grubich** presently serves as the district court special master for family law matters. This job often involves making decisions in contested child custody matters in which neither side or only one side is represented. Decisions that are wrong in this context can have lifelong devastating consequences to the children who are the victims in these broken unions. David recognizes the importance of these decisions. This is a hard thing to do in this job.

Thank you for consideration of this letter.

Very truly yours,

Lawrence A. Anderson

LAA/teb

GRAYBILL LAW FIRM, P.C.

300 4th Street North • PO Box 3586 • Great Falls, Montana 59403

Benjamin R. Graybill

File No.

September 16, 2020

Telephone: (406) 452-8566
Toll Free: (866) 452-8566
Telefax: (406) 727-3225
E-mail: brg@silverstatelaw.net

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

Re: Montana Eighth Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Commission Members:

I support Michele Reinhart Levine to fill the Eighth Judicial District judgeship vacancy.

Michele brings first-hand knowledge and experience litigating complex civil litigation matters. This is key for the efficient and just operation of a district court.

Eighth Judicial District Court judges handle an array of legal matters that take time. Many of these matters are not complicated legal issues, but are challenging due to the time and effort needed to conduct hearings and understand relevant facts. For good reason such matters often take priority over civil tort and contract cases. That leaves little time for reading briefs on complicated civil tort and contract issues, synthesizing different interpretations of the law, figuring out an answer, and drafting a coherent order.

Michele has the experience to capably keep a handle on civil litigations matters. She will be decisive and her competence in civil litigation arena will result in legally sound decisions. I believe Michele is committed to balancing competing docket priorities in a way that fairly and fastidiously promotes justice for all who will appear before her.

Michele's experience in the Legislature will help as well in this regard. She is used to facing a mountain of information, having to make sense of it, and deciding how to respond. She was respected in the Legislature for her ability to be courteous while steadfastly taking on challenging and often divisive legislative initiatives that through her deft management moving them to passage.

Michele has the integrity, intelligence, and demeanor to be a first rate judge.

Very truly yours,

GRAYBILL LAW FIRM, P.C.

Benjamin R. Graybill

BRG/bn

By-

September 17, 2020

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

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission—

The purpose of this letter is to wholeheartedly support and endorse Michele Reinhart Levine for the vacancy of District Court Judge in Cascade County.

I've known Michele for 17 years and worked side-by-side with her in a professional work environment both as co-workers at a family agriculture and conservation non-profit organization, and when we both served in the Montana Legislature. I was thrilled to learn of her interest in the position as I've known Michele to be an extraordinarily thoughtful and level-headed decision maker. I believe what sets Michele apart from many is that she doesn't come to decisions based on instinct alone, but thoroughly analyses all the facts and materials in front of her. Michele can confidently come to conclusions because she knows she's done every bit of due diligence to get there.

I am certain that she's carried this ability into her legal career. Michele, in my mind, would be as bright, fair and objective of a judge as the people of Cascade County could hope for. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions about Michele or my support of her candidacy.

Respectfully,

/s/

Kendall Van Dyk 406.690.1728 kendall@mtlandreliance.org Judicial Nomination Commission % Lois Menzies Office of Court Administrator P.O.Box 203005 Helena, MT 59620-3005

To the Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing today to voice my support of Michele Reinhart Levine for appointment to the judicial vacancy in the 8th Judicial District. I have known Ms. Reinhart Levine for approximately seven years and had the pleasure of serving with her on the Board of the Junior League of Great Falls.

Ms. Reinhart Levine brings passion and a wealth of knowledge to all that she does. She is the kind of person who expects the best of herself and who not only expects the best in others, but inspires them and helps them to achieve it. Personally, I know that when I bring a problem to her attention, she will either find the solution or give me the appropriate resources to do so myself.

Ms. Reinhart Levine consistently treats others fairly and with respect. I have witnessed her take the time to acknowledge and understand another person's point of view even when it is in opposition to her own.

I am just a dentist and cannot speak to her qualifications as a lawyer, but I deal with a fair number of humans and I can say that she is one of the best. I like to believe that our judicial system works as intended when people like Michele Renihart Levine are able to amalgamate core ethics, knowledge, and fairness into their position in public service. It is for this reason that I believe that she would be a great judge for our community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michelle R Nieset, DDS 2501 6th Ave South Great Falls, MT 59405 michelleniesetdds@gmail.com From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Thursday, September 17, 2020 8:51:37 PM

From: Scott Radford <sradford@strainbld.com> Sent: Thursday, September 17, 2020 3:02 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Cc: mlevine@fairclaimlaw.com; bauerlaw77@yahoo.com

Subject: [EXTERNAL] MY PERSONAL COMMENT ON WHO WOULD BE THE BEST CANDIDATE FOR

DISTRICT COURT JUDGE OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Thursday, September 17, 2020

Greetings:

I attended today's Zoom Eighth Judicial District Court Candidate Forum. All the candidates appeared to be qualified.

But, Attorney Michele Levine substantially stood out.

I would strongly recommend that Governor Bullock appoint Attorney Levine to serve out the remaining term of Judge Pinski.

For me Attorney Levine checked all the boxes of fairness, judicial temperament, dedication to the job, intelligence, and willingness to do whatever it takes to get the job done.

I was impressed. For someone who has been a member of the CCBA since 1981, I think Attorney Levine has all the makings of one of the best District Court Judges to sit on our local bench.

Yours Sincerely,

Scott M. Radford, esq. MT Bar #: 2079 Radford Law Firm, P.C. P.O. Box 2928 Great Falls, MT 59403

(406) 452-5522 office (406) 868-0478 Scott's cell From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Sunday, September 20, 2020 4:16:13 PM

From: Clare Krewer < ckkrewer@hotmail.com> Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 2:30 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Levine

To whom it may concern,

I met Michele Levine in college. Her room was just down the hall from mine. We became friends. I wanted to share the qualities and traits that she has that would be a wonderful addition to the District Court. First of all, Michele is compassionate. She is able to truly listen, especially to those that have a different opinion. She is considerate of other points of view. If she disagrees with someone, she is respectful. She never makes anyone feel that they are not important because they have a different opinion. She is extremely patient. She takes the time to listen and consider the points that you are making. She is open minded and is willing to learn things she is not sure about. She has a good sense of humor which makes her easy to talk to. She is passionate about doing the right thing. She stands up for others to make sure their opinion is heard. The district court would be lucky to count Michele as a member.

Clare K. Krewer

From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Sunday, September 20, 2020 4:15:50 PM

From: Franke Wilmer <frankewilmer1@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 1:44 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Ms. Menzies and Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission,

I write to offer my strongest, unreserved support and recommendation for Michele Reinhart Levine's appointment to the open Cascade County district court judgeship.

In my now-nearly 30 years as a professor of Political Science at MSU in Bozeman, where I served twice as Department Head, and having served 8 years in the Montana House of Representatives I have had ample opportunities to mentor and recommend quite a few exceptional individuals for law and graduate school admissions, public service, political candidacies, and two outstanding judicial appointments - Elizabeth Best and Mike Wheat. I unhesitatingly include Michele in the last category.

I served with Michele during three of the four terms I served in the legislature, and was, from day one, extraordinarily impressed not only with her ability to quickly master the most complicated policies (and their political implications) but also the civility and diplomacy with which she engaged those whose views or interests differed from her own. This made her one of the most effective legislators with whom I served - and gave me, as it did her other mentors - hope and confidence that she would pursue a legal career. That she has done so, and so successfully, is not surprising, nor is her interest in judicial service. She has all the right talents and, equally important, motives, to be one of Montana's most respected and impactful judicial public servants.

Please do not hesitate to follow-up with any questions you may have, or if you think I can provide additional insight into her qualifications and exceptional suitability for

this appointment.

Yours, Franke Wilmer

__

Franke Wilmer, Ph.D.
Professor
Department of Political Science
Montana State University
Wilson Hall
Bozeman, MT 59717
406-994.5246

From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Sunday, September 20, 2020 4:15:15 PM

From: Dave Slovak <dave@mtlawyers.com> **Sent:** Sunday, September 20, 2020 9:07 AM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] 8th Judicial District Court vacancy-- Michelle Levine

Commission Members,

First, thank you for your service. A fair and impartial judiciary is vital and your efforts to recommend only the most qualified applicants is key.

I find myself concurring in the recent comments of Larry Anderson. Cascade County has truly been fortunate to have a number of fine judges over my forty years of practice. But, what Larry said of the proper and measured use of authority and power really struck home. The best judges recognize the importance of a measured and temperate approach to the administration of justice. It is not about the judge but rather about the parties and a strict adherence to the rule of law. The applicants that Larry mentions in his letter all seem to fit that bill including Michelle Levine.

While the position of state district court judge is prestigious, it is by no means glamourous. I can think of no job in our legal system that is more demanding and yet our state courts are understaffed and frequently under appreciated. This is not a job for the faint of heart and it is certainly not a retirement job.

To my way of thinking, two important considerations should be kept in mind during your deliberations. First, the job requires someone that is dedicated to public service as the pay is not great and the hours required to do the job are daunting. Michele's background is one of public service at the state level as a three term legislator and at the city-county level with the planning board. Her professional work before she chose the law demonstrates that same commitment to public service.

Second, a good state district court judge needs to be smart. Not just common sense smart or street smart but intellectually on top of his or her game as well. The Eighth Judicial District Court sees many legally and scientifically complex cases both in the civil and criminal arenas. The work is intellectually challenging. Michelle fits this bill as well. As her resume reflects, she has been a top scholar throughout her academic career including advanced degrees in science based studies and the law. Grades and intellect do matter for this position.

Thanks.

--

Dave Slovak

Of Counsel

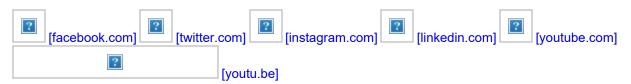
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Jonathan McDonald Attorney at Law P.O. Box 1570 Helena, MT 59624 406.442.1493

September 18, 2020

via e-mail: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine/Eighth Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Commission Members:

In an ideal world, our best and brightest become our judges. Michele's application and willingness to serve as a district court judge presents an opportunity to make Montana a bit more ideal.

I have known Michele informally through her work in our profession and as a legislator. More recently, I had an opportunity to observe her work on a case in which we represented different clients who had been impacted by the same unnecessary event. She is diligent, thoughtful and competent with an excellent understanding of the law.

Michele has not only the competence to capably serve in the role of a judge who will treat those who come before her with kindness, dignity and respect, but as her service in the legislature shows she also has the ability to successfully run and retain her position should she be appointed. I am a believer in a stable judiciary, free from frequent churning of judges. Michele will ensure that sort of stability.

The job of a judge is not an easy one. Michele's personality and demeanor, combined with her legal talents and knowledge, will ensure she can serve effectively.

I strongly encourage the commission to forward Michele's name to the governor for consideration.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

McDONALD LAW OFFICE, PLLC

By:

JONATHAN McDONALD

Thomas J. Harrington 10303 Royal Coachman Drive Missoula, MT 59808

September 18, 2020

SENT VIA EMAIL AND USPS

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

Dear Montana Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing to recommend the Commission forward Michele Reinhart Levine's name to the Governor in connection with her application to fill the open state district court judgeship position in the Montana Eighth Judicial District.

I have known Michele for 2 years, primarily from our respective involvement in the workers' compensation bar. Michele serves as a tireless advocate in pursuing the best possible outcomes for her clients. Michele conducts herself in a professional manner, is well-prepared, and demonstrates a strong work ethic. Michele is also reasonable and practical. These traits will serve Michele well if she is appointed to the bench.

I am also aware of Michele's public service work, including her prior tenure as a representative in the Montana House of Representatives, and her current role with the Cascade County Zoning Board of Adjustments. Michele's private practice legal experience, her involvement in community affairs, and her professionalism provide her with the requisite skillset to serve as an effective judge. I support Michele's inclusion in the list of names the Commission will forward to the Governor for the open state district court judge position in the Montana Eighth Judicial District.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Harrington

CARPENTER LAW FIRM

professional liability company

CHARLES H. CARPENTER (406) 543-0511 (Office) (406) 214-9540 (Mobile)

210 NORTH HIGGINS AVENUE HIGGINS BUILDING, SUITE 336 MISSOULA, MONTANA 59802

September 18, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission Lois Menzies Office of Court Administrator PO Box 203005 Helena MT 59620

Re:

Comment Regarding Michele Reinhart Levine

Commissioners:

I write in whole-hearted support of the application of Michele Reinhart Levine to fill the vacant position in the Eighth District Court.

I have known Michele since 2010, when we first met in connection with a political campaign. She was still a law student at the time and, because I had been practicing nearly 20 years, I spoke with her at length about her goals in the profession. We have stayed in contact since then, as she has developed as a lawyer. I was from the beginning, and have for the last ten years continued to be, impressed with her thoughtfulness, dedication, and empathy. Coupled with her professionalism, and strong work ethic, I think these qualities make her an excellent candidate for the judiciary. Michele also brings a breadth of experience, especially in private practice, which will serve her, and the litigants who appear before her, very well.

I have every confidence that Michele would be an excellent judge. I urge you to select her as a finalist for the position.

Yours,

Charles H. Carpenter

Judicial Nomination Commission c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court

VIA EMAIL ONLY: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am honored to give my enthusiastic support to the appointment of Michele R. Levine as a District Judge for the Eighth Judicial District.

I practiced law in Great Falls from 1972 until my retirement in 2017. A wide-ranging general practice eventually evolved into a civil trial practice involving many bench and jury trials in multiple courts throughout the state, mediations, and more than 30 appearances before the Montana Supreme Court. Michele was an associate with our law firm for nearly 4 years before my retirement. Therefore I am well-qualified to make this recommendation on her behalf.

Emblematic of her energy and devotion to public service Michele, at age 26, was elected to and served 3 terms in the Montana House of Representatives while attending law school. After taking a full-time position with our firm Michele continued her public service with active participation on the Cascade County Zoning Board, Montana Trial Lawyers, and as board chair or member of Kairos Youth Homes, Junior League and other civic organizations. She also continued her interest in legislation by actively lobbying for and drafting proposed changes to laws affecting our practice. Michele accomplished all of this while married and becoming the mother of two young daughters.

While practicing with Michele, she interviewed clients and witnesses, researched and wrote briefs, argued motions, engaged in mediations and actively participated in all activities associated with an active civil trial practice of law. In addition to her legal ability, Michele was extremely adept with new technology and with computer-based legal research. Very shortly after my retirement Michele became a shareholder in the firm and has therefore participated in the governance and administration of an active law firm.

I know Michele to have all of the attributes of an excellent District Judge. She is smart, even-handed, empathetic, understands complex legal issues, thinks creatively and works long hours. Therefore she will make an outstanding district judge and I support her appointment as an Eighth Judicial District Judge without reservation.

Norm Newhall 406-781-9831

Very Truly Yours

LINNELL, NEWHALL, MARTIN & SCHULKE, P.C.

RICHARD J. MARTIN
J. KIM SCHULKE
STACY TEMPEL-ST. JOHN
MICHELE REINHART LEVINE
MEGAN L. MILLER

WAYNE E. LINNELL, Of Counsel NORMAN L. NEWHALL, Retired

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KINDRA MARTIN BRITTNEY ROTHROCK ANGIE WHITEMAN

> OFFICE MANAGER: TAMMY TURNER

PARALEGAL STAFF:

September 18, 2020

VIA EMAIL ONLY – mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

Re: Michele Reinhart Levine

Candidate for appointment to Montana Eighth Judicial District Court

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

Please accept this correspondence as support for Michele Reinhart Levine's application for Eighth Judicial District Court Judge.

I have known Michele since September of 2012, when she began her legal career with this law firm. At that time, I was a paralegal for the firm and often worked closely with Michele. I learned immediately that Michele is enthusiastic about helping others and serving her community. Michele excels at problem solving, grasps concepts quickly, and embraces new ideas.

Since becoming an attorney myself, Michele has been instrumental in shaping my career. She never passes on an opportunity to provide mentorship or provide sound guidance. Michele is thoughtful and retrospective in her dealings with others, always endeavoring to do better. Michele has taught me an innumerable amount about being a kind, compassionate, capable attorney.

I could repeat the sentiments of so many others regarding Michele's work ethic and career achievements, but I'd rather speak more personally about Michele. What impresses me the most is her indomitable spirit. She can delve into the unknown with fervor, somehow make sense of chaos and never give up. Michele is not afraid of failure because she recognizes knowledge may be mined from it. I have a deep respect for Michele's passion and tenacity. Michele carries a genuine concern for others and a true desire to better her profession by being a good human. She possesses valuable inherent

Judicial Nomination Committee Re: Michele Reinhart Levine September 18, 2020 Page | 2

qualities every judge should have. Michele is absolutely capable and worthy of an appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Words cannot express how bittersweet it would be to see Michele leave the law firm. I have a great deal of respect and admiration for Michele. Her kindness, consideration, and positivity would absolutely be missed. However, I would be remiss if I did not ask the Judicial Nomination Commission to recommend Michele for the appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court.

incerely,

Megan L. Miller, Associate Attorney

mmiller@fairclaimlaw.com

(406) 454-5802

MLM/mp

LINNELL, NEWHALL, MARTIN & SCHULKE, P.C.

RICHARD J. MARTIN
J. KIM SCHULKE
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MICHELE REINHART LEVINE
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PARALEGAL STAFF:

OFFICE MANAGER: TAMMY TURNER

September 18, 2020

VIA EMAIL ONLY: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am pleased to write this letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application for appointment to the judicial vacancy in the Eighth Judicial District.

I was born and raised in Great Falls, Montana, and began my legal career here in 2001 when I joined the law firm of Linnell, Newhall, Martin & Schulke, P.C., where I became a shareholder in 2005. I first met Michele in 2012 when she joined our firm as an associate attorney. In reviewing a wide array of applicants for the associate position, Michele's outstanding resume placed her ahead of all other candidates and documented her wide range of skills from land use and conservation law, to being a criminal student prosecutor and intern at the Montana Department of Justice.

Based on my eight years working with Michele, I know that she has a depth and breadth of legal experience to be an excellent district court judge as evidenced by her work in land use, conservation law, criminal law, family law, complex civil litigation, personal injury and workers' compensation. Michele possesses excellent legal research, legal writing, and oral communication skills. She has a tireless work ethic and the dedication necessary to be an outstanding trial court judge.

Michele also demonstrates an exceptional judicial temperament. She will bring civility and respect to all citizens in her courtroom. She truly cares about Montanans in every socio-economic class, but especially for those that are marginalized, disenfranchised, or left behind by our judicial system as evidenced by her countless *pro bono* hours of service to those most in need. Michele does all of this while exhibiting the utmost level of professionalism, integrity, and collegiality.

Judicial Nomination Committee Re: Letter of Recommendation for Michele Reinhart Levine September 18, 2020 Page | 2

Michele's ongoing commitment to the people of Montana is evidenced by her running for and being elected at the young age of 26 to the Montana Legislature where she served three terms. She continues this commitment by serving on the Kairos Youth Board and the Cascade County Zoning Board. Michele will use these unique skills and significant support from the community to be very electable within the judicial district.

Michele is and will be an extraordinary asset to Cascade County and Montana.

Sincere

Stacy Tempel-St. John

stjohn@fairclaimlaw.com

(406) 454-5814

STS/mp

From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Monday, September 21, 2020 9:17:58 PM

From: Patti Prinkki Keebler <pjk1254@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, September 20, 2020 9:08 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Recommendation for Michele Kathryn Reinhart

Dear Members of the Judicial Nominations Committee,

It is my pleasure to recommend Michele Reinhart as an excellent choice to fill the current district court vacancy in Great Falls.

I've known Michele since she was a college student, when she interned in Helena during the 2001 legislative session and we worked on energy policy together. I found her bright, hardworking and capable then, and my appreciation for her has only grown. I've worked with and followed Michele through her work for the Northern Plains Resource Council, her time as a legislator, and her work as an attorney and community leader.

My position as a staff member to Governor Brian Schweitzer included working with legislators during the session and in the interims. It is my experience that Michele always listened to all viewpoints, and came to reasoned decisions as a legislator. She was considerate with her colleagues and she handled the enormous workload with equanimity.

Our judicial system would greatly benefit from Michele's intelligence and temperament.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my views.

Patti Prinkki Keebler PO Box 35, Roberts MT 59070 406-431-1554 cell/text From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Monday, September 21, 2020 9:19:19 PM

From: John Morrison <john@mswdlaw.com> **Sent:** Monday, September 21, 2020 11:34 AM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Reinhart-Levine

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

I write in support of the nomination of Michele Reinhart-Levine to fill the judgeship vacancy in the Eighth Judicial District.

I have known Michele for many years in the context of both government service and the law practice. Michele is smart, open minded, hard working, honest and fair. She was an outstanding legislator and has distinguished herself as a dedicated and effective lawyer as well. As a lawmaker, Michele was known as a good listener and collaborator with a strong understanding of the process. As an attorney, she has gained important experience in criminal law, civil litigation, workers compensation, family matters and administrative procedure. Michele is also a "people" person, who is a mother and involved citizen. Empathy, kindness, fairness and a desire to do the right thing are qualities that Michele possesses in abundance.

Because of her broad experience and personal character, Michele is very well equipped to become an excellent trial court judge. She has my full and enthusiastic endorsement.

Best regards,

John Morrison
MORRISON SHERWOOD WILSON DEOLA PLLP
401 North Last Chance Gulch,
P.O. Box 557
Helena, Montana 59624-0557
406-442-3261
406-443-7294 FAX
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From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Monday, September 21, 2020 9:20:25 PM

From: Merianne Stansbury <meriannest@ymail.com>

Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 1:22 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cascade County Judicial Vacancy

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this in support of Michele Reinhart Levine to fill the Eighth Judicial District Court vacancy. I am a former Associate Attorney with the Brown Law Firm in Billings, MT, and also have experience working as Judicial Assistant and Law Clerk to the Honorable Mary Jane Knisely. I am a former classmate of Michele's from the Joint Law and Environmental Studies Program at the University of Montana and had the pleasure of working on a class study of State Superfund sites with her. I believe Michele has the experience and character necessary to succeed as a District Court Judge.

Michele has a wide variety of legal experience, from drafting and passing legislation to civil litigation to bench trials, which makes her a particularly good candidate to be a Judge. She has experience representing all types of clients, including some experience with family law, and has excellent research, writing, and oratory skills. While Michele has a lot of past experience as an advocate, she has always been one to see and listen to both sides before making judgments. When I received flack from other Environmental Studies students for accepting a job doing civil environmental defense work immediately following law school, Michele was the only one to defend my decision because she understood that everyone deserves a defense and that working for "the other side" can influence positive behavior. This more than any other interaction with her has earned her my respect and friendship for a lifetime.

Michele is not only experienced, but she has the right temperament for the job. She asks questions when she doesn't understand, and sticks to her convictions once she has made a decision. She listens to those with whom she engages and reflects when necessary. Michele has compassion and empathy, and is always respectful of others' choices and opinions even if she disagrees. She has always held herself to the highest standards of professionalism, ethics, and integrity. I believe Michele would be a calming voice of intelligence and reason on the bench.

For these reasons, and those highlighted by other friends and colleagues, I highly recommend Michele Reinhart Levine for Judge for the Eighth Judicial District of Montana.

Sincerely,

Merianne A. Stoneback, J.D.

From: Menzies, Lois
To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Monday, September 21, 2020 9:24:53 PM

From: Kasey Schindele <kschindele@mail.com> Sent: Monday, September 21, 2020 7:42 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment on Judicial Nominee

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission Members,

My name is Kasey Schindele. I am the Executive Director of Kairos Youth Services in Great Falls, MT. I would like this email to be shown as my public comment in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for District Court Judgeship in the Eighth Judicial District.

I have known Michele for over two years as she sat as the Chair on the Board of Directors for Kairos Youth Services. Michele has been an asset in many ways to our nonprofit agency. She is a very helpful and active part of our agency offering her expertise in law and her ability to direct and has helped make many difficult decisions for the better of staff, our youth and the community.

Michele is always knowledgeable and fair in any situation I have been in with her. It is clear her focus is to better our community and she is not afraid to work hard for the better of others. I admire Michele's ability to take on a task in front of her, logically think through the options, acknowledge the options and move forward towards a thoughtful outcome. Michele has always been willing to help how she can, as a support and this has been invaluable to me and to the populations we serve.

Michele's education and experience qualifications show her as well versed in the law, knowledgeable and diverse in her practice. She is strong in her belief in our justice system, and would continue to do the good and hard work it takes for the position.

I strongly support and am proud of the nomination of Michele Reinhart Levine for District Court Judgeship.

Sincerely,

Kasey Schindele



September 21, 2020

VIA EMAIL

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

Re: Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing on behalf of Michele Reinhart Levine to support her application for the 8th Judicial District Court Vacancy in Cascade County. I met Michele as a law school classmate in 2009. She is intelligent and conscientious, and is capable of thinking through critical issues in order to reach a just result. She is diplomatic and has a balanced temperament. She is also committed to civic engagement and her community. I believe she possesses the qualities necessary to make an excellent judge. I hope you will consider nominating her for appointment.

Please contact me should you have any additional questions.

Sincerely, BRYAN, DISTEFANO & MATTINGLEY, PLLP

/s/ Francesca dístefano

L. JASON BRYAN

jason@nwmontanalaw.com *Also admitted in Wisconsin

FRANCESCA DISTEFANO

francesca@nwmontanalaw.com

DAVID A. MATTINGLEY

david@nwmontanalaw.com

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W.T. BOONE (1910-1984)
KARL R. KARLBERG (1923-1988)
JAMES J. BENN (1944-1992)
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WILLIAM L. CROWLEY
RANDY J. COX
ROBERT J. SULLIVAN
DEAN A. STENSLAND
CYNTHIA K. THIEL
ROSS D. TILLMAN
JAMES A. BOWDITCH

MATTHEW B. HAYHURST
SCOTT M. STEARNS
NATASHA PRINZING JONES
THOMAS J. LEONARD
JULIE R. SIRRS
TRACEY NEIGHBOR JOHNSON
CHRISTOPHER L. DECKER
RANDY J. TANNER
ZACHARY A. FRANZ
TYLER M. STOCKTON
EVAN B. COREN
ALISON R. POTTS

September 21, 2020

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

Re: Application of Michelle Reinhart Levine for the 8th Jud. Dist. Vacancy

Dear Members of the Commission:

Michelle Reinhart Levine is an excellent candidate to serve as District Judge for the Eighth Judicial District. Ms. Reinhart Levine is smart, thoughtful, diligent and empathetic. In a word: Judicious.

Although my civil practice is defense-oriented and Ms. Reinhart Levine's background includes more representation of plaintiffs, I have no hesitation in supporting Ms. Reinhart Levine. I am certain she would treat all parties fairly.

Ms. Reinhart Levine has the intelligence to fulfill the duties of a judge; the temperament to bring honor to the position; the wisdom to further the interests of justice; and the work ethic to manage a heavy caseload.

I urge you to strongly consider her for the position.

Zach Franz

Sincerely,



September 21, 2020

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

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing to voice my sincere support for Michele Reinhart-Levine, candidate for district judge in Cascade County. I have had the honor of knowing Michele for many years, first when she served with my husband in the Montana Legislature and later when she and I ended up on opposite sides of a complex civil litigation matter. In each of these experiences, I found Michele to be honest, professional, and level-headed. Even though we litigated on opposite sides, Michele treated both my client and me with respect – something that is all too frequently lacking in our adversarial system. Michele takes the time to think through issues and is always willing to consider different viewpoints. As a judge, I believe she will work hard to be fair and openminded.

Michele makes service of others a high priority. Her work with community boards and prior service in the Montana Legislature speak to her high commitment to Montanans. Her diverse experience in civil litigation also gives her a good understanding of the Rules of Civil Procedure and Evidence, both of which are key to fairly resolving legal issues and keeping the court's docket on track.

I am originally from Cascade County and frequently find myself litigating civil matters in Cascade County District Court. I believe the people of Cascade County will be well served by Michele Reinhart-Levine as the next district court judge. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me any time.

Sincerely,

Jill Laslovich

jell lastoride

JAY DUFRECHOU, J.D., PH.D.

September 21, 2020

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

Re:

Judicial Application of Michele Reinhart-Levine 8th Judicial District Vacancy (Cascade County)

Greetings:

It is my pleasure to support Michele Reinhart-Levine's application for appointment as District Court Judge for Cascade County.

Over the last several years, I have worked numerous times with Michele in my capacity as private mediator in workers' compensation cases. In doing this work, I draw upon my doctoral degree and experience in psychology as well as my legal degree and experience.

Michele has submitted numerous mediation brochure to me that have been consistently well-written, astutely argued, grounded in her legal knowledge and experience, as well as demonstrating compassion for her clients, and a goal of reaching the best result within the parameters of the law and the practically possible given complicated interacting legal, administrative and social realities.

I have also spent many hours over the years in the room with Michele and her clients (and often family members of the client) during negotiations. Michele has always been a strong advocate for her clients while remaining very respectful towards me and the representatives of the opposing party. She is not afraid to challenge positions when appropriate but has a solid grasp of legal probabilities and practice life realities impacting her clients and framing their decisions.

Most impressive to me with respect to Michele's application for the judiciary is her deep commitment to justice and to all members of society. She knows Montana and the many different ways Montanans live and the problems that arise for many people. She is creative in her thinking and problem-solving while remaining deeply respectful of law and precedent. I wish her the best in her application and in all endeavors.

Very truly yours

Jav P. Dufrechou

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

VIA EMAIL

September 21, 2020

Re: Letter of Support for Michele Reinhart Levine for the Eighth Judicial District Judgeship Vacancy (Cascade County)

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

It is my pleasure to provide this letter endorsing Michele Reinhart Levine for the judgeship vacancy in Cascade County.

I have known Michele since 2010, as we were teammates on the ABA Negotiation Competition Team at the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana. We spent many hours together preparing for and competing in negotiation competitions throughout our law school careers. Michele's hunger for knowledge and information, as well as her preparedness, made a lasting impression on myself and our other teammates. I urge you to review the letter of support provided by our negotiation coach, Klaus Sitte, for further information regarding Michele's time as a negotiation competitor and the skills she utilized in and gained from that experience.

I have not had the opportunity to practice with or against Michele since we have been out of law school, but I am very familiar with her strength of character and integrity as a person. Above all, Michele is the hardest worker in the room, she is dedicated, prepared, and compassionate. She is willing and able no matter the task at hand. If she doesn't already possess the knowledge or skills for a given task or to answer a specific question or solve a certain problem, she will research, plan, and practice until she does. Additionally, she possesses a mild and thoughtful temperament that would be a great asset on the bench. I know that she will go above and beyond to devote the time and energy necessary to the role of District Court Judge of the Eighth Judicial District.

Sincerely,

|s| Christine M. Cole

Christine M. Cole, Esq. Johnson & Johnson Law, PLLC 323 W. Pine St. Missoula, MT 59802 christine@johnsonmtlaw.com September 20, 2020

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 Recommendation for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing to you in support of the nomination of Michele Reinhart Levine for the District Court Judgeship in the 8th Judicial District.

Michele and I met in 1999 at Carroll College where we both students. Michele and I have stayed in touch since graduation and I was honored to preside at her wedding to Bill Levine.

Many others have vouched for Michele's professional excellence, her work ethic, and her commitment to public service. I add to their commendations a reflection on Michele's personal ethics. I'm using the term *ethics* here to mean "why we do what we do."

I think Michele is motivated by a deep sense of responsibility for the well-being of others. She is not a candidate who would seek this appointment for personal advancement, but for the satisfaction of her deeper desire to uphold justice. Commitment to a larger vision will sustain Michele through the demands of the position and hold her fast to what is just, true, and good while making decisions.

The District will be well served by Michele and I give her my highest recommendation.

Yours Sincerely, Rev. Kendra Wille

Rev. Kendra Wilde

Ordained Minister of the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Helena, MT

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

Dear Commission Members,

I am writing in support of Michele Reinhart-Levine's judicial application for appointment as District Court Judge for the Eighth Judicial District.

I have known Michele Reinhart-Levine since 2006 when she worked as a land use planner for Missoula County and served as a Montana State Representative. I served as Missoula County Commissioner at that time and worked with her in both roles.

As a land use planner, I could always rely on Michele to bring land use decisions to the County Commission with a fully prepared recommendation based on state law and county land use regulations. Land use law and regulations are complex and a lot of factors play into subdivision and zoning projects. Her presentations were always thorough and provided the needed background material for the Commission to make sound decisions based on the rules and regulations with technical reports and environmental assessments. Land use decisions are often very personal to people who live next to new developments, so I appreciated her well- researched and documented staff reports. It allowed me to make good, legally based decisions.

As a Representative in the Montana Legislature, she had that same work ethic and dedication to detail. She was known for her ability to sort through a lot of material to pull out what was pertinent to the issue at hand. She asked good questions to make sure the legislation was addressing the issue in a productive way. She was involved in a wide spectrum of issues. She took into account all view points and made decisions based on the 'good of the whole' – what was best for Montana to address problem the legislation was aimed at solving.

As an attorney, Ms. Reinhart-Levine has worked on cases from civil litigation, family law and parenting plans to consumer protection and workers' compensation. She also has experience with Indian law which is so important in Montana. She is very fair minded and believes in the law not creating law from the bench.

As a citizen of Montana, Michele is an involved and educated citizen. She will serve the Eighth District and Montana well as a District Judge. Her ability to take mountains of information included in legal briefs and pull out the important items; her understanding of and respect for the law; her experience in a broad spectrum of legal issues; and her professionalism while caring will be an asset to the court.

I highly recommend Michele Reinhart-Levine for this appointment as District Judge for the Eighth District in Montana and am happy to respond to any questions.

Sincerely, Jean Curtiss, retired Missoula County Commissioner 1419 Howell Street, Missoula, MT 59802 (cell) 406-370-0393



CONNER & MARR, PLLP

Dennis Patrick Conner Keith Douglas Marr J. R. Conner Attorneys at Law

520 Third Avenue North P.O. Box 3028 • Great Falls, MT 59403-3028 Telephone: (406) 727-3550 • Fax: (406) 727-1640

Kitty Agostinelli, Legal Assistant Clari Davis, Legal Assistant

September 21, 2020

Sent via email to: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

RE: Letter of Support for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Ms. Menzies and Commission Members:

I am privileged to write a letter of support on behalf of Michele Reinhart Levine. I urge the Commission to recommend Michele for appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Michele has an incredible work ethic. She has worked tirelessly over the years as an advocate for injured workers, abused and neglected children, victims of domestic violence, and other underprivileged populations who might otherwise go unheard. She represented Missoulians in House District 97 as a three-term State Representative. She has worked in the private sector and for governmental entities. In short, Michele has a diverse background which helps her communicate and identify with people from all walks of life.

Michele has always championed equal access to justice. She has earned the respect of her peers in how she tackles complex legal matters with dignity and grace. Michele has the fortitude and disposition to meet the challenges of the crowded Eight Judicial District Court dockets. Yet, she adheres to the highest of professional and ethical standards. Michele would be a wonderful asset to the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Please contact me should you wish to discuss Michele's qualifications further. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Keith D. Marr



CONTACT@MCGARVEYLAW.COM

MCGARVEYLAW.COM

406-752-5566

345 1ST AVE EAST KALISPELL, MT 59901

September 21, 2020

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission.

On behalf of the undersigned attorneys of McGarvey Law, this letter offers our earnest support for Michelle Levine in her application for the judicial vacancy in the 8th Judicial District.

We have known Michelle personally and professionally over the years, and it is our experience with her remarkable demonstrated judgment, communication skills, dedication, and enthusiasm for her many endeavors that lead us to believe she will be an excellent jurist.

Michelle has dedicated her life to public service. From her work as a legislator, on the Board of Environmental Review, on the Board of Adjustment for Cascade County, and as an attorney with important litigation experience, she has demonstrated the characteristics that are the hallmark of a good judge. In each of these endeavors, Michelle is respected by all involved for weighing the facts presented, carefully considering the applicable legal standards, and making difficult decisions. Although the necessity to determine winners and losers often involves a difficult decision, it is an essential role for a judge. When faced with having to do just this, Michelle has maintained a dignified demeanor and respect for all involved

In sum, Michelle is intelligent, has remarkable judgment, and has the thoughtful and caring character to be a judge for the 8th Judicial District of the highest quality.

Thank each of you for your public service and consideration of our comments.

Yours sincerely, McGarvey Law

Roger Sullivan

Dustin Leftridge

Allan McGarvey

John Lacey ()

Jinnifer Marima

Ethan Welder 6



Patrick Flaherty
Daniel Flaherty
Paul Gallardo
1026 First Ave. South
P.O. Box 1968
Great Falls, MT 59403
Phone: (406) 727-8494
Fax: (406) 727-8537

September 17, 2020

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

Re: Letter in Support for Michelle Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Committee,

This letter serves as my support for Michelle Levine as District Court Judge for the Montana Eighth Judicial District. I have known Michelle personally and professionally for 10 years. She is known among her peers as an intelligent servant and advocate for the people. Those who know her can attest to this description. Throughout the years, I have seen Michelle bring a voice to those without one, and help those in need. But her strengths do not end at with her passions and drive. What stands out most to me is the gift Michelle has in connecting and communicating with others; again, those who know her understand what I am talking about. When Michelle interacts with others, she makes you feel like you are the most important person at the moment, and the topic is of the utmost importance. She is a great listener, recalls the smallest details, is empathetic, and engages with you. This, coupled with her intelligence and passion for justice, would make Michelle Levine a fair and excellent judge. I believe she can make a positive difference in our community, and I know that is truly the reason she is applying to be our next judge.

I strongly recommend this Committee nominate Michelle Levine.

Sincerely,

Paul Gallardo

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

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing to recommend and support the nomination of Michele Rheinhart Levine as district court judge for the Eighth Judicial District. Ms. Levine is a highly professional and ethical individual, with the balance, intellect and discipline required to be a district court judge.

I served two regular legislative sessions with Ms. Levine. We shared committee assignments in the House Business and Labor Committee, and the House Human Services Committee. Michele also had assignments during her three terms on the House Local Government, Natural Resources, and Rules Committees.

I observed Ms. Levine in her roles as a committee member, as a member of the full House in floor activities, and as a member of our caucus. I know her both in times of the pressure and stress of legislative work and in times of quiet reflection on important policy positions.

As a legislative peer, I know Ms. Levine to be keenly aware of legislative process and history, and to care strongly about legislative prerogative and intent. Michele would bring that experience and those particular values to the bench, and in a manner that transcends mere intellectual understanding.

I also have a keen appreciation for another quality Ms. Levine demonstrated time and again in our legislative work — a respect for other individuals and their perspectives, along with a willingness to listen with open ears. I was always taken with the respect Michele gave to everyone who came to the podium to testify in committee, and with her desire to make sure she understood what they had to say.

There is both discernment and compassion displayed in those practices. I believe those qualities will serve the public well in the court. I also believe Michele will use those same values in working with diverse perspectives to improve how the court could improve service to the public.

I also want the committee to know and reflect on another fine quality that is a constant in Ms. Levine's work – her perseverance in the pursuit of what is right. Michele has a dedication to pursuing the right answer or solution to an issue – not the easy solution, or the expedient

solution – but the correct solution. She has a certain "steeliness of resolve" to work until the right solution presents itself. We need more of that.

In summary, I think the Eighth District could not have a finer candidate than Michele Rheinhart Levine for District Court Judge.

Sincerely, Chuck Huntin

Chuck Hunter

Former Representative and House Minority Leader

Helena, MT

September 21st, 2020

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 Recommendation for Michele Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

We are writing today in support of Michele Reinhart Levine. We have both known Michele for around a decade, first during her time as a Representative in the Montana House and later as a law student and lawyer.

Michele is a true public servant, who believes deeply in making Montana a better place for us all. She will make an exceptional judge because of her empathy, genuine concern to help individuals improve their lives and inherent sense of fairness. Cascade county would be lucky to have her as judge and the judicial system will benefit from her experience in different branches of government.

Ultimately, a district court judge needs to demonstrate a commitment to fairness and equity. Michele would bring a unique perspective to the judiciary that would benefit all citizens of Montana. We highly recommend Michele and hope that you will see fit to pass her name on to Governor Bullock for consideration.

Sincerely.

Katie MCarlson

Vler R. Gernant

Terri Poe, M.S.

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

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission c/o Lois Menzies,

I'm writing to you today in support of my friend and colleague Michele Reinhart Levine for District Court Judge appointment. Michele and I have been confidants since our youth as Carroll College Environmental Studies students, and spent years living in Helena as young adults and fellow legislative interns. She has spent nearly her entire life living in Montana, working in an array of legal fields—from legislative intern to grassroots lobbyist to legal planner to highly esteemed lawyer. Her impressively well-rounded legal background makes her capable of drawing on many life experiences as well as the knowledge it takes to be a judge, and will only grow in her ability to do so.

Michele knows that fairness and equality are the cornerstone of the legal system, and it matters to her to stay true to those qualities as a lawyer and would assuredly do so as a judge. Just as an example, her time spent at the Montana Department of Justice focused on protecting consumers from fraud and protecting ballot access. She is also highly competent in her personal practice in family and civil litigation, providing her with the tools she will need to make important judgements.

Michele has the ambition, intelligence, common sense and commitment of an excellent lawyer, combined with the open mind and understanding of an admirable human being, to make her one excellent candidate as District Court Judge. I highly recommend Mrs. Michele Reinhart Levine to the Cascade County District Court Judge vacancy.

Sincerely,

Terri Poe, M.S.

September 20, 2020

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 Recommendation for Michele Reinhart-Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

My name is Haley Nelson, and I am writing to recommend Michele Reinhart-Levine for the Eighth Judicial District Court Judgeship. I am a Special Assistant Attorney General with the Office of Legal Services for the Montana Department of Labor and Industry in Helena, Montana. I worked with Michele on a case before the Workers' Compensation Court, and she is a strong advocate for her client and hard-working, thoughtful attorney.

Michele brings an important perspective to lawyering based on her years of experience before attending law school. I first met Michele in 2009 when she served in the Montana House of Representatives. Her intelligence, work ethic, willingness to listen, and ability to consider different perspectives on many issues was readily apparent. Michele has always been able to distill and articulate pertinent information when presenting any bill or idea to anyone. She was a very effective legislator who could work with members of any party and people from any background. A strong work ethic, research skills, and analyzing a lot of information from different perspectives are all essential skills for any judge, and Michele mastered these skills in a professional setting long before she attended law school.

I was fortunate enough to connect with Michele again when we both attend law school at the University of Montana. Michele was two years ahead of me, but she was quick to welcome me into law school and the legal profession, and she has remained a supportive friend and mentor ever since.

Most of all, Michele is guided by strong personal ethics, respect for our government, and the rule of law. She believes in public service and seeing justice served in our communities inside and outside the courtroom. I encourage you to recommend Michele to Governor Bullock for appointment for the Eighth Judicial District Judgeship.

Sincerely,

Haley A. Nelson

Haley A. Nelson, Esq. Helena, Montana

Sharon Patton-Griffin 256 Dune Drive Great Falls, MT 59404 pattongriffin@yahoo.com

September 21, 2020

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

Re: Public Comment in support of Michele Levine's application for District Court Judge in the Eighth Judicial District

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's nomination to the District Court Judgeship for the Eighth Judicial District in Cascade County.

As retired educator with forty-three years of experience working with children and parents from all walks of life, I have had experience with various courts and their impacts on people's lives. I understand the importance of the judges and courts in a functioning democracy that provides opportunities for all to live successfully.

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg provided our nation with the model of such a judge in such a court. A quote from her reflects the one of the reasons that I support Michele for the position of District Court Judgeship for the Eighth Judicial District in Cascade County. Here it is:

"To make life a little better for people less fortunate than you, that's what I think a meaningful life is. One lives not just for oneself but for one's community."

I am certain that Michele demonstrates the intellectual acuity and the legal expertise required for this judicial appointment. The quality, to me, that made Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg exceptional among all judges was not her intellectual or legal ability, it was her recognition of her humanity and, hence, her connection with all in her community. I know that Michele has that recognition. She devotes hours in service to our community ... above and beyond her service in her employment and her service to her family.

Michele is exactly the kind of woman of whom Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg would approve. Her words on leadership, "Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you," describes the leadership style that Michele Reinhart Levine embodies and with which she will lead in her courtroom.

I enthusiastically support Michelle Reinhart Levine's appointment to the Eight Judicial District Court. I respectfully request that her name be forwarded to the Governor for his consideration.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sharon Patton-Griffin, Ed.D. GRPS – Retired pattongriffin@yahoo.com (406) 899-5917

VIA EMAIL ONLY: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

Re: Letter of Support for Michele Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I was appointed the Secretary of Transportation at the Washington State Department of Transportation by Governor Jay Inslee in 2016 and confirmed by the Washington State Senate in 2017. Over the last 40 years I have held leadership roles in the public and private sector, as an experienced land use and transportation engineer, planner and program manager. I was previously the Director of the Office of Planning and Grants, overseeing planning, permitting, code enforcement, floodplain management, and historic preservation for the City and County of Missoula, from 2007 to 2010.

While in Missoula I supervised Michele Levine and her division where she served as a land use planner. Michele managed complex re-zoning and subdivision project applications for the City and the County. She managed the application review process and created staff reports and drafted findings of fact and conclusions of law for consideration by City and County elected officials in collaboration with citizens, developers, and local elected officials, as required by local regulations and Montana law. Michele was hard working, dedicated, respectful, and professional in carrying out her duties. She delivered effective and articulate presentations and staff reports to local governing bodies, while managing controversial projects.

Michele worked with stakeholders statewide to improve statutes and regulations to better serve communities. For example, when she took leave from her planning position in 2009 to serve in the legislature, she successfully carried and passed legislation to:

- improve floodplain laws;
- increase transportation funding for local road projects;
- use graywater in commercial and multifamily structures; and
- to provide uniform standards for certificates of survey and final subdivision plats.

Michele worked across the aisle with Republicans in a bi-partisan way to get things done.

Michele treats people with civility and respect. She had the discipline, intelligence, ethics, and grit to juggle her job duties with campaigning for office, preparing legislation, and while training for a marathon and several half-marathons. Michele has the intellect, discernment,

and temperament to be an effective Judge. Please contact me with any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Roger M. Millar, PE, FASCE, FAICP

301 N. Beattie St. Helena, MT 59601 codygeneferguson@gmail.com

21 September 2020

Montana Judicial Nomination Commission Montana Supreme Court 215 N. Sanders St. #323 Helena, MT 59601

Dear members of the Montana Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing to recommend Michele Reinhart Levine for the District Court Judgeship in Cascade County. I've known Michele for more than twenty years as a friend and colleague and know her to be a person of the utmost integrity with a deep commitment to fairness, justice, and the rule of law and to public service. She would make a fine addition to the court.

I first met Michele when we both attended Carroll College in Helena. What impressed me about her then and what I think endures in her character is her sense of justice and fairness, her willingness to listen, and her incredible work ethic. Michele is a thoughtful, contemplative person who seeks to understand where people are coming from and then tries to find productive solutions to problems. In courses and as a member of the Carroll community, Michele sought to bring people together while keeping in mind that we can all always do better.

I observed this when we worked together for the nonprofit Northern Plains Resource Council from 2002-2005 as lobbyists in the Montana legislature and as community organizers. Of particular note from that time, Michele was tasked with managing the Good Neighbor Agreement—an innovative, legally-binding arrangement between the Stillwater Mining Co., local community organizations in Stillwater County and Sweet Grass Counties, and the Northern Plains Resource Council to allow the mining of critical platinum and palladium minerals to continue while protecting water quality and the public health, safety, and quality of life in neighboring communities. In that role, Michele had to navigate between multiple competing interests and, at times, challenging personalities, to effectively forge solutions. She did her homework and succeeded and the Good Neighbor Agreement continues to be regarded as a model for how natural resource development can be done responsibly and sustainably. While I was out of state during the years in which she served as a representative from Missoula in the Montana legislature, I observed from afar that she applied these characteristics and hard work to representing her district. And now, in her current position representing workers in workers compensation disputes, she applies her ingrained sense of fairness and justice and work ethic to finding fair and equitable solutions for people injured on the job.

From my perspective, it is hard to imagine anyone who will be more committed to the work of fairly considering and applying the law in Montana. Michele will bring compassion,

thoughtfulness, her keen mind and devotion to the position in Cascade County. I can't recommend her highly enough. Thank you for your service and for your consideration.

Best Regards,

Cody Ferguson, Ph.D. (History)

September 21, 2020

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

Dear Members of the Commission:

I am writing to enthusiastically support the nomination of Michele Reinhart Levine to the position of Eighth Judicial District Judgeship. I have known Michele for almost two decades, since we attended Carroll College and competed on the school's debate team together. I immediately admired her for her intelligence, earnestness, and passion for equity and justice, qualities that will serve her well as a district judge.

Shortly after college, Michele represented Missoula in the Montana House of Representatives. That she chose such an arduous form of public service at an early stage in her career tells you all you need to know about Michele. She works hard and does her homework, and she is dedicated to the people of Montana.

Michele's legal career has focused on personal injury, workers' compensation, and family law. She is familiar with many aspects of the judicial system and has done extensive pro bono work. Just as she has in her previous public service, as district judge Michele will work to make the court system better serve the people.

The Court will be stronger for Michele's service. I strongly urge her nomination.

Sincerely,

Annie Hanshew Helena, Montana 406-475-2131



Anthony Johnstone

Helen & David Mason Professor of Law Affiliated Professor of Public Administration 32 Campus Drive Missoula, MT 59812-6552 (406) 243-6711 anthony.johnstone@umontana.edu

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

Re: Recommendation for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission,

I write in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's nomination to Montana's 8th Judicial District. Michele demonstrates a rare combination of deliberation, compassion, and legal talent that would make her an outstanding judge. I enthusiastically recommend her for nomination as well as appointment.

Michele served as a law clerk in the Office of the Montana Attorney General under my supervision in my former position as Solicitor. She came to our office after being selected for the ABA's prestigious Janet Steiger Fellowship for consumer protection law through a competitive national application process. Our work covered a broad range of issues over an exceptionally busy docket. She worked closely with me in two civil matters. In the first case, she prepared me for a Ninth Circuit argument on a difficult constitutional issue. She quickly got up to speed on the detailed factual record and largely conflicting case law on the question, and helped reframe central arguments in the appeal. In the second case she navigated an even more difficult procedural question with exhaustive research in a very thinly litigated subfield of jurisdiction. In both cases she completed her work well before deadline, and complemented it with several insightful dialogues. Michele also prepared a winning criminal appeal in the Montana Supreme Court and assisted in several consumer protection investigations.

In the Department of Justice, the School of Law, and in subsequent interactions, I have found Michele to be an uncommonly good listener. This skill translates into an ability to understand and analyze a wide range of arguments. Throughout her career, she has delivered on her deep commitment to public service. Montana would benefit greatly in her continuation of this record of public service on the bench.

Sincerely,

ANTHONY JOHNSTONE

Helen & David Mason Professor of Law



September 21, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission

Attn: Lois Menzies, Office of Court Administrator

Re: 8th Judicial District Court Nominee Michele Reinhart Levine

PO Box 203005

Helena, Mt 59620-3005

mt.supremecourt@mt.gov

Dear Nomination Committee,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Michele Reinhart Levine for the 8th Judicial District Court seat in Cascade County.

I was fortunate enough to meet Michele as a member of Jr. League. While on the board of Jr. League of Great Falls, Michele was very organized, helping in any way she could with fundraisers and community events. It is very apparent that Michele has a desire to better our city and state and she is an asset to our community.

Years later, I was even more fortunate to get to know Michele and her family on a personal level by helping them professionally. She is down-to-earth, easy to talk to, and fair. However, Michele can be tough. She knows what she wants and has worked to achieve her goals.

It is without reservation that I believe Michele would make an incredible judge and I highly recommend her name be forwarded to the Governor for his consideration on this appointment.

Sincerely,

Stacy Everhart, REALTOR®

Dustin Young and Company

stacyeverhartrealtor@gmail.com

406-403-6766

1420 Marketplace Dr

Great Falls, Mt 59404

VIA EMAIL ONLY: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

Re: Letter of Support for Michele Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

Since 1974, I have lived in Great Falls, with my husband Dr. Charles Jennings. We raised our four children here. I have been active in the community for decades and had a hand in helping establish the Paris Gibson Square Museum, the HANDS Great Falls Public Schools elementary after school program, the River's Edge Trail, and the Island Range Chapter of the Montana Wilderness Association. The Great Falls Public Schools Foundation is also one of my projects, as is Get Fit Great Falls and Great Falls Rising. I am a former board president of the YWCA, the Junior League of Great Falls, the GF Symphony Assn. and the Montana Wilderness Association.

Michele and I have crossed paths many times over the years, when working for and attending various community events and functions. Michele shares my passion for contributing to our local community. She has also been the President of the Junior League of Great Falls, as well as Vice President, Membership Chair, and Nominating Chair. Junior League helps train women leaders through voluntarism. While she was an active member with Junior League, she helped create the new grocery store exhibit at the Children's Museum. She also helped with Junior League's donations of science fair judging and giving money to the Science, Technology, Art, and Math (STEAM) Expo for Great Falls Public Schools. Her organizational skills led to the success of the annual Cabaret for a Cause, a community fundraiser for Junior League and the Children's Receiving Home, an emergency crisis shelter for abused and neglected children. Another Junior League activity for Michele has been organizing rummage sales for Toby's House, a crisis respite childcare facility to help prevent child abuse and neglect. Other volunteer activities are Kairos Youth Homes and the Cascade County Zoning Board of Adjustments.

Through Carol's List she and I have worked together to identify women leaders in the community, helping to recruit more women to run for office and to have more women participate in all levels of government. Michele has attended community forums that I have organized, including one highlighting the recent school levy, urging citizens to be informed about the GF Public Schools budget and the importance of the funding formula.

Michele has shown her commitment to bettering our community. With the heart of a volunteer, she cares about the effectiveness and efficiency of all branches of government. She will uphold and safeguard the values we all share, including justice, fairness, liberty, and equality, for all. For these reasons, please include her on your list of names to send the Governor. As shown by her community involvement and her public comments, she has broad community support and would serve the Eighth Judicial District well.

Best wishes,

Gerry Jennings Great Falls, Montana



2 Railroad Square, Suite C • P.O. Box 1525 Great Falls, Montana 59403-1525 P: (406) 268-1000 • F: (406) 761-2610 email@marralawfirm.com • marralawfirm.com

September 21, 2020

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

RE: Eighth Judicial District Court, Judicial Candidate, Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I thoroughly support Mrs. Michele Reinhart Levine's application for the appointment as the new Eighth Judicial District Court Judge.

Mrs. Levine is a well respected member of the Bar in Cascade County. She is and will always be a dedicated public servant. Mrs. Levine's service as a Montana State Representative for House District 97 reflects her public service.

Mrs. Levine has the work ethic and judicial temperament that are necessary to be an effective impartial judge. Her empathy and understanding are traits that a judge needs in this day and age.

Please submit Mrs. Michele Reinhart Levine's name to the governor as your top choice for the appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Sincerely yours,

Marra, Evenson & Levine, P.C.

Thomas A. Marra

E-mail: tmarra@marralawfirm.com

TAM/blm



600 DEWEY BLVD POST OFFICE BOX 3329 BUTTE, MT 59702
TEL 406.494.8890 THE MCKEONLAW.COM FAX 406.494.7066

September 22, 2020

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

Re: Michele Reinhart-Levine

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

It is my honor to support the application of Michele Reinhart-Levine for the position of District Court Judge in the Montana Eighth Judicial District. I have known Michele, professionally for a number of years. Michele has the experience, competency, compassion, determination and empathy necessary of any Montana district court judge. She is a person who brings knowledge and passion to her practice of the law and zealous representation of her clients.

Michele will serve as a fair judge, who will make the right decisions in both the criminal and civil arenas. I believe Michele to be the most experienced and qualified applicant for the position of the Eighth Judicial District Judge. I cannot stress any further how highly I recommend her and respectfully implore the Commission to strongly consider Michele to fill the seat vacated by the Honorable Judge Greg Pinski.

Respectfully,

McKEON LAW, PLLC

Michael J. McKeon Jr.

FAURE HOLDEN attorneys at law pc

Jean E. Faure . Jason T. Holden . Katie R. Ranta

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: Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I write this letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine. I heard of Michele as a force in the Montana Legislature before I met her. She served three terms for House District 97 while attending law school. I later came to know Michele on a more personal level when I moved to Great Falls and joined Faure Holden Attorneys at Law in 2015.

Michele is dedicated to serving the people of Montana. She has experience both making law and practicing it. She knows the role and importance of the judiciary in our democracy, both on the national and state level. She has experience in both civil litigation, criminal law, and family law.

Michele is also dedicated to the people of Cascade County. She has practiced law here since her graduation from law school in 2012. She is actively involved not only in the legal community but volunteers her time to our community's struggling youth and serves on the County Zoning Board.

Michele will protect, preserve, and promote our Montana values within the framework of Montana law. She will serve all Montanans and ensure that all litigants get a fair shake in her court. Jean Faure joins me in recommending that Michele's name be forwarded to Governor Bullock to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Pinski.

Very truly yours,

Katie R Ranta

<u>LEGN</u>

Jaure

FAURE HOLDEN attorneys at law po

PO BOX 2466 GREAT FALLS, MT 59403 • 1314 CENTRAL AVE. • GREAT FALLS, MT 59401

PHONE: 406.452.6500 • FAX: 406.452.650 • www.faureholden.com



LEONA WALDHAUSEN COLVIN

LEONA@NEMONT.NET

CONTACT

PO Box 503 Culbertson, MT 59218 406.787.5599

JUDICIAL NOMINATION COMMISSION

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

September 23, 2020

Dear Members of the Nomination Commission: It is with total confidence and pride that I write this letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for Eighth Judicial District Judge.

I first met Michele when I worked with her as a community organizer. Our effort to protect Montana's natural resources and rural way of life was at times very stressful, controversial, and demanding. In the face of difficult circumstances, I found her to be enthusiastic, hard-working, focused, and extremely talented at achieving the goals of our organization, despite limited funds and high staff turn-over.

Several years later, while Michele was serving in the Montana Legislature, she visited the northeastern part of the state, where I live. Rather than relying on various reports about our situation in the Bakken Oilfield, she took the time to inform herself. Once again, I was very impressed with her hard-work and level-headed approach to learning about local struggles related to the oil-boom. Upon meeting local residents, she was humble and showed respect, kindness, empathy, humor, and professionalism. All that met her felt heard and they were thankful for her attention to detail.

Michele would make an excellent judge, and I truly hope she will be selected.

Thank you kindly for opportunity to support this nomination. Warmest Regards,
Leona Colvin

Mark D. Meyer 3229 3rd Avenue South Great Falls, MT 59405

September 21, 2020

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: Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Ms. Menzies:

Please accept this letter as my strong recommendation in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application for the position of District Court Judge with the Eighth Judicial District Court.

For the past three years I have worked as a staff attorney for the Montana State Fund. In that position, I have handled a number of claims where Michele represented the injured worker. Based upon those interactions, I am confident Michele would make an excellent judge. Michele has always demonstrated a strong work ethic and, as a result, has always been well-prepared to advocate for her clients. Michele has also consistently displayed an ability to assess and apply the governing legal authority to secure the best result for her client. Michele's experience in representing individuals in the workers' compensation system certainly provided her with an appreciation of how the legal system impacts individuals in that system, which will necessarily provide her with an ability to relate to the individuals and entities that appear before her. I firmly believe Michele's experience and background, along with her personal attributes, make her an excellent candidate to fill the judicial vacancy in the Eighth Judicial District and strongly support her application.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Meyer

Mark D. Meyer

MDM



September 22, 2020

VIA EMAIL

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

L. JASON BRYAN

jason@nwmontanalaw.com *Also admitted in Wisconsin

FRANCESCA DISTEFANO

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406.890.1880 406.407.7355

877.717.8809 fax

www.nwmontanalaw.com

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine – Cascade County Judicial Position

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I write to support Michelle Reinhart Levine's application for appointment to the Eighth Judicial District vacancy. Michelle would be a great addition to the bench.

Michelle and I were law school classmates. I remember being impressed with her presence in the classroom. She stood out as compassionate and inquisitive. We also worked together as interns with the Missoula County Attorney's Office. She worked several cases to trial during law school. She was a strong and fair advocate in that setting. She was also someone who could be counted on for support.

I have no doubt that she possess qualities to be a great district court judge. She has a history of public service and commitment to the legal community. She would also be an ally in helping regular folks receive fair access to the courts as demonstrated through her commitment to pro bono work. I am confident that she will make timely well-reasoned decisions because she has a desire to gather the facts and a very strong work ethic.

I provide my full support to Michele Reinhart Levine for Cascade County Judge and urge the Commission to forward her name to the Governor.

Sincerely, BRYAN, DISTEFANO & MATTINGLEY, PLLP

/s/ David A Mattingley

FROM THE DESK OF

MELISSA NOOTZ

September 22, 2020

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

Sent via email: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

To the Judicial Nomination Commission.

I am writing this letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for the vacant position of district court judge for the Eighth Judicial District (Cascade County). Serving as a Livingston City Commissioner, a non-partisan position, I understand the importance of all leaders actively engaging with community members in order to understand their concerns.

Michele has served communities across Montana from the plains to the mountains, from rural to urban communities, and with people from all walks of life including farmers, ranchers, families, business owners, government officials, and multiple tribal communities. She consistently works to help and support everyday Montanans to engage and commit to serve their own communities across all levels and branches of government. This unwavering core value of making government work better for the people is blatantly demonstrated through her actions.

Michele is undeniably electable and her track record of winning three general elections and serving Montana HD 97 in Missoula proves it. Garnering support across parties, she was appointed to the Cascade County Zoning Board of Adjustments by both Republican and Democrat County Commissioners. Her breadth of experience working productively on potentially controversial issues including water and zoning issues give her the credibility to chair public meetings, allow people to be heard, and move business along.

Demonstrated experience engaging her community, understanding issues and how these perspectives relate to her work in government, and using her deep experience

with the constitution - Michele is equipped and able to make fair decisions for Montana communities. Her track record demonstrates strong judicial temperament including fairness, commitment to equality, and hard work ethic.

Respectfully,

Melissa Nootz

Brenda C. Desmond Missoula, Montana 406 721-6717 bcdesmond@msn.com

September 22, 2020

Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

This is an enthusiastic letter of support for the appointment of Michele Reinhart Levine to the Eighth Judicial District Court. Her intelligence, experience, and dedication to access to justice make her highly qualified for the position.

I have known Ms. Levine since 2007 when she campaigned for election to the Montana House of Representatives for the district in which I live. I was impressed then with her hard work – on her campaign and then as a legislator. My other initial impressions of her were that she was very smart and thoughtful, openminded, engaging and committed to public service. She has continued to demonstrate these qualities since then.

She served our district for three terms. She was always open to comments and questions from her constituents and was known as an excellent problem solver and tireless legislator. Our paths crossed again during her law school years where she again demonstrated the qualities that will make her an excellent district court judge: integrity, energy, commitment to justice for all, and willingness to listen and learn.

Ms. Levine's legal career has equipped her well to serve as district court judge. She has a breadth of experience in civil litigation, administrative law, family law, child protection and criminal law. She had invaluable experience in statutory interpretation, constitutional law and state government law as a legislator.

I urge you to forward Ms. Levine's name to the governor.

Rund C Usma

Brenda C Desmond



Roland B. Durocher | Jeffrey G. Winter

September 22, 2020
Via email ONLY to: Imenzies@mt.gov

Judicial Nomination Commission c/o Lois Menzies PO Box 203005 Helena, MT 59620

RE: Support of Michele Reinhart Levine for Eighth Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Commission Members:

My name is I am writing you in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's appointment as District Court Judge in the Eighth Judicial District for the vacancy left by Hon. Gregory Pinski's resignation. I have known Michele since she began practicing law in Great Falls in 2012. I consider her a friend and have the utmost respect for her as a professional colleague.

The Commission is fortunate to have a number of well-qualified applicants for this position. However, Michele's qualifications for the position of District Court Judge stand out even in a field of exceptional applicants. Although Michele is one of the younger applicants, that does not mean she lacks experience. Michele's resume is impressive, to say the least. Her extensive and diverse background makes her well qualified to take on the demanding role of a District Court Judge.

In addition to Michele's professional qualifications, she also has the character and demeanor required of a judge. I have always found Michele to be pleasant, respectful and patient regardless of the situation she is facing. She is thoughtful, deliberate and fair. As judge, I am confident that Michele will carefully consider the arguments presented, and then rule according to what she believes is right, based on the law and facts involved. This is the type of justice Montanans need, not someone who is predisposed to rule in favor of one side or the other. I know Michele will fulfill this role in an exemplary fashion.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine and for your service on the Judicial Nominating Commission.

Very Truly Yours

Jeffrey G. Winter Durocher & Winter

406.727.4020 | fax 406.771.7319

 From:
 Menzies, Lois

 To:
 Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 9:59:05 PM

From: Abigail Brown <abby@mtwaterlaw.com> Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 5:58 AM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment in Support of Michele Reinhart Levine for 8th Judicial District

Court Judge

Dear Ms. Menzies and the Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am Abigail R. Brown, managing attorney and founder of ARB Law Group located in Helena, Montana. I write in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for the position of district court judge for the Eighth Judicial District (Cascade County). Michele is well-qualified for the position through her experience, education, temperament, dedication to public service, and active engagement with Montana's legal community.

I do not recall exactly when I first met Michele, whether it was during her time as a State Legislator or a law student, but I do remember being impressed by Michele when I met her. Michele is a dedicated public servant who is commitment to serving the people of Montana to the best of her abilities. Michele is an astute listener and thoughtful attorney; she would make important contributions to as a member of the judiciary.

I got to know Michele well during law school as I was her teaching assistant for legal research and writing. As a student, Michele was eager to learn and always came prepared to class. Michele's work ethic is unmatched – if she commitments to something, she will see it through and see it through well. Thus, when Michele tells me that part of her objective in applying for this judicial position is to catch up the civil docket, I have no doubt she will accomplish that goal.

In sum, Michele is an exceptional candidate for the position district court judge for the 8th Judicial District and I strongly urge the Commission to forward her name to Chief Justice McGrath for consideration.

Sincerely,

Abigail R. Brown

Attorney at Law she/her/hers

ARB Law Group P.O. Box 1182 7 W. Sixth Ave, Ste 2A Helena, Montana 59624

Telephone: (406) 457-5494 Email: abby@mtwaterlaw.com

www.mtwaterlaw.com [mtwaterlaw.com]

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CARLSON LAW, PLLC

TREVOR CARLSON, ATTORNEY AT LAW

P.O. Box 3703 600 CENTRAL AVE., SUITE 412 GREAT FALLS, MONTANA 59403

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PHONE: (406) 750 - 0250

FAX: (406) 720 - 7919

September 20, 2020

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

> Public Comment on 8th Judicial District Judge Applicants RE:

To the Judicial Nomination Commission:

My name is Trevor Carlson, and I have been practicing law in Central Montana since 2013. I have a solo practice in Great Falls, Montana, that provides services for criminal defense, family law, landlord-tenant law, and civil litigation. I routinely appear in about a dozen counties around the area.

I am writing this letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for the Eighth Judicial District Court Judge position.

I have known Ms. Reinhart Levine since 2010, when I began law school at the Alexander Blewett III School of Law. Ms. Reinhart Levine was a year ahead of me, graduating in 2012. In 2017, started working at a firm in Great Falls and became re-acquainted with her as a member of the Cascade County bar.

Ms. Reinhart Levine recently served as the Guardian ad Litem on a family law case I litigated in Cascade County District Court. The case dealt with the heavy allegations of sexual abuse of a two-and-one-half-year-old child.

From the beginning of her involvement in the case, Ms. Reinhart Levine was attentive, thorough, and determined to ascertain the best interests of the child. She took her duties very seriously, leaving no stone unturned in her investigation of the case. She compiled medical and counseling records and spoke to numerous individuals with knowledge of the matter.

She also spent several hours listening to my client's concerns and fears. She was always accessible and willing to discuss the case. Her final Guardian ad Litem report was detailed and well-reasoned. When the final hearing came, the judge asked us to attempt settlement of the case before the hearing. This turned into a full day of settlement discussions, with Ms. Reinhart Levine helping to facilitate the negotiations as an ad-hoc mediator. The case was ultimately resolved without a final hearing.

My client was a single mother with limited means. Throughout the case, we were under the impression that Ms. Reinhart Levine would be compensated for her time. Truthfully, her involvement was so in-depth that I began to worry her final bill would be a crushing financial burden for my client. After the case was settled, I asked Ms. Reinhart Levine when she would be submitting her final bill. I was shocked to hear she was not going to charge for her services. This single case undoubtedly took up a great deal of her time.

As an attorney who has served as Guardian ad Litem and as a pro bono attorney on other matters, I know how difficult it is to devote hours to a case you will receive no compensation for when paying clients are also vying for your attention to their matters. Ms. Reinhart Levine worked on this case as though she was billing top-dollar to a client with unlimited funds. Yet, in reality, she was working for free. To me, that is the hallmark of how pro bono work should be handled, and I do not think the court could have appointed a better Guardian ad Litem.

Ms. Reinhart Levine's patience and work ethic were astounding. I have no doubt she would make an excellent district court judge. She is compassionate and willing to listen before making a decision. A district court judge is someone who must uphold justice and make sure <u>all</u> litigants have a fair proceeding. I have no doubt she will safeguard the rights of everyone that appears before her.

Sincerely,

Trevor Carlson

Carlson Law, PLLC

 From:
 Menzies, Lois

 To:
 Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

Date: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:23:32 PM

From: Christina Barsky <christina.barsky@gmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 2:50 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment for Michele Reinhart Levine - 8th Judicial District

To the Commission -

I write this note in support of Michele Reinhart Levene's nomination to a Cascade County District Court Judgeship. I am an Assistant Professor in the Max S. Baucus Institute's Department of Public Administration & Policy at the Alexander Blewett III School of Law (University of Montana). It is my belief that Michele's motivating values, track record, and discipline ensure that she will be a steadfast voice for equality, equity, and justice on the bench. I believe that Michele's passion for public service and dedication to gender representation are worthy of particular note.

I have known Michele for a number of years, first meeting her as a professional acquaintance when she served as a representative for Montana HD 97. In the years since, Michele has become a friend. I've seen Michele's dedication to equity and women's leadership pervade not only her professional, but also her personal life, as she became a founding member of an organization I co-founded, Electable, LLC - an organization working to help women run, win, and lead in local elected office.

It takes a lot of work to run for, win, and succeed in elected office. Add to this identifying as a woman and youth, and the task seems almost untenable. Yet, Michele won her seat in the legislature before the age of 30. I use this example to draw attention to some of the qualities Michele brings to the table: she is an undeniably hard worker, who seeks out and listens to a diversity of perspectives, and does the homework necessary to educate herself before making a decision. Through the lens of my field, public administration, Michele stands out as a public servant that embodies efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, responsiveness, and equity.

It is my belief that together, these elements produce the temperament necessary (and desired) to serve in the capacity of a district court judge. I urge you to give her the highest consideration.

Christina S. Barsky	

Christina S Barsky, Ph.D., M.P.A. Missoula, Mont. 612 / 419.1949 | 406/ 426.1726

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:36 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Sterling Laudon <sterling.laudon@gmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 3:11 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Reinhart-Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Members:

I write to express my enthusiastic support for Michele Reinhart-Levine's application to fill the vacancy left by Judge Pinski in the Eighth Judicial District Court. She would be honest, fair, and compassionate. She has all of the qualities needed to be an excellent judge and would be a dedicated public servant.

I first met Michele in law school when we were members of the University of Montana School of Law class of 2012. Coming into law school as a member of the legislature, Michele worked on many of the laws that the rest of us were learning in class. Michele knew the law and knew why it was the law. In a competitive environment, Michele always contributed to classroom discussion and improved the learning environment for her classmates. From the beginning, Michele was an enthusiastic scholar of the law. Her education and her many varied experiences in practice since will be an asset on the bench.

Michele is one of those people who takes on many responsibilities and somehow finds time to do them all superbly--running a busy law practice, volunteering on community boards, and parenting two children. In every way, Michele is someone who makes her community a better place to live. I have no doubt she would be an excellent judge for the people of Cascade County.

Respectfully,

/s/

Sterling Laudon 406.672.6870 sterling.laudon@gmail.com

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:37 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Jennifer Euell <jenemt@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 3:12 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Reinhart Levine

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm writing in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application for the District Judgeship in Cascade County. I have known Michele for many years, and believe she would make an excellent Judge. Michele has a bright intellect, a compassionate heart and a warm, but calm and grounded manner. She has broad experience beyond her deep knowledge of law. She has shown her dedication to serving others in the past, particularly those who face the most challenges. I have no doubt she would continue to serve with dedication and fairness in this position.

Please consider this letter a vote of confidence and a shining endorsement of Michele Reinhart Levine as a new District Judge in Cascade County.

Sincerely,

Jen Euell

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:38 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Stephanie Baucus < Stephanie.Baucus@moultonbellingham.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 3:20 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,; Menzies, Lois

Cc: Stephanie Baucus

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Judicial Applicant - Michele Reinhart-Levine

Dear Ms. Menzies,

Thank you for speaking with me today. As I mentioned, I understand that my nonprofit board colleague and professional friend Michele Reinhart-Levine has applied to fill a vacancy for a judicial position in Great Falls, MT. I realize that the deadline is later today, so please excuse my brevity and informality, but I didn't want to miss the opportunity to provide support for Ms. Reinhart-Levine's candidacy.

I have served on a nonprofit board with her and worked with her on another nonprofit organization, and I can say that she is an extremely talented lawyer and public servant. She is genuine, thorough, well-meaning, and fair. I think she would make a very conscientious and fair judge. She values justice, integrity, and fairness, and I think she would be a welcome addition to Montana's judicial bench.

Please let me know if I can provide any other information in support of her candidacy. Thank you so much for your consideration. Take care, Stephanie

Stephanie Baucus

Counsel

MOULTON BELLINGHAM PC

27 North 27th Street, Suite 1900, Billings, MT 59101

PO Box 2559, Billings, MT 59103-2559

Office: (406) 248-7731; Direct Dial: (406) 238-1583 Cell Phones: (406) 876-1939; (202) 236-9134 stephanie.baucus@moultonbellingham.com

https://www.moultonbellingham.com/attorney/43/Stephanie-Baucus [moultonbellingham.com]



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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 Recommendation for Michele Reinhart Levine for Eighth Judicial District Court Judge Nomination

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter to support Michele Reinhart Levine as an applicant for the current vacancy for district court judge in the Eighth Judicial District. I have known Michele since we were students together in law school at the University of Montana. I graduated from UM Law in the class of 2013, while Michele graduated in 2012. I am currently employed as an attorney with the State of Montana, and was, from 2013 to 2014, employed in private practice in Great Falls at the same time that time Michele was early in career with the law firm where she is now a shareholder. I can attest that Michele has spent the last several years since relocating to Great Falls dedicating herself to that community. When she moved from Missoula to Cascade County after law school, she sought with intention and purpose to make Great Falls her home, not just a place to live and, as a district court judge, I believe that she will bring this same spirit of community service.

Having known Michele for several years, I can attest to the fact that she possesses exactly the sort of experience, temperament, and dedication that one looks for in a district court judge. As an attorney, Michele's experience has primarily been in civil litigation, particularly workers compensation and personal injury, though, as her resume states, she also has a background in criminal law, administrative law, and environmental law. While these are the simple facts of Michele's practice history on a resume, there is far more to Michele than any resume could convey.

Michele's dedication to public service goes back many years from working as an organizer for community, Montana based environmental efforts through her years of service representing her legislative district in Missoula, and her service on non-profit boards, Michele has never stopped working for Montanans. I remember, even amid the stresses of law school, when most of us were primarily concerned about simply surviving the rigors of our classes and worrying about our future careers while trying to balance our personal lives, Michele took the time to serve her district in the state House. Through her years in the state House, Michele represented her portion of Missoula County honorably and professionally. It was well known that Michele earned the respect of her colleagues on all sides of our political, partisan divides. These same characteristics, passion for justice, balanced with fairness is exactly what one should want out of a district court judge.

The work of a district court judge is a serious undertaking – the caseloads are heavy, the work is, at times, monotonous, at times very complex, the hours can be long, and the lives of many are seriously impacted by the decisions made by a judge. From the wide discretion we

invest in judges for criminal sentencing, to the power a judge possesses over the lives of children in youth courts and youth-in-need-of care cases, to the authority over families in divorce/custody proceedings, and the lives impacted by personal injury cases, being a district court judge is a weighty responsibility. It is no hyperbole to say that lives can often hang in the balance, dependent on a district court judge's wisdom.

The Eighth Judicial District (arguably) seems to bear a disproportionate weight of criminal cases, cases impacting families and complex civil personal injury cases, as compared to some of Montana's other judicial districts. Michele has both the civil law experience needed for the Eighth Judicial District, the commitment to public service, and, most importantly, the dedication to fairness that this position requires. Replacing Judge Pinski, who also had a background in civil law, Michele would come into this position well prepared to handle the civil caseload.

As both a practicing Montana attorney and someone that has known Michele since law school, I can enthusiastically recommend Michele for this district court vacancy.

/s/ Bradley R. Jones Helena, MT



MILODRAGOVICH DALE STEINBRENNER. RC.

A I TO II N E TO

MICHAEL J. MILODRAGOVICH LON J. DALE GERALD W. STEINBRENNER PERRY J. SCHNEIDER* P. BRAD CONDRA HANNAH STONE

September 23, 2020

TIM E. DAILEY
MICHAEL D. BYBEE**
LIESEL SHOQUIST
RACHEL H. PARKIN
MICHAEL P. SHERWOOD
ALYSSA L. PROBST

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

VIA EMAIL ONLY: mtsupremecourta mt.gov

To the Judicial Nomination Commission:

This letter is written in support of Michele Reinhart-Levine's Judicial Application for District Court Judge in Cascade County.

I met Michele in law school when she presented as a guest speaker with respect to her work as a legislator. I was impressed with how articulate and engaging she was about her work. We became friends, and over the years I have reached out to Michele for advice or recommendations from everything from sippy cups to the Subsequent Injury Fund for comp clients. Her advice and thoughts are always spot on, and she makes time for a quick call even with her case load and busy household.

Michele's practice has been primarily in the civil and administrative arena, and her experience as a trial lawyer would lend well to the bench. She takes time to examine both sides of an issue, does her research, and strives to make stronger and better case law. As a judge, I firmly believe she would bring compassion, insight and sound logic to the matters over which she presides.

Finally, given her community involvement and role as a parent of young daughters, she would be a positive role model familiar with the challenges faced by those over whom she would preside. I believe this quality would greatly benefit Cascade County and our judiciary.

Sincerely,

MILODRAGOVICH, DALE & STEINBRENNER, P.C.

Hannah Stone

EMAIL: hstone a bigskylawyers.com

HS:sn

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:41 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Aaron Browning

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 3:28 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Judicial Nomination Commission, District Court Vacancy, Michele Reinhart Levine

September 23, 2020

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

Sent via e-mail to: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Dear Commission Members:

I would like to briefly add my voice to the folks recommending Michele Reinhart Levine be nominated to fill the district court vacancy in Great Falls.

I have known Michele since 2001. We met when she was an intern working on conservation policy before the Montana legislature and I was lobbying for a different conservation organization. We became fast friends and colleagues, as her kind, thoughtful, intelligent nature became quickly apparent. Even then, it was clear she diligently did her research, was always more-than-prepared, and ridiculously articulate with words, both written and spoken.

A few years later, I had the good luck to be able to hire Michele for a position as a field organizer based out of Billings, Montana. Comparing the applicants, there was no question Michele was the best choice.

As an organizer and advocate before the legislature, Michele worked with family farmers, ranchers, Native Americans, small business owners, and other rural Montanans to protect access to clean air and clean water, and safeguard Montana's unique and amazing quality of life. While Montanans may disagree on the specifics of policies in this regard, these are fundamental and universal values we all share, and it is a testament to Michele's character that she dove head first into the tough issues to try to make the state an even better place to live, work, and raise a family.

In this role, she excelled. As Michele's direct supervisor for a number of years, I can vouch for the thoughtfulness, care, and precision she brings to every project she undertakes. I can also vouch for the deep appreciation she has for people of good conscience who may disagree, and I have seen first hand her work with Montanans from all walks of life to find unique and collaborative solutions to issues that are contentious.

One of my proudest professional moments was when Michele ran for and won a seat in the Montana House of Representatives representing the Target Range area in Missoula County. While to some the word "Missoula" may translate to "liberal," I caution against painting with such a broad brush. The district in question, which has long since morphed into different ones, was rural and filled with folks from all different walks of life. Michele represented them well. I know, because I watched her.

While she had moved on to advance her professional career by that point, my heart was warmed as I was able to watch from the House gallery on more than one occasion as Michele passed piece of legislation after piece of legislation that brought Republicans, Democrats, and independents together, working across the aisle with a focus on local government, planning, and conservation issues.

I know the choice before you in these matters is never easy. I hope that you have an abundance of riches when it comes to potential candidates to consider and to nominate. While I have long since moved away from Montana, I can tell you that from my personal experience, witnessing, supervising, and working directly with Michele for a very long time that I believe she is more than qualified to take on this new role as judge fairly, ethically, and with the devotion to hard work and equanimity that the position requires.

Sincerely, Aaron Browning 2989 Perry St Denver, CO 80212

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:47 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Jim Molloy <jim@galliklawfirm.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 3:42 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Reinhart Levine: Eighth Judicial District Court Application

I submit this email in support of the application of Michele Reinhart Levine for appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court for Cascade County, Montana. I have known Michele for several years and had the opportunity work with her while I was in charge of Consumer Protection in the Attorney General's Office. She would be an outstanding Judge. She would treat litigants and their attorneys with respect at all times, and would decide cases based on the merits. She demonstrated her commitment to public service when she served as a Legislator, and has continued to demonstrate her commitment since.

I encourage the Judicial Nomination Commission to forward Michele's name to the Governor for consideration for appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Thank you,

Jim Molloy

This email may have been dictated using voice recognition software. Please excuse mistakes.

James P. Molloy

Gallik, Bremer & Molloy, P.C.

777 E. Main Street, Suite 203

PO Box 70

Bozeman MT 59771-0070

406.404.1728 (Office)

406.949.0340 (Cell)

Helena Office

2601 E. Broadway Helena MT 59601



ATTORNEYS: Neal P. DuBois Eric D. Mills Phoebe Marcinek DUBOIS MILLS, PLLC 104 4th Street N., Ste. 200 P.O. Box 1348 Great Falls, MT 59403 Phone: (406) 315.3242 Fax: (406) 727.1812

September 23, 2020

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

Re:

8th Judicial District Judge Position;

Support for Michele Levine

Dear Commissioners:

I am happy to support Michele Levine for the appointment to the vacancy left by Judge Pinski in the Eighth Judicial District Court, Cascade County. I have known Michele for several years both professionally and personally and I urge you to give serious consideration and your ultimate approval of Michele Levine for submission to the Governor as a finalist for this position.

Michele has an impeccable reputation for her zealous representation of Montanans and promoting access to justice by her selfless actions of pro bono and law clinic work in our community. Michele's commitment to public service and hard work is evident in her history serving in the Legislature, serving on various non-profit boards, becoming a young shareholder at her firm and, of course, raising two children and maintaining a healthy family life. Michele's law practice focused on civil personal injury and complex litigation situates her to efficiently handle the now backlog of civil cases.

I know several of the other candidates and do not envy your task or that of the Governor. However, I am confident Michele is the right candidate for the position, is capable of winning a general election and has the character, experience and ability we need on the in the district court. Thank you for your consideration of this endorsement and of Michele Levine's application.

Very truly yours,

DUBOIS MILLS, PLLC

Néal∕P. DuBois Attorney at Law

BECK, AMSDEN & STALPES, PLLC

Attorneys at Law

Attorneys: Monte D. Beck John L. Amsden Justin P. Stalpes Lindsay C. Beck Anthony F. Jackson 1946 Stadium Drive, Suite 1 Bozeman, MT 59715 Tel: (406) 586-8700 Fax: (406) 586-8960 E-mail: info@becklawyers.com Of Counsel: Michael G. Black

<u>Paralegals:</u> Natalie F. Phillips David W. McGoldrick Reid M. Beck

September 23, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission Office of Court Administrator P.O. Box 23005 Helena, MT 59620-3005 mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Re: Application of Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for appointment as a Judge in the Eighth Judicial District.

Michele has earned a reputation for being scholarly, hard-working and analytical. Her background and experience have prepared her for this role, and it is my belief in coming to know her that she would be a fantastic judge. Further, she has already demonstrated the ability to organize and run a campaign. Her experience as a legislator demonstrates that Michele is community-minded and unafraid of responsibility. Michele is a citizen of this state before anything, and I believe she will put in the work to always make her community a better place. I was certainly pleased when I heard that someone of her caliber and with her experience with a broad range of issues, both legal and legislative, was seeking this position. I hope that the Commission agrees and sends her name to the Governor.

Sincerely,

Justin P. Stalpes

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:34 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Barbara Bessette <bessette4montana@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 3:04 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Levine

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of Michele Levine to be appointed for the District Court Judge vacancy in Cascade County. We need people like her to be serving on the bench. She would be a voice for equality, equity and justice for all. She would be fair to all who come before her and never let politics play a role in any decision. She is a hard worker and someone with great amounts of integrity. Please consider her for this important position.

If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me wth the information below.

Thank you for you time in this important matter.

--

Barbara A. Bessette Representative House District 24 PO Box 1263 Great Falls, MT 59403 406.403.5656

Legislators are publicly elected officials. Legislator emails sent or received involving legislative business may be subject to the Right to Know provisions of the Montana Constitution and may be considered a "public record" pursuant to Montana law.

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:53 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Randy Gray <randygray@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 4:57 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] 8th Judicial District Vacancy- letter of support for Michele Reinhart-Levine

JUDICIAL NOMINATION COMMISSION c/o Lois Menzies Office of Court Administrator Helena, MT 59620 mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Re: 8th Judicial District Court vacancy

Dear Commission:

It is my pleasure to send a note of support for Michele Reinhart-Levine for this vacancy. I practiced law in that District for 30+ years, but have been retired the past 10 years. I was also a three term mayor of Great Falls. I know Michele by virtue of several volunteer projects over the past decade. She is a very good thinker, listener, and communicator. She is diligent, organized, patient, always prepared and articulate. She is passionate about public service, as demonstrated by her service for three terms in the Montana House of Representatives and her long time service with the guardian ad litem program. Her empathy comes through loud and clear. She is a well regarded and respected member of the legal community of this District with lots of hands on experience representing clients in a wide ranging private trial practice. Come to think about it, all of the above are the very attributes of a really good trial judge. Simply put, she would be a distinguished, fair minded, but no-nonsense District Judge.

Thanks for the chance to add my voice in support of Michele.

Randy Gray Great Falls, MT 406-781-4150

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:52 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: lindsay abernethy <lca84@hotmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 4:54 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Levine for District Court Judge

Dear Sir or Madam,

I write to provide my recommendation for Michele Levine for the Cascade County District Court vacancy. I am a law school classmate of Ms. Levine's, and I have known her for more than 10 years. Ms. Levine has demonstrated the utmost integrity throughout her legal career, and I know she will serve Cascade County's citizens well. I know Ms. Levine to be dedicated to her profession, her clients and, as a public servant, her constituents. I hope she is able to fill the Court's vacancy and continue her service to the citizens of Cascade County with her knowledge, professionalism and compassion for humanity.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Abernethy Registration 11852

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:52 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Annie Glover <annieglover@gmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 4:43 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Judicial Nomination Commission public comment

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my support for Michele Reinhart Levine's appointment to the vacant District Court Judge position in Cascade County. I am a registered voter in Cascade County. I have worked with Ms. Reinhart Levine in her capacity as a state legislator. She is a dedicated and committed public servant. She always strove to seek the interests and voices of a diverse group of Montanans to ensure that she represented her whole constituency fairly and conscientiously. She would be an asset in this position for Cascade County. Thank you for your consideration.

_

Annie Glover, PhD 406.570.4592 annieglover@gmail.com

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:51 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Laura Walker < lwalker@jardinelaw.com> Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 4:31 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] support letter

Dear Commission members,

I am writing to express my support for Michele Levine. I have known Michelle practically my whole life, having grown up together in Livingston. Michele is a compassionate person who genuinely cares for her clients and their struggles. She is intelligent and hard working, and has a long standing commitment to the communities where she has resided and public service. She will bring a commitment to equal justice and access to the courts that is needed in this district.

Laura E. Walker
Attorney
Jardine, Stephenson, Blewett & Weaver, P.C.
300 Central Avenue
U.S. Bank Building, 7th Floor
P.O. Box 2269
Great Falls, MT 59403
lwalker@jardinelaw.com
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DD: (406)731-5539

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From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:50 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: A.J. Miller <amiller@mtlawyers.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 4:15 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Reinhart-Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

It is with great pleasure and without hesitation that I write this letter in support of Michele Reinhart-Levine for the District Court Judge vacancy for Cascade County. Michele and I graduated from law school together in 2012. Throughout those three years, Michele was recognized by our classmates as a pillar of knowledge, fortitude, and selflessness. She was never reticent to offer her insight or opinion and was always willing to consider those of others, even if they were not consistent with hers. She clearly possessed a drive to learn the law and, in turn, use this knowledge for the betterment of others.

Over the last eight years, these attributes have transferred to her practice in spades. Her stellar and tenacious advocacy for her hundreds of satisfied clients has rightfully earned her the respect and admiration of many attorneys on both sides of the isle. As excellent of an attorney as Michele is, I am certain she will be an even better judge. The Eighth Judical District would be lucky to have her, and Montana would be lucky to add another fine judge to its judiciary.

Sincerely,

A.J. Miller

Andrew J. Miller

(office): 406-222-2222 • (fax): 406-259-3232



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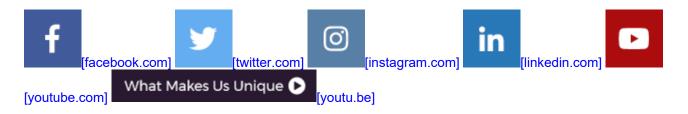
Billings Office
550 N 31st Street, Ste 200

Billings, MT 59101 406-259-2222 **Great Falls Office** 21 3rd Street N, Ste 301

Great Falls, MT 59401 406-761-5595 **Helena Office**

845 Great Northern Blvd. Helena, MT 59601 406-204-7439

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From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:50 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Domenic Cossi <domenic@westernjusticelaw.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 4:09 PM

To: MT Supreme Court,

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of Support for Michele Reinhart Levine

I am writing in support of Michelle Reinhardt Levine's application for District Court Judge in the 8th Judicial District

I have known Michele since law school. From her time in the legislature until now, Michele has been a tireless advocate for Montana people and lands. With her breadth of experience, she has a unique understanding of how Montana law is made and applied. Michele cares greatly for her clients and I am sure she will bring the care and hard work she applies to representing them to the bench. She understands the importance of hard work and attention to detail necessary to run an efficient courtroom. She would be a great addition to the judicial bench in Montana.

Domenic A. Cossi

Western Justice Associates, PLLC Trial Lawyers for People and the Environment 303 W. Mendenhall, Suite 1 Bozeman, Montana 59715 (406) 587-1900 (406) 587-1901 (fax)

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Please be advised that I do not have email on my phone and do not keep my email open at all times of the day. If you need to reach me quickly, please contact my office and they will contact me.

SHERINE D. BLACKFORD HILLARY P. CARLS MONICA E. PAYNE

September 23, 2020

Via Email:

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

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

This correspondence is in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application for appointment as District Court Judge in the Eighth Judicial District.

Ms. Levine is an exceptional lawyer that has built a strong reputation in advocacy for her clients. Since law school, she has devoted her practice to representing injured clients and fighting for real people both in and out of the Courtroom. In doing this, she has developed skills that are vitally important for any Judge. This has also given her the litigation experience necessary to understand, and successfully and efficiently navigate, the court process.

As a person, Ms. Levine is dedicated to all aspects of her life, including her community, her work and her family. This dedication will certainly translate to her position as a Judge should she be selected to serve in this capacity.

Cordially,

BLACKFORD CARLS P.C.

Sherine D. Blackford

Hillary P. Carls

email: info@blackfordcarls.com office: 406.577.2145 fax: 406.219.0256



Paul D. Odegaard Mark M. Kovacich Ben A. Snipes Andrew J. Miller Ross T. Johnson Lucas A. Wallace Greg E. Overturf * Leanora "Lea" Coles Benjamin J. Langford Of Counsel: Tom L. Lewis J. David Slovak Jay P. Dufrechou

September 23, 2020

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

EMAILED TO Imenzies@mt.gov & mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

RE: Eighth Judicial District Court Vacancy - Applicant: Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Ms. Menzies and Commission Members::

I write to recommend Great Falls attorney Michele Reinhart Levine as a nominee for Governor Bullock's consideration, when appointing our next District Court Judge to the Montana Eighth Judicial District. Michele served in our Legislature and has practiced law in my community for a number of years. In both settings, she has demonstrated that she possesses a rare combination of intelligence and a commitment to serve others.

I recently completed my term as the President of the Montana Trial Lawyers Association. During my tenure on the board and as President, I interacted regularly with Michele who has been a valuable and dedicated member of the organization. She has volunteered countless hours to improving the legal profession and promoting access to justice in Montana.

Apart from her success as a lawyer and commitment to the legal profession, Michele Reinhart Levine is also a quality citizen. I urge you to nominate her for Governor Bullock's consideration when appointing Cascade County's next District Court Judge.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Mark M. Kovacich

MMK:dak

Joel G. Krautter, Esq. 417 2nd St. SW Sidney, MT 59270 (406) 560-5952 Joel.krautter@gmail.com September 22, 2020

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

Re: Eighth Judicial District Court Judgeship Appointment

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing today in strong support of the appointment of Michele Reinhart Levine to the Montana Eighth Judicial District Court Judgeship.

My recommendation of Ms. Levine for this position is based both on my interactions with her as we attended law school together at the University of Montana School of Law and also after law school as fellow attorneys.

Ms. Levine was a 3L student at UM when I was a 1L student and I was appreciative of the helpful feedback and advice about succeeding in law school she provided as I began to navigate the rigors of my first year of law school. This is an example of the character Ms. Levine would bring to the bench, that of empathy and looking out for others.

Ms. Levine and I have stayed in contact as we each began legal practice. I have been impressed by Ms. Levine's strong advocacy on behalf of injured Montanans. In my nearly six years as an attorney, I have also had the opportunity to represent injured Montanans and this experience has given me a strong appreciation for those fellow attorneys who are willing to fight for the indigent, the injured and the forgotten. Ms. Levine has fought for these people and I believe this experience and understanding of the law will be an asset to her as a judge.

I hope you will give serious consideration to Ms. Levine's appointment.

Sincerely,

loel G. Krautter, Esq.

STINSONLAWGROUP

Admitted in Wyoming, Montana & Oregon · Offices in Cody & Bozeman Mail to: Cody Office

September 23, 2020

Email only: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

Re: Michele Reinhart-Levine, 8th Judicial District Judge Applicant

Dear Commission Members:

I write in support of Michele Reinhart-Levine and her application for judgeship in the 8th judicial district, Cascade County. I know Michele primarily through cocounseling with her on a substantial tractor-trailer injury and death case near Cheyenne, Wyoming on I-80. I have also interacted with Michele in trial colleges in Washington and Florida. Michele and her law partner, Dick Martin, brought me into the tractor crash case as trial counsel. Although her primary practice area is not in federal court or truck litigation, Michele rolled up her sleeves and was an active, vital member of the trial team from the start. Michele attended all depositions, client prep, strategy sessions, focus groups, and conferences. This included trips to Wyoming and Idaho. I tell you all of this to say I have a very good sense of her as a lawyer, advocate, and person. When thinking of her in the role of judge, three key qualities jump to my mind.

First, Michele is a deeply caring person. Her kindness, patience, and gentle persistence with our brain injured client was simply astounding. This seems true in her practice in general as I heard her discuss parenting plans with great care and an understanding of how those plans crafted a child's ability to succeed. As a judge, I believe she will not allow the human aspect of cases to recede into the procedure. This

also means she will, I am certain, demonstrate the right judicial temperament while being both firm and kind, reasoned and professional, to all litigants, counsel, other members of the bench, and all whom she encounters.

Second, Michele showed impressive legal reasoning and the ability to see both sides of the issue in balanced legal analysis. Michele authored a critically important and complex motion in our case. I tell you sincerely her writing in this brief was praiseworthy; direct, persuasive, analytical, and to the point. She did not overstate or sell her position, but rather relied on solid legal analysis to prevail. Michele prevailed in her motion and, in so doing, secured the admission of critically necessary and hotly disputed evidence in favor of our client.

Third, and notably important with the current judicial caseload, she will be diligent in her work and not allow cases to languish or lie unattended. I can firmly attest to the fact that Michele is a hard worker. In the midst of our truck case she managed a full case load and never once allowed a deadline to loom near without being fully prepared. There were seven (7) Plaintiff's lawyers alone in this consolidated case and Michele organized the entire group; not an easy task.

Lastly, I would like to comment on how engaging Michele is as a person. As you likely know, she is a former state legislator and a current planning board member in Great Falls. She knows how to interact appropriately and professionally with members of the public. She is ensconced in Great Falls and Cascade Country. As a result of all of this, Michele is a highly electable judge that will bring long-term continuity to the bench. Please feel free to contact me with any questions. I am certainly happy to visit with the commission. Thank you.

STINSON LAW GROUP, P.C.

By: LAURENCE STINSON



Providing Legal Counsel Since 1911

ATTORNEYS:

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OF COUNSEL:

E. EDWIN ECK
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GREAT FALLS · HELENA

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September 23, 2020

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

via email: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Re:

Michelle Reinhart Levine

Candidate for appointment to Montana Eight Judicial District

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter of support on behalf of Michelle Reinhart-Levine for Cascade County District Court judge. While I have not had cases with Michelle as we practice in different areas of the law, I personally know her to be thoughtful and intelligent. She is impartial and a good listener.

Michelle is an active volunteer in our community. She is compassionate and an advocate for her clients and our community.

I think she has excellent qualities that would equip her to serve as Eight Judicial District Court Judge.

Sincerely,

Karen L. Reiff

September 23, 2020

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

To the Members:

I am writing to recommend the nomination of Michele Reinhart-Levine as a District Judge in the 8th Judicial District.

I primarily know Michele as a person who worked in my office as an intern in 2011-2012. I remember Michele as someone who was confident, eager to take on new challenges and who had great respect for the law. I particularly recall that she was a good fit in our office and was a real "team player." In addition, she and I had the shared experience of having previously served in the Montana Legislature. I'm sure that experience gave her the added benefits of appreciating the art of compromise and understanding all points of view. One other aspect of her employment as an intern in our office that stood out was her successful prosecution of a felony DUI case in District Court pursuant to the Student Practice Rule and under the supervision of a Deputy County Attorney. This was a rare experience for an intern and Michele "hit it out of the park."

Everything I've heard about her since her days in the Missoula County Attorney's Office leads me to believe that she has more than lived up to my recollection of her abilities and character in the practice of law. As such, I am convinced she would make an outstanding judge and her name should certainly be submitted to the Governor for his consideration as a prospective appointee.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely.

Fred Van Valkenburg

Attorney, Emeritus

Former Missoula County Attorney

fvanvalkenburg@bresnan.net

406-370-4206

112 University Ave.

Missoula, MT 59801

September 24, 2020

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

Re: Eighth Judicial District Judgeship Vacancy (Cascade County)

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing to express my strong support for Steve Bolstad, Dave Grubich and Michele Levine for the position of District Judge for Montana's Eighth Judicial District. Each of these candidates has the experience, expertise and temperament to be an outstanding district judge.

I've had the pleasure to know all of these candidates personally and professionally over many years. In addition to being talented, hard-working and experienced lawyers, each candidate has a calm, even temperament and possesses a sincere respect for our justice system. I have no doubt that whomever is appointed to the bench by Governor Bullock from this impressive 'short list' will bring all of these important qualities to work each day as a District Judge for Cascade County.

For all of the above reasons, I support these three candidates' applications for this important judgeship without reservation and respectfully urge the Commission to submit their names for consideration by Governor Bullock.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michael J. George

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 Recommendation for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application for the position of District Court Judge in the Eighth Judicial District Court.

It was my distinct pleasure to work for Michele as her paralegal for many years. During those years I was impressed by her professionalism, dedication, and passion for her work and community. She has strong verbal and written skills enabling her to effectively communicate with her clients and colleagues. I admire the way Michele can look at an any issue or situation and see it from multiple perspectives. She is am impressive orator enabling her to state her position effectively and respectfully. I learned so much working for her and am grateful I had that opportunity.

I have also been fortunate enough to know Michele socially and consider her a close friend. Michele's positive attitude and approach to life is inspiring. She is a smart, funny, intelligent woman whom I admire and respect.

I highly recommend Michele Reinhart Levine for the position of District Court Judge for the Eighth Judicial District Court. Michele is and will be a great asset to the court and the community.

Sincerely,

Brenda L. McGee

Paralegal



2 Railroad Square, Suite C • P.O. Box 1525 Great Falls, Montana 59403-1525 P: (406) 268-1000 • F: (406) 761-2610 email@marralawfirm.com • marralawfirm.com

September 23, 2020

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

Via e-mail to: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Re: Nomination for District Court Judge

Dear Members:

I am writing to ask you to recommend Michele R. Levine to our Governor for appointment to the open Eighth Judicial District Court Judge position. Michele possesses the intelligence and patience necessary to do the work of instilling genuine confidence in our judicial system at a time when many citizens doubt the ability of our court systems to equitably function.

Michele has an excellent work ethic, a true interest in justice, and the energy to research the law and then apply the law to the facts. She is the spouse of one of the lawyers I practice with, which has provided me the opportunity to listen to her insights about working with people, whether clients, attorneys or judges. She is active in our community, and values the lives and livelihoods of all of the people with whom she comes into contact. She has always expressed an interest in learning, and has engaged in pro bono work in the area of family law. Just last week, one of my clients did not have to testify at a contentious custody hearing because, as the Court appointed guardian ad litem, Michele managed to bring the parties to the table to agree, rather than continue to litigate.

Michele has a talent for listening, and discerning all points of view. She possesses a patient demeanor and calm persona and can clearly articulate her understanding of facts and their application to the law. She is aware of the growing frustration among litigants over the time it takes to obtain rulings and is committed to being organized and issuing rulings on motions and final rulings in bench cases, so that the parties can go on with their lives or go on appeal.

Finally, I have practiced in many areas of the law, as a prosecutor, in criminal defense, in the family law arena, and both "sides" of civil practice (plaintiff and defendant) in many areas of law. There is no area of law that Michele could not handle. She has the brains and the brawn to do the work. She is not afraid of hard work or of research. I have full faith that she would treat every person and every argument with fairness and respect, as that is who she is day to day. Michele is an excellent choice for the position and I urge you to place her name before our governor as your selection.

Sincerely,

MARRA, EVENSON & LEVINE, P.C.

Antonia P. Marra

Email: amarra@marralawfirm.com



2 Railroad Square, Suite C . P.O. Box 1525 Great Falls, Montana 59403-1525 P: (406) 268-1000 • F: (406) 761-2610 email@marralawfirm.com · marralawfirm.com

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 Via Email

RE: Letter of Support for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support on behalf of Michele Reinhart Levine for the judicial vacancy in the Montana 8th Judicial District. I first met Michele during law school at the University of Montana. I was immediately struck by her intelligence, her work ethic, and her ability to connect the law to real-world scenarios.

After law school Michele and I both moved to Great Falls. Upon my arrival, Michele was one of the first people to welcome me. She immediately got me involved in community service. Through our work together in Junior League I further learned that on top of being intelligent and capable, Michele is kind. She cares for her fellow neighbors and is wiling to work tirelessly to make her community a better place.

Michele possesses all of the necessary qualities to be a successful judge in the 8th Judicial District. She is intelligent - she is capable of understanding a vast array of legal topics and smart enough to seek out resources to help her learn legal topics she may not be familiar with. She is compassionate - she will treat every person who walks in the courtroom with respect and dignity. She is tough - she understands that being a judge means making hard decisions and she will be ready to make those decisions on her first day on the bench. She is efficient - she knows the case load of an 8th Judicial District Court Judge is large. She is prepared to work hard and

Judicial Nomination Commission September 22, 2020 Page 2

efficiently to keep her docket moving. Finally, Michele is a team player - she will work collaboratively with courthouse staff and community members to make her courtroom and the Great Falls community a better place.

Michele will make an excellent 8^{th} Judicial District Court Judge. I whole-heartedly support her nomination.

MARRA, EVENSON & LEVINE P.C.

Amber Henning - Attorney

ahenning@marralawfirm.com

September 23, 2020

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

Re: Judicial Candidate, Michelle Reinhart-Levine

Judicial Commission Members,

I am writing in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application for the judicial vacancy in Montana's Eighth Judicial District.

I first began working with Michele in September of 2018, after we retained her to represent my father-in-law to help settle disputes with Montana State Fund. My father-in-law has been a complex client, and his case is historic by Montana State Fund standards. He was injured in 1981, resulting in paralysis, and as one can imagine his case file over the 39 years is extensive and complicated.

Were it not for Michele's knowledge, patience, and persistence, my father-in-law's quality of life would be considerably diminished from what it is currently. Michele navigated multiple claim denials, mediations, and a negotiation on his behalf, resulting in life-changing medical equipment and care now being available to him. Because of her knowledge of the Old Fund law, my father-in-law is able to live with in our home, in a completely accessible home addition, with the wheelchair, bed, and van he needs in order to be as comfortable as possible. As his full-time caregiver, I do not know that I can find adequate words to express my gratitude to Michele for helping us to ensure that my father-in-law can live out his remaining years well cared for, without worry of having everything he needs to have the best quality of life that can be expected for someone who has been wheel-chair bound for over 39 years.

While it would make me personally sad to lose Michele as an attorney, I very strongly believe that as a Judge Michele would treat every case with fairness and give every case her full attention. She is knowledgeable, compassionate, and is able to apply the law while not losing site of the person the law will impact.

Sincerely,

Beth Burns

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

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

Michele has the qualities and character that would be serve the Eighth Judicial District honorably. She is fair and impartial. She is eloquent and not boisterous. She is always well prepared for hearings. She is dedicated. While she has been a strong advocate for me and my case, she can see the other side's perspective. She has demonstrated that she will treat each person's case with due care and consideration. She has a very strong moral and ethical compass and sense of justice and fairness. I am confident that she will follow the law, apply the law to the facts, and come to well-reasoned conclusions. I cannot recommend her highly enough. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Evie J. Hudson Great Falls, Montana

Ein J. Hudon

(406) 899-7943

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

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission:

My name is Jeff Herman. I am currently a client of Michele Levine's. She has represented me regarding my workers' compensation claim since January 2017. I had to get an attorney because my workers' compensation insurer regularly denied my medical treatment. Surgery was denied. Referrals to specialists were denied. My choice of my doctor was denied. The doctor chosen by the insurer did not want to be my doctor. Michele was a tireless advocate for me and worked hard to hold the insurer accountable to the law. She has helped me get the medical treatment that I needed, from 2017 to present. I am grateful for her efforts. She has kept in touch with me about my case and the status of the matter before the Court. With her help, we challenged the constitutionality of the treating physician statute which gives insurers the power to choose the doctor. While the Judge chose not to address the issue at this time, since the insurer acquiesced to the doctor of my choice, we put the Court and others on notice of the problems of letting insurers choose doctors.

The workers' compensation claim process is very stressful on injured workers. The wage loss, physical pain, and the claims process are very difficult for any person to manage. Being injured has had many negative impacts on my life. I am grateful that Michele guided me and my family through this claim. Michele helped me secure the benefits I needed and let me know that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Michele has the qualities and character that would be serve the Eighth Judicial District honorably. She was always well prepared for administrative conference calls and for the court hearing. She is dedicated. She is well spoken. She is willing to go the extra mile for you. While she has been a strong advocate for me and my case, she can see the other side's perspective. She will treat each person's case with due care and consideration. She has a very strong moral compass of fairness and justice. I am confident that she will follow the law, apply the law to the facts, get to the bottom of things, and come to well-reasoned conclusions. I cannot recommend her highly enough. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Jeff Herman Great Falls, Montana (406) 836-0876

Donovan Worden, Sr. (1892 - 1967)Donovan Worden, Jr. (1918 - 2001)Jeremy G. Thane (1927 - 2016)

Ronald A. Bender Martin S. King W. Carl Mendenhall Sean M. Morris Reid J. Perkins William E. McCarthy Amy M. Scott Smith Jori Quinlan Jesse C. Kodadek Chris A. Johnson (MT,WA) Dana L. Hupp Martin Rogers Joel E. Henry Brand G. Boyar Natalie L. Black Elizabeth W. Erickson Clare Kealey Jennifer Shannon

September 23, 2020

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

> Re: Public Comment on 8th Judicial District Judge Applicant Michele Reinhart

> > Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application to fill the district court judgeship vacancy in the Eighth Judicial District, Cascade County.

I have known Michele for over a decade, in a variety of contexts. First, we were coworkers at the Missoula Office of Planning and Grants. Then, she represented my parents' legislative district, and while door-knocking during her campaign, deeply impressed them with her understanding of the issues and her concern for her constituents' needs and interests. Later, we attended law school together, although in different classes.

At all times, Michele has demonstrated the highest degree of integrity, empathy, and fairmindedness. She is intelligent, conscientious, and patient, and she takes the time to understand all sides of an issue. She is also, when appropriate, firm and decisive. She has the respect of her peers, her constituents, her colleagues, and her clients. I can think of few others whose temperament is as well-suited for the role of a judge in our state courts.

I encourage you to strongly consider Michele's application. She would be an asset to the bench.

Sincerely,

September 23, 2020

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

VIA EMAIL

Dear Ms. Menzies:

I am writing to support Michele Levine for Cascade County Judge. I first met Michele when I was a student in the Environmental Studies Master of Science program at the University of Montana and she was serving on the Montana State Legislature, as part of an educational trip to Helena to observe the Legislature at work. Michele was then (and is now) extremely well-spoken, well-informed, and thorough.

I was also privileged to attend the University of Montana School of Law with Michele. Although she was a year ahead of me, we took a class together and were partners in a trial exercise—in which we obtained excellent results. Getting to know Michele in a more personal capacity cemented my impression that she is smart, organized, and hard-working. She gives her all to everything that she does.

Michele's strong commitment to public service, her intellect, her integrity, and her experience on the Legislature, all recommend her highly to serve as a judge. She will treat every litigant before her with respect, carefully scrutinize every case, and fairly apply the law to the facts. I cannot think of anyone I would support more strongly for this position.

Sincerely,

Talasi B. Brooks

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:15 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Lois Fitzpatrick <loisfitzpatrick@yahoo.com>Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 2:24 PMTo: MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michelle Reinhart Levine's application

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

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing in support of Michele R. Levine's application for the Eight Judicial District vacancy in Cascade County. I have know Michele since she was a student at Carroll College. Not only did I know Michele as an intense student working hard on learning, but I knew her as a student worker. She worked for me as a student worker at the Corette Library, Carroll College. I was the Library Director. Michelle was one of those extraordinary workers, she was always on time and had a great curiosity about the library. She was always the first one to offer to to take another worker's shift if needed. I knew if Michele was working, the library was in good hands. She loved to be busy and so would seek out projects that she could do. Michele was well liked by the Library Staff and the student staff. She was kind and empathetic, not always found in College aged students. I knew it was from losing her brother at a young age. I was very sad when she graduated, but thrilled she had been in my life.

I was a librarian lobbyist for the Montana Library Association. Imagine my great surprise and excitement when Michele was elected as a representative for Missoula. I meet her in the hallway the first week and she was so excited and wanted to be one of the best legislators. She wanted to know all sides of the legislation that was in her committees or on the floor. She was always prepared, definitely well schooled on doing her homework. I would watch her in the hallways talking with other legislators, citizens and lobbyists. She was bi-partisan working on legislation. She always wanted the best for Montana.

I highly recommend Michele for the judge vacancy in Cascade County. She would bring a highly reasoned mind and attitude in the court. She would listen to all issues and would be well prepared in giving her judicial opinion. She would also try to make sure that the public would understand why she made such a decision. Teaching the public has always been part of her background including while she was at Carroll when she was part of the Talking Saints, the award winning forensics program at Carroll College.

I highly recommend Michele R. Levine's application for the judicial vacancy in Cascade County.

Yours truly,

Lois A. Fitzpatrick Professor Emeritus Carroll College Corette Library 237 Flagstone Ave Helena, MT 59602

503-440-4496

loisfitzpatrick@yahoo.com Lfitzpat@carroll.edu

Sent from my iPad

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:14 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Hannah Tokerud < h.tokerud@gmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 2:14 PM To: MT Supreme Court, < MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment for Michele Reinhart Levine, candidate for the 8th Judicial District

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Committee:

I write in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's appointment to the vacancy at the Eighth Judicial District.

I first met Michele in 2010, when we were law students. Since then, our paths have intersected many times. During law school, we both interned at the Montana Attorney General's Office of Consumer Protection, and we worked together in the Women's Law Caucus, a law school organization committed to helping women and children in the community. Years later, we were both attorneys in Great Falls and were again members of an organization dedicated to helping women and children (this time the organization was the Junior League of Great Falls). Throughout the years, Michele has shown a remarkable work ethic, a commitment to public service, and a drive to help vulnerable members of our community. I believe that her temperament and skills would make her an excellent judge.

Thank you for consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

Hannah Tokerud Helena, Montana

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:13 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Terry Minow <terry.lynn.minow@gmail.com> **Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 1:01 PM **To:** MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of recommendation for Michele Reinhart

To: Lois Menzies, Judicial Nomination Commission

From: Terry Minow, 502 Lower Valley Road, Boulder, MT 59632

406-225-4397

I'd like to recommend Michele Reinhart for District Court Judge in Cascade County.

I know Michele from her three terms as a legislator. I was a lobbyist at the time. She was an excellent legislator with a strong sense of justice and fair play. She treated all who came before the legislature with respect no matter their political affiliation or beliefs.

Michele is a hard-working, knowledgeable, compassionate person who strongly believes in justice for all. She will be a judge who respects the law and the people who depend on the law to settle disputes of all kinds.

Thank you for your consideration.

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:12 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Mary McCrea <cawkermccrea@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 12:39 PM
To: MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Michele Reinhart Levine - District Court Judge vacancy - Cascade County

TO: Judicial Nomination Commission

FROM: Mary McCrea, resident city of Missoula

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine, Letter of Recommendation

Since 2001 I have worked for County and City of Missoula Planning Departments and it is in this role that I became acquainted with Michele Reinhart Levine. I was Michele's direct supervisor from 2006 – 2009 when Michele was a land use planner for the City -County Office of Planning and Grants. Michele was an exceptional employee because of her organizational skills, intellect, attention to detail, strong problem-solving skills, determination to listen to all sides, and knowledge of the local and state laws that she was tasked at implementing. Michele is honest, kind, full of energy and has a strong commitment to public service.

I strongly recommend that Michele be appointed to fill the vacancy for the Cascade County District Court Judge. Michele is an excellent researcher and has the curiosity and determination to acquire the knowledge needed to master any topic. Michele is highly capable and resourceful at sorting through hundreds of pages of documents to discern the relevant facts. She is organized and efficient. Michele is always courteous and civil and for her Planning project reviews, her recommendations were always solidly grounded in the facts. Michele is smart, honest, capable, reliable and has the strength of character to make decisions exercising her good judgment.

Best regards,

Mary McCrea

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:11 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Kelly Lynch <kellylynch1971@gmail.com> **Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 12:10 PM **To:** MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Michele Reinhart-Levine for 8th District Court Judgeship

Good afternoon,

I unreservedly recommend Michele Reinhart-Levine for the vacant 8th District Court judgeship. I worked with Ms. Reinhart-Levine during her term as a Montana legislator. At the time, I was the Administrator for the Community Development Division at the Montana Department of Commerce. Ms. Reinhart-Levine and I worked together to understand the implications of bills impacting the scope and authority of local governments to review and condition land development across Montana.

Ms. Reinhart-Levine was always thorough, thoughtful, and balanced in her approach to reviewing proposed statutory changes, committed to ensuring that all interested parties were heard and their concerns understood. She is a hard worker, extremely intelligent, and fair. She was able to understand and propose solutions to complex multi-faceted land use and planning issues, an area of law that takes personal experience and critical thinking to understand and the ability to tread carefully so as not to upset decades of legal precedent.

Ms. Michele Reinhart-Levine would make an excellent judge. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this recommendation.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Lynch, JD, AICP

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:08 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Chris Tweeten <christiantweeten@gmail.com> Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 10:23 AM To: MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Judicial nomination

Dear Commissioners

I am pleased to send this message in support of the nomination of Michele Reinhart Levine for the vacancy on the bench in the Montana Eighth Judicial District.

I first encountered Michele when she was serving in the Montana Legislature. As a deputy attorney general and as Chairman of the Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission, I interacted frequently with legislators on a number of issues. Michele was a quick study on any issue we discussed. She was a careful listener and offered thoughtful comments and suggestions on several different pieces of legislation. The ability to listen carefully, and analyze quickly, are, of course, valuable attributes for a trial court judge.

I also was privileged to serve with Michele on the Board of Environmental Review. The Board reviews issues arising from environmental permitting, among other things. The issues are often technical and complex. I was impressed with Michele's thorough preparation for Board meetings, her meticulous note-taking, and her ability to ask incisive questions that got to the heart of the case. Again, these behaviors demonstrate that she has the qualities needed to serve with distinction on the bench.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I hope you will give Michele's application a favorable recommendation.

Chris Tweeten

Sent from my iPhone

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:08 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Hilary Oitzinger hilary.oitzinger@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:56 AM
To: MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Judicial Nomination Commission

Dear Commission Members,

I write to reccommend Michele Reinhart-Levine for District Court Judge in Cascade County. I formally met Michele upon first moving to Great Falls and opening my practice in early 2014. She took me under her wing, guided me toward community service opportunities and served as my friend and mentor in the Cascade County Bar.

Michelle is a passionate advocate for the letter of the law. She has an acute and discerning legal mind and experience in many areas of law, including creating it. Her time as a legislator has allowed her to carefully hone her analytical skills within the broader concept of the lawmaking. This gives her a unique perspective on the interrelationship of the law and our communities and a deep understanding of its implications on the daily lives of Montanans.

This knowledge uniquely prepares her to be an exceedingly competent, level-headed, and fair jurist, and I am proud to support her.

Best regards,

Hilary

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:07 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Leanne Frost <leanne.frost@gfcmsu.edu> **Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:36 AM **To:** MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of Support for Michele Reinhart-Levine for District Court Judge

I have worked with Michele Reinhart-Levine on the Kairos Youth Services Board of Directors for over five years. During that time, I have been impressed with Michele's analytical but compassionate approach to making decisions. Michele chaired the board and provided outstanding leadership. When difficult decisions and circumstances arose, Michele sought information and then took measured steps to ensure a reasonable and fair resolution. She balanced the needs of the organization, all legal requirements associated with the organization's licensure, and the impact on Kairos' employees and clients.

As District Court Judge, I believe Michele will follow the same approach. She will seek information and then work towards a reasonable and fair resolution, following the law, for all those involved. I wholeheartedly support Michele in her application for the District Court Judge position.

Please feel free to contact me for more information or with questions,

Leanne Frost

Dr. Leanne Frost
Executive Director of Instruction
Director of General Studies
Great Falls College MSU
406-771-4372
leanne.frost@gfcmsu.edu



From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:06 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Amanda Taylor <amanda.taylor.randono@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:26 AM **To:** MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for 8th Judicial District

To Whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application to become a District Judge for the 8th Circuit. I have known Michele since approximately 2001. We met at Carroll College where we both competed on the national-ranking speech and debate team. After Carroll, our paths crossed again at the University of Montana where she was in law school at the same time as my husband. While my husband and I now reside in Minnesota where we moved for my doctorate degree, I was born and raised in Great Falls and still have family and friends in the community. Based on my personal experience with both Great Falls and Michele, I am confident she would be an excellent choice for District Judge.

Both at Carroll and UM, I was able to see how passionate Michele is about people. She cares deeply and uses her considerable intelligence, rhetorical skill, and problem solving skills to the benefit of her community and clients. During our overlapping time at Carroll and UM, she was actively involved in environmental conservation work and volunteering. Her experience as a state representative, working mother, and legal professional combined with her commitment to her community make her perfectly suited to be a careful but objective arbiter of cases that come to the 8th Circuit.

Sincerely,

Amanda D. Taylor, Ph.D. 998 Brooks Ave W Roseville, MN 55113

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:04 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Joe Sullivan <Joe@dhhtlaw.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 7:38 AM **To:** MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Nomination of Michele Reinhart-Levine for District Court Judge (Eighth Judicial District Court)

September 23, 2020

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

Re: Nomination of Michele Reinhart-Levine for District Court Judge (Eighth Judicial District Court)

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission Members:

Michele Reinhart-Levine has asked me to write a letter to you on her behalf. It is my honor and pleasure to do so.

First and foremost, Michele has both the intellect and demeanor to make for a fine District Court Judge. She has compassion and will ensure those before her feel they have had an opportunity to be heard. She has an excellent work ethic which is needed in this role because of the substantial caseload she will be expected to manage.

Second, Michele is electable. She has held public office. She knows how to run a campaign. She is not afraid of the commitment and effort it takes to talk to voters and present herself in such a way as to make them comfortable in voting for her.

Third, Michele is willing to do "extra." I first met Michele when she was still in law school. She was a panel member in a CLE I was helping put together for the State Bar. At a time most law students were more concerned about their next exam, she was already serving her future profession. This bodes well for someone, who as a Judge, will be called on to go out into the public and educate on the Rule of Law. Likewise, her willingness to do extra will help sustain projects like the Veterans' Court.

Because of these factors, I, without hesitation, recommend to you Michele Reinhart-Levine and respectfully request you pass her name on to the Governor for consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Sullivan

JOSEPH M. SULLIVAN
DAVIS, HATLEY, HAFFEMAN & TIGHE, P.C.
The Milwaukee Station, Third Floor
101 River Drive North
P.O. Box 2103
Great Falls, MT 59403-2103

Telephone: 406-761-5243 Facsimile: 406-761-4126 joe.sullivan@dhhtlaw.com

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois

Sent: Wednesday, September 23, 2020 9:03 PM

To: Cook, Kevin

Subject: Public Comment -- Levine

From: Courtney Ryan <courtneysryan@gmail.com> **Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 12:12 AM **To:** MT Supreme Court, <MTSupremeCourt@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment - Michele Reinhart Levine for 8th Judicial District Judge

Dear Ms. Menzies,

I write to you today to enthusiastically recommend my friend Michele Reinhart Levine as the ideal candidate to fill the recent vacancy for Montana's Eighth Judicial District Court Judge.

Michele was the first person I met in our law school class at the University of Montana, and I consider myself fortunate to have come to know her on a personal and professional level since that day. Over the course of our three years together in law school, Michele demonstrated her superior problem solving, communications and leadership skills, inspiring others through her professional experience as Montana State Representative for House District 97 while preserving a consistently positive attitude.

Michele's warm personality is evident in every interaction with her and, as others who have shared the pleasure of working closely with her can attest, her legal acumen and her passion and dedication for public service are unmatched. As one of Montana's youngest congresswomen, Michele set the tone for her bright future. Her passion for improving the lives of Montanans shines through in her approach to life and in her career, as an honest, intelligent, confident, diligent and practical professional with an affinity for drafting and analyzing laws. These qualities reflect Michele's natural ability to deliver impartial and thoughtful decisions from the bench.

As such, it is my great honor and pleasure to support Michele's application, and I trust that you will find her credentials, coupled with her exemplary demeanor and competence, make her an outstanding future Judge for Cascade County and for the great state of Montana.

Thank you for your consideration, and I hope you will send Michele's application along to Governor Bullock.

Sincerely, Courtney Ryan Heath Seattle, WA Haley Jackson connell.haley@gmail.com 406-396-7374

September 23, 2020

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

Re: Letter of support for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

My name is Haley Jackson and I am an appellate criminal defense attorney in Bozeman, Montana. I am honored to support Michele Reinhart Levine for the Eighth Judicial District Court Judge position. I have known Michele for over ten years and think she would make an excellent judge.

Michele and I met in 2009 as first-year law students at the Alexander Blewett III School of Law. It quickly became clear that Michele would be one of the top students in our class. She was eager to learn, excited to debate, and enthusiastic about sharing her knowledge and experience with her classmates and professors. Michele's work ethic was admirable, and she always came to class prepared, informed, and ready to learn. I have no doubt that as a judge Michele would work tirelessly for the people in her courtroom.

Perhaps what I admire most about Michele is her commitment to public service and desire to help others. Michele is a lawyer because she truly cares about people and how the justice system treats them. She respects all people, listens to all positions, and carefully considers all arguments. I am confident that as a trial court judge Michele would make the people in her courtroom feel heard and treat all parties fairly.

Michele has the intelligence, work ethic, and integrity to be an outstanding judge. I believe she would be an asset to the judiciary, and I strongly support her for the position.

Respectfully,

Haley Jackson

September 23, 2020

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

* V

* Via email to mtsupremecourt@mt.gov *

Re: Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing to recommend Michele Reinhart Levine for District Court judge for the Eighth Judicial District appointment. Mrs. Levine's record shows that she possesses the candor, competency, and commitment to service that we expect from our judges in Montana.

Mrs. Levine's community service and advocacy for Montana and her community is strong evidence that she will always have the best interest of her community in mind. This is evidenced by her advocacy as a legislator in the Montana House of Representatives for three-terms and her service as a board member for the Kairos Youth Homes. Mrs. Levine has taken the time to empower youth with severe emotional needs and therapeutic needs and she has worked on legislation that applies to both criminal and civil matters. I am confident that her passion to help and serve her community, along with her eight years of legal experience, will bring a much-needed perspective to the bench.

As a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, I know that Mrs. Levine will also look to alternative sentencing to further empower and reduce recidivism for the Native American population in the Eighth Judicial District.

I strongly urge the Commission to recommend Michele Reinhart Levine to Governor Bullock for appointment as Eighth Judicial District Judge. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Shane A. Morigeau

Attorney,

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

(406) 546-4290

Suite 4000 22 Second Avenue West Kalispell, MT 59901

T 406.755.5700 F 406.755.5783

KAUFMAN VIDAL HILEMAN ELLINGSON PC

September 23, 2020

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

Re: Michele Reinhart-Levine Letter of Support

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

It is my absolute pleasure to recommend Michele Reinhart-Levine for the position of Eighth Judicial District Court Judge.

I have known Michele since 2016 as a fellow attorney and friend. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with Michele and came to know her as a truly valuable asset to absolutely any situation. She is honest, dependable, and incredibly hard-working. Beyond that, she is an impressive leader who is always concerned for those around her. Michele's incredible work ethic, dedication and passion for justice would be a huge advantage to the community.

Along with her undeniable talents, Michele has always been an absolute joy to be around. Her bubbly personality always manages to foster positive discussions and bring the best out of others.

Without a doubt, I confidently recommend Michele for the position of District Judge. As a dedicated and knowledgeable attorney and an all-around great person, I know that she will be a beneficial addition to the court.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Attorneys at Law

Shelly Brander Jeffrey Ellingson Daniel Hileman Lucas Mann Nicole Morton Stephen Nardi

David Tennant Emily von Jentzen

Leonard L. Kaufman, of Counsel

Senior Status: James E. Vidal

KAUFMAN VIDAL HILEMAN ELLINGSON PC

Nicole F. Morton

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I submit this letter in support of Michele Reinhart-Levine for the position of District Court Judgeship.

I am familiar with Michele as we were in the same law school class. I got to see Michele tackle the challenges and stress of law school as a fellow student. I think she would make a great judge for three reasons.

First, Michele is dedicated to public service. She served as a state legislator prior to law school and has always been dedicated to justice. I think her passion for service will make her an excellent judge—one who seeks to serve the public rather than some candidates who may seek a judgeship for social standing or ego.

Second, she will be fair and impartial. In appointing judges, it is important to select a candidate who will serve the bench and adhere to the law. Michele is committed to fairness and equality, and I have no doubt she will strive to be the best possible judge, always up for the new challenges that come her way on the bench. She has always been a person who presents herself with an even keel, a demeanor that will suit her for the bench.

Third, she will bring intelligence and preparation to the bench. Michele was always a bright student, exhibiting not only her comprehension of the materials, but that she put in the work and preparation necessary to learn new concepts.

Michele would make a fantastic addition to the bench. I urge you to select Michele Reinhart-Levine for the position of Eighth District Court Judge.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brady Minow Smith Trial Attorney Salt Lake Legal Defender Association 275 East 200 South Salt Lake City, UT 84111

September 23, 2020

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

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission

My name is Ada Montague Stepleton. I am currently an attorney with the Montana Department of Natural Resources. I know Michele personally and from going to law school together. Michele was one year ahead of me. Our time in law school overlapped by two years. Since she missed a semester of law school to attend the Montana Legislature, she took many classes with my class of 2013. Michele and I connected in law school because we shared similar backgrounds as being land use planners prior to law school. We enjoyed conversing about land use and water law questions. I have always appreciated her clear thinking on legal questions. She reached her conclusions after doing her research first. The other thing that stood out to me was her ability to see the big picture, but also keep track of the details and not lose sight of either one.

I see Michele as a gold standard in many ways. For the past nine years, I have seen her abilities to manage multiple obligations at the same time. While she was in law school, she was also able to be a legislator, be on the ABA Negotiation Team, and she did an internship with the Missoula County Attorney's Office. After law school, she has juggled being a working attorney mom while also being very active in the community. As a fellow lawyer mom, I know that this balance is not always easy. However, her ability to juggle family life along with her career is impressive. She has the support of family and friends as well to help her achieve that ongoing balance.

I have admired Michele as a colleague and as a former legislator. She represents someone who deeply understands and cares about how the three branch of government work and the separation of powers. It is important to her that each branch of government operate on all cylinders to best serve the people of Montana as effectively and efficiently as possible. Michele brings into the fray someone with intellect and high standards. She would serve the people that entered the Courtroom with fairness, compassion, dignity, and respect. For these reasons, it is my belief that she would be an asset to the District Court. Please include her on the list of names that is forwarded to Governor Steve Bullock. Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Ada Montague Stepleton

MELISSA A. HORNBEIN

1025 MAULDIN STREET HELENA, MONTANA, 59601 hornbein@gmail.com 406.471-3173

September 22, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission c/o Lois Menzes Office of the Court Administrator mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Re. Application of Michele Reinhart Levine for Eighth Judicial District Court Judgeship

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission,

I write in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application for the Eighth Judicial District judgeship. Michele possesses a combination of skills, experience, and commitment to public service that uniquely suit her to the judiciary.

I met Michele through mutual friends when I was finishing law school in Missoula and she was serving in the Montana Legislature. She immediately impressed me with her grasp of the law—though she had not at that time started law school—and her understanding of the ways in which law and policy intersect to affect individual people's lives. When she made the decision to attend law school, it was a natural fit. Michele and I have been friends since that time, but my first opportunity to work directly with her came when I was serving as an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Montana and she was in private practice. We worked as opposing counsel on a personal injury case. I found Michele to be thoughtful, consummately professional, and an articulate advocate for her client.

Michele's experience as a legislator and later as an attorney representing clients in matters of complex civil litigation make her an ideal judicial candidate. On top of these qualifications, she will bring empathy, fairness, and great people skills to the bench—all of which are equally important qualifications. What stands out most, however, is Michele's deep and abiding commitment to public service. Her application for this position is a logical next step in a career that has been defined by that commitment. I urge you to forward Michele Reinhart Levine's application for the Eighth Judicial District judgeship to the Governor for his consideration.

Mulin Honlin

Melissa A Hornbein

Jessica M. Carranza M.Ed, Ed.S, NCSP GFPS School Psychologist, MASP Past-President, MSSC Chair 1408 9th St. NW Great Falls, MT 59404 406-788-9533

September 23, 2020

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

RE: 8th Judicial District Judge Position; Support for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Commissioners,

I'm writing this letter on behalf of Michele Reinhart Levine in support of her nomination to fill the vacancy in the 8th Judicial District Court. I first met Michele nine years ago upon joining the Association of Women's Junior League in Great Falls, MT. Michele's commitment and passion to support women and children in her community was an inspiration to me. Michele was willing to step into whichever role was needed within our association, including President, Nominations Chair, and Membership Chair. She was always able to help problem solve and generate ideas that allowed a small group of women to accomplish great things in the Great Falls area. With Michele's drive and guidance, the Women's Junior League was able to sponsor the Great Falls Public School's STEAM Expo which allowed for Pre-school through High School age students to develop and share STEAM related projects. Michele also went above and beyond to ensure that students at our lowest-income elementary building were able to participate by spending her lunch hour partnering with Girl Scouts of America to work hands on with these students. In addition to directly supporting our younger generation with building valuable life-long skills, Michele worked with the Women's Junior League to address Cascade County's ongoing problem of high rates of abuse and neglect. Michele spent countless hours with the association fundraising for the Children's Receiving Home on an annual basis. Michele also has been an advocate for the partnership between Women's Junior League and Toby's Crisis House Nursery. The partnership with Toby's Crisis House Nursery has involved fundraising, advertising, and manual labor, which Michele has been a part of and supported from the very beginning. Overall, Michele is continually dedicated to addressing the needs of her community through both hands-on work and advocacy.

Throughout the time that I have known Michele, I have been in awe of her ability to balance work, home, friendships, and volunteering. She is steadfast with time-management and always reliable despite so many things going on. I also appreciate the time that she will carve out to have a conversation, especially with those people that may not have the same belief system that she does. When I first moved to Montana, nine years ago, Michele helped me build a

better understanding of the law. Despite my more conservative nature, Michele was supportive in answering my questions, and took the time to understand my points of view. Because of her, I have been able to feel confident enough to increase my involvement in grass-root advocacy efforts for my own profession.

In summary, Michele is a passionate individual committed to doing what is right for her community. She has strong time-management and effective decision making skills. The respect and professionalism that she embodies at all times with people from all walks of life is admirable. Michele's breadth of qualities indicate that she would be a fantastic choice to fill the vacancy for the 8th Judicial District Judge Position.

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Jessica M. Carranza

Jessica M. Carranza School Psychologist, M.Ed, Ed.S, NCSP Jessica_carranza@gfps.k12.mt.us



September 23, 2020

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

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine – Recommendation for Nomination to 8th Judicial District Court Judgeship

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

It is my pleasure and honor to write in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for your nomination to the seat of 8th Judicial District Judge. In my humble opinion, Michele is more than fit to serve in this position and has the intellect, insight, work ethic, and temperament to do so effectively and in the service of our United States and Montana Constitutions and the people of our great state.

I first met Michele nearly two decades ago, when I was a 2L at the University of Montana School of Law and she was a graduate student at UM. Michele was the only non-law student in my first environmental law class with Professor John Horwitz, and it was imminently clear from day one that she was the smartest person in the classroom. I was immediately impressed with her preparedness for each class, her mastery of the materials, and her ability to communicate her thoughts. When few, if any, of the students in our class were able to fully answer Professor Horwitz's Socratic inquiries, which was often, Michele would graciously fill the gaps in the discussion. She was as articulate then as is she to this day, and it was clear she not only did her homework but was a critical thinker who understood the nuances of the law. I was so impressed with her acumen for the law that I apparently encouraged her to attend law school after completing her Master's degree. She reminded me of that discussion recently and I can only say she made a decision that has benefitted the Montana Bar and the profession as a whole.

While Michele's application for the Judgeship and her resume speak for themselves, I can tell you that she is a passionate student of the law and has been a deft advocate for her clients throughout her civil practice. She is an excellent legal writer and orator and she is highly respected among her peers for her skill as an advocate and litigator. She is also a kind and thoughtful person whose varied experiences in life, and with individuals from all walks of life, will allow her to serve as an empathic yet impartial judge. Michele's experience in working with parties from both sides of the aisle in the Montana Legislature

Judicial Nomination Commission RE: Michele Reinhart Levine September 23, 2020 Page 2

and in her civil practice will further assist her in administrating a just courtroom in which all parties are met with consideration and respect.

Finally, Michele is a quick study, and with her diverse experience and practice, I am confident she would step into the judgeship with vigor and soon be as organized, prepared, and efficient as any judge in the state. She also understands the concept of judicial economy and knows that justice is often served through compromised, if not amicable, resolution of the parties' disputes. With that said, I have no doubt in her ability to effectively preside over criminal and civil trials and make informed rulings on procedural, evidentiary, and substantive issues of law.

In short, I can think of no better candidate for the 8th Judicial District Court Judgeship than Michele, and she has my utmost confidence for your nomination.

Very truly yours,

CAREY LAW FIRM, P.C.

Bv

David T. Lighthall

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

Sent via email to: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission Members:

I am writing in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's application for appointment to the Eighth Judicial District, to replace the vacancy created by Judge Greg Pinski's recent resignation. I have known Michele since her time serving in the Montana State Legislature and have always admired her forthright approach to problem-solving.

Michele's application details her breadth of legal experience and understanding of the law; her academic achievements and leadership awards, and her professional work with the FairClaim firm of Newhall, Martin and Schulke P.C. Her diverse experience working with domestic violence; child custody, negligence, and protection orders; and worker's compensation cases involving firefighters, CNAs and workers in the trades industry would prove beneficial to a justice of the District Court. Her work on product liability cases involving toxic products and her degree in Environmental Studies would undoubtedly be helpful in the upcoming asbestos cases from Libby that have been assigned to the Eighth Judicial District Court. Finally, her time working as a legal intern in the Missoula County Attorney's Office offers her the unique perspective of the types of cases and caseload of an urban county district court.

I personally know Michele to be a strong, decisive leader of high integrity, who is well respected by her peers and others in the Great Falls community. I believe Michele is thoughtful, fair, and dedicated to the law.

Although relatively new to the community, Michele's spouse is a lifelong resident of Great Falls and Michele has been openly embraced by the community. The Levine kiddos and their parents are often seen hiking the Rivers Edge Trail or romping on the playgrounds in our city parks. I am confident her experience as a legislative candidate and the community's earnest acceptance will earn her the voter support for a future successful election.

When making this important decision for our community, I know you recognize the magnitude of recommending a justice candidate who is well accepted within the community and can work with the standing elected officials of Cascade County. Michele fits both those measures. Thank you for the opportunity to send my thoughts.

With respect for your role,

Jane Weber

Longstanding resident of Great Falls, MT and County Commissioner



John M. Morrison Frederick F. Sherwood David K. W. Wilson, Jr. Linda M. Deola Brian J. Miller

rfolsen@mswdlaw.com

Attorneys at Law 401 North Last Chance Gulch P.O. Box 557, Helena, Montana 59624-0557 www.mswdlaw.com Robert Farris-Olsen Andrée Larose Scott Peterson Anne Sherwood

(406) 442-3261 (406) 443-7294 FAX

September 24, 2020

Via U.S. e-mail only

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

Re: Eighth Judicial District Judicial Vacancy

Letter for Support for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Ms. Menzies:

I'm writing in support of Michele Reinhart Levine's nomination for appointment to replace Judge Pinski as a judge in the Eighth Judicial District Court. I've known Michele since she started law school, and I was her TA in civil procedure. If I recall correctly, she showed up to one of my first TA sessions, and was incredibly prepared with questions. This kind of motivation and understanding, carried through law school and into private practice. I'm confident as a judge she will always be thoroughly prepared and thoughtful in her decision making.

Michele's breadth of experience will also ensure she succeeds as a competent and impartial judge. As a judge most of her time will be spent dealing with family and criminal law. Fortunately, her experience with the Missoula County Attorney's Office and her probono work have her well prepared.

Of particular note, though, is her background in consumer protection. At the moment, there are very few attorneys working to protect Montana consumers (other than in insurance issues) from unfair and deceptive acts and practices. And there are even fewer judges with that experience. Thankfully, Michele's time at the Office of Consumer

Protection has prepared her to understand these issues and oversee lawsuits involving the Montana Consumer Protection Act.

Finally, Michele's experience as a Legislator is invaluable. Not many of our judges have experience in crafting legislation. As a judge, Michele's role, whether in civil or criminal matters, will require her to interpret Montana's laws. Having drafted legislation, and advocated for or against it, Michele is in a unique position to understand the plain language of the laws, but also the purpose of the laws she is interpreting. This knowledge will make Michele an even more qualified judge.

I'm confident Michele will be an effective Judge from day one. Please forward his name to the governor for appointment to the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Sincerely,

Robert Farris-Olsen

September 22, 2020

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

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in support of Michele Reinhart Levine and her application to be the next 8th District Court Judge. I have known Michele for 10 years and cannot imagine another more qualified Montanan to join the judiciary. Michele Reinhart Levine has dedicated her life to being an advocate for all Montanans and understand Montana issues around inequities and justice in our communities.

Michele Reinhart Levine has a breadth of experience in land use in Montana and is an outdoor enthusiast. I first met Michele on the North Fork River, her knowledge of Montana water rights and environmental issues comes from a love of the Montana outdoors. She has worked on trails and in Department of Natural Resources which provides her a good understanding of our public and private lands.

Michele Reinhart Levine has also been an advocate for equity for women, minorities and the LBGQ community rights. It has been heartening to watch her career to address these issues in the Legislature and in her legal career. Michele has grown by working in both of these arenas and seen first-hand in Missoula and Cascade County the challenges Montana communities are facing. Michele Reinhart Levine has true insight into these judicial issues which prepares her to be a able Montana Judge.

Please consider appointing Michele Reinhart Levine to this opening. Michele Reinhart Levine would serve Cascade County and Montana well as the next 8th District Court Judge.

Sincerely,

Kyle Waterman 940 2nd Ave E Kalispell MT 59901 September 21, 2020

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

SENT VIA EMAIL TO: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Dear Members of the Judicial Nomination Commission,

Michele Reinhart Levine embodies the judicial qualities of fairness, hard work, and compassion. It is without hesitation that I recommend her for appointment to the 8th Judicial District bench and urge you to strongly consider her application.

Michele deeply values fairness. She will hold people accountable while understanding that inherent imbalances exist in our justice system. She values a spirited debate and considers others' points of view, ceding well-raised points and provides a thoughtful counter perspective or alternative approach to resolving a problem. Her balanced approach and background in mediation and negotiation will serve her well in resolving the variety of disputes that come before any district court judge.

I have observed Michele's work ethic, her ambitious goals, and the unwavering dedication she brings to every project since she was young. She has always deeply valued public service. I watched her work tirelessly on behalf of her constituents during legislative sessions and connecting with her community outside of the legislature. She excels at engaging with clients, colleagues, and opposing counsel, striving to find the right solution or compromise that fits the specific circumstances of the matter and applicable law as well as honoring the *why* of the law – the reason for the rule. She currently balances a robust law practice with raising a family and serving her community through volunteer work and leadership in local nonprofit organizations.

Michele leads with grace and her genuine curiosity facilitates thoughtful and respectful discussions among adversaries. Her judicial temperament will undoubtedly showcase her respect for others, active listening skills, and empathy. She understands the human struggles many people bring with them to court, including poverty, mental health, and addiction issues because she has worked with pro bono clients, injured workers, and criminal defendants. Her soft voice and aptitude for empathy will not override her commitment to justice or her ability to be decisive or to deliver tough decisions.

Over the twenty years or so that I have known Michele, she has been an outstanding public servant, advocate, and friend. Please accept my strongest endorsement of her qualifications and personality. Both will serve the citizens of Cascade County very well as a district court judge.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kelley Rischke

Kelley Hubbard Rischke 2908 Tradewind Ln.

Bozeman, MT 59718 Kelley_lynne@hotmail.com

Tiffany Hensley-McBain, PhD thmcbain@gmail.com

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

EMAILED TO: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

September 15, 2020

RE: Michele Reinhart Levine- Eighth Judicial Court District Vacancy

Dear Ms. Menzies and Commission Members,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write in support of Michele Reinhart Levine for the judicial vacancy with the Eighth Judicial District Court. I have worked closely with Michele as members and officers of the Junior League of Great Falls, and I firmly believe she is the best candidate for this position.

It is apparent from not only her application, but also the many supportive comments already sent on her behalf that Michele's professionalism, experience, and accolades make her more than qualified for this position. However, I can also speak to her qualities and dedication to her community on a more personal level and will attempt to do so:

Michele is a caring and proud member of the greater community. Michele served as a Montana State Legislator, and she remains active in engaging women in civic and political roles. She has been an active member of the Junior League of Great Falls (JLGF), an organization focused on developing qualified civic leaders through volunteerism, since December 2012. During that time, she has served as Membership Chair, President Elect, President, and Nominating Chair. Through her dedication to JLGF, Michele has put in countless hours to raise money and provide hands-on service to multiple Great Falls organizations primarily benefiting children. These include the Children's Receiving Home, Toby's House Crisis Nursery, and the STEAM expo, among others. She is nearly always the first to volunteer and remains a member we can count on to stay engaged, even though she has transitioned to an alumni role. I am certain that if she were given the position of judge in the Eighth District Court, Michele would represent the greater community with pride and approach the position with professionalism and a mutual respect for all whom she encounters.

Finally, I firmly believe that Michele would make a fair and non-partisan judge. Michele approaches conflict with logic and a level head. I also know from experience that she is capable of reaching across the aisle when she disagrees with someone politically. I have seen Michele put aside ideological differences to move in a positive direction, and it is my firm opinion that as a judge she would be capable of making non-biased decisions.

Lastly, I know Michele to have strong morals, a commitment to social justice, and an understanding of the broad implications of judicial work. Her character exemplifies integrity and the citizens of Montana would be fortunate to have Michele on the bench.

Respectfully,

Dr. Tiffany Hensley-McBain Great Falls, MT

Daniel Bennett

2410 5th Avenue South

Great Falls, MT 59405

Judicial Nomination Commission

c/o Lois Menzies

Office of Court Administrator

P.O. Box 203005

mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

My letter is in support of the application of Michele Reinhart-Levine for the position of judge in the Eighth Judicial District.

From 1985 to 2017 I was employed as a personal injury paralegal with Linnell, Newall, Martin and Schulke in Great Falls.

From 2012 through 2017 I worked with Michele on a daily basis. The majority of her case load at that time involved the representation of plaintiffs in Worker's Compensation and personal injury cases.

Michele is as intelligent and hard working as any attorney I've worked with. She has great compassion for her clients and represents them vigorously. Despite the stress of handling personal injury and workers compensation claims she remains steadfastly calm and courteous in her dealings with defense counsel and adjusters. This has enabled her to achieve immediate resolution of issues that, might otherwise take days or more to resolve. It was not at all unusual for Michele to interrupt our status meetings to take a call from a distressed client, conference in the defense representative, and obtain a favorable result in a matter of minutes.

During her time as an associate Michele was often directed to research complex litigation problems. She was excellent at reducing the issues to their essentials and illuminating a path forward. All of us benefited from her abilities.

During the time I worked with Michele she established close friendships with many of her fellow employees, whether attorneys, secretaries, receptionists or paralegals. Her love of people was also reflected in the many community service projects in which she was involved that have been reported by others. All while raising two young daughters!

It is difficult for me to imagine a candidate more suited to fill the 8th Judicial District Court vacancy than Michelle Reinhart-Levine.

Daniel Bennett

VIA EMAIL ONLY: mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

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

Re: Letter of Support for Michele Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

From 1985 to present, I have engaged in the practice of law in Montana and the West, with major emphasis on water, wildlife, constitutional law, and land use and natural resource litigation. From 2010 to 2013, I was a Visiting Professor at the University of Montana and taught courses in Constitutional Law, Environmental Law, Federal Public Land Law, Law of Climate Change, an Advanced Seminar in Natural Resources, and Appellate Advocacy. I am currently a law professor and Director of the Water and Justice program at the Vermont Law School. Of the 1,500+ students that I have taught, Michelle easily rises to the top tier of smart, level-headed and diligent students.

Michele was a law student of mine in my Constitutional Law course at the University of Montana School of Law, (as it was known then), in the fall of 2010. Michele was a diligent and prepared student. She came to class ready to engage in the course material that was assigned to her. She made thoughtful contributions to the class discussion. She timely completed assignments and tested well. Her A- in the class reflected her work ethic for a complicated subject area, where grades are issued on a strict curve.

I was also familiar with Michele from her work for conservation non-profits and at the Montana Legislature. She quickly grasped and processed information. She arrived at reasoned conclusions in a level headed manner. In regards to the temperament, intellect, and work ethic needed for the position of a District Court Judge, Michele has the necessary qualities to perform the work, and to do so with high ethical standards. Please forward her name to Governor Steve Bullock. She is highly qualified to serve as a Montana trial court judge in the 8th judicial district.

Please contact me at 406 396 6415 if you have any questions.

 $/_{\rm S}/$

Jack R. Tuholske



Phone 406-444-7794 Fax 406-444-7798 TDD 406-444-0532 WWW.WCC.DLI.MT.GOV

WORKERS' COMPENSATION COURT

David M. Sandler Iudge

September 22, 2020

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

Re: Eleventh Judicial District Court Vacancy

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I write to recommend Michele Reinhart Levine for appointment to the vacancy in the Eight Judicial District Court.

I have known Michele since 2015, when she appeared before the Workers' Compensation Court shortly after my appointment. Since then, she has appeared before me many times and I have spoken to her many times at conferences. Michele is an exceptional lawyer and advocate for her clients. Whether investigating the facts of the case or researching the law, Michele leaves no stone unturned. She is extremely competent, professional, and ethical.

Michele possesses all of the attributes of an exceptional judge. She is intelligent, thoughtful, decisive, and pragmatic. Her legal writing is articulate, clear, and precise. She handles herself in a professional manner. Michele easily relates to people from all walks of life and treats everyone with respect and kindness. She is a hard worker and is therefore the type of person the court needs to handle the large caseload of a judge in the Eighth Judicial District.

The Eighth Judicial District would be well-served by having Michele as a Judge. I urge you to forward her name to Governor Bullock for his consideration.

Judicial Nomination Commission c/o Lois Menzies Page 2

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

David M. Sandler

Judge, Montana Workers' Compensation Court



Joe C. Maynard, Jr. P.O. Box 2529 Billings, MT 59103-2529 Telephone: 406.255.7236

Facsimile: 406.252.5292 jmaynard@crowleyfleck.com

September 22, 2020

Judicial Nomination Commission P.O. Box 203005 Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Michele Reinhart Levine Endorsement

Dear Commission Members:

By way of introduction, I am a senior partner in the largest institutional, corporate, and insurance defense firm in a 5-state region. Over the course of the past 30+ years, I have appeared in most, if not all, state and federal courts in the State of Montana at one time or another. As Montanans, we are very fortunate to possess the jurists we have presiding over our courts. Michele Reinhart Levine would be an excellent addition to an already sterling group of jurists. The purpose of this letter is therefore to urge you to include Michele among the candidates to be forwarded to Governor Bullock.

Turning to the basis for my endorsement, an appropriate starting point is the Code of Judicial Conduct. Rule 2.5 requires competence, diligence, and cooperation. During the course of litigating multiple cases against Michele, I can unequivocally state that she possesses each of those qualities. She is always thoroughly prepared and it is apparent that she has researched the controlling precedent. She presents legal arguments in a reasoned, cogent manner. Consistent with her duty of candor with the court, she acknowledges those decisions which are adverse to her position. Although a zealous advocate, she has never misrepresented the facts or the law. In short, she has consistently demonstrated a high level of integrity.

A judge should also be temperate and attentive. At all times, Michele has demonstrated those qualities. She is professional and does not engage in personal attacks. I am confident that she would be a hardworking, thoughtful, intelligent jurist who would deliver well-reasoned decisions which attempt to follow the ever changing state of the law. I do not believe she would tolerate unprofessional or unethical conduct.

Judicial Nomination Commission September 22, 2020 Page 2

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Montana Code of Judicial Conduct requires impartiality and fairness. Although Michele is a plaintiffs' attorney and I exclusively defend insurance companies, I have no doubt that Michele would decide cases based upon the facts and law rather than personal bias or prejudice. I am convinced that the litigants would leave her courtroom knowing the decision was the result of an impartial application of the law to the facts and not the result of the judge's personal bias or agenda.

In light of the above, I am confident that Michele Reinhart Levine would make an outstanding district court judge. I therefore urge you to submit her name to Governor Bullock for appointment.

Sincerely,

Joe C. Maynard

JCM:vb

BECK, AMSDEN & STALPES, PLLC

Attorneys at Law

Attorneys: Monte D. Beck John L. Amsden Justin P. Stalpes Lindsay C. Beck Anthony F. Jackson 1946 Stadium Drive, Suite 1 Bozeman, MT 59715 Tel: (406) 586-8700 Fax: (406) 586-8960 E-mail: info@becklawyers.com

September 23, 2020

Of Counsel: Michael G. Black

Paralegals:
Natalie F. Phillips
David W. McGoldrick
Reid M. Beck

VIA E-mail and U.S. First-Class Mail

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

Re: Letter of Support for Michele Reinhart Levine

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

First, thank you all for your time and service to the Judicial Nomination Commission. The work you do is of critical importance to Montanans and is deeply appreciated.

I am an attorney with Beck, Amsden & Stalpes in Bozeman, Montana. Almost all the work I do is litigation in state and federal district courts. I am honored to support Michele Reinhart Levine to become the newest 8th Judicial District judge. I have known Michele since around 2008 and know that she is uniquely qualified to make an outstanding judge. Michele's appointment would be beneficial to not only those who practice before her, but to the entire community, judiciary, and state.

My first thought when I learned there would be a Cascade County judicial vacancy was, "I hope Michele seeks this appointment." Anyone who knows Michele knows that she has the characteristics necessary to be a great judge. Michele's demand for fairness and justice might only be matched by her willingness and dedication to hear someone out and withhold judgment until she has. Yet she has no problem deciding or reaching a determination once she has heard what you have to say.

With Michele, one can be assured they will be heard and treated fairly and justly. But even when that treatment comes in the form of deserved reproach (which will often be the case as a judge) Michele has a unique ability to do so with respect and a conveyed sense that she has listened and fully and intelligently considered the circumstances. Even if her judgement is harsh, it will be fair. At the end of the day, what more should we ask from a judge than a considered, swift, and just determination?

Michele is also a people person who cares about and respects others. She will treat with respect and equality all those who come before her, regardless of social class, sex, gender, race, creed, or other characteristic. People should receive justice based on the law and facts — not immutable characteristics that all too often are demonstrated by objective research as working for or against certain people. I strongly believe that few will work as hard as Michele to ensure fair and equal treatment is always the case in her court.

Michele has also campaigned, won elections, and learned or honed the skills necessary to ensure she is not only a judge until the next election, but well into the future. I believe strongly judges should only be appointed who can and will win future elections. I believe this is important not only for the obvious reasons, but because it ensures consistency in the judiciary and prevents repeated turnover with judges who need to learn the job over again.

Michele has built a network of support in her community and throughout the state. Likely due in large part because of her exuded sense of fairness and her people skills, Michele has built strong support among the defense bar, the plaintiff bar, the criminal bar, and the non-legal community. Michele has the support she will need to be a judge for decades to come.

Michele is also a quick and efficient learner with a keen legal mind. Her intellect will ensure she smoothly transitions to the bench. I also expect that her abilities and mind will result in a decisive court that more than meets the time and efficiency demands of the position.

For these and many other reasons, I strongly and enthusiastically support Michele Reinhart Levine to be the next 8th Judicial District Court judge.

Sincerely,

Anthony Jackson

Julie E French 7373 E US Hwy 60 Lot 57 Gold Canyon, AZ 85118

September 20, 2020

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

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Michele Reinhardt Levine

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been asked to write a letter of recommendation for Michele Reinhardt Levine for the judgeship vacancy in the eighth judicial district for Cascade County.

I was honored to serve with Michele in the 2007 and 2009 legislative session for the state of Montana, with both of us serving in the House. I was in leadership in the 2009 session. I found Michele to be an excellent legislator! She was tenacious in issues that were important to her and was well spoken and well educated on the issues whenever rising in committee or on the House floor. Michele was also one of those legislators who was well respected on both sides of the isle and was willing to work with all legislators, regardless of party affiliation. She worked hard, represented her district well and was a good listener.

Michele was not afraid to speak her mind but willing to compromise when needed to get legislation passed. I remember one instant when her bill was doomed to die in committee. She approached every legislator individually on the committee and presented her case! The bill passed out of committee AND passed out of the House.

Personally, as an ordinary citizen, if I had to go before a judge, I would want that judge to be honest, fair, empathetic, and well versed in the law. Michele would be this and more! I can think of no other person I would want to see as a judge than Michele Levine.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Julie French