

# Tab 1

**Montana Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission**  
**Zoom Video Conference**  
**March 6, 2026 - 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Commissioners Present:**

Justice Beth Baker, Gretchen Hall, Olivia Riutta, Alison Paul, Lillian Alvernaz, Aimee Grmoljez, Jacob Griffith, Hon. Leslie Halligan, Hon. David Carter, Kekek Stark, and Maggie Weamer

**Commissioners Absent:**

Hon. Stacie FourStar, Rick Cook, Ed Bartlett, Juli Pierce, Sen. Wendy McKamey, Rep. Alanah Griffith, and Hon. John Kutzman

**Others Present:**

Katy Lovell, Becky Schupp Watson, Alissa Chambers, Stephanie Marshall, Madiera Zehnder, Megan Dishong, Hon. Katherine Bidegaray, Ann Sheahan, John Mudd, Valerie Falls Down, Ryan Davies, Jami Campbell, Hayden Ramsey, Elise Keenan, Tina Hines, and Sara Wood

**Call to Order & Introduction:**

Justice Baker called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and asked participants to introduce themselves.

**Approval of September 5, 2025, Meeting Minutes:**

There were no questions or additions to the December 5, 2025, meeting minutes and they were unanimously approved.

**AI Discussion and E-Filing with Ryan Davies (Montana Supreme Court IT):**

Ryan Davies discussed the ongoing challenges related to expanding Montana’s e-filing system to self-represented litigants, as well as the potential role of AI and self-help resources in supporting future implementation efforts. He explained that while expanding e-filing to pro se litigants has been a goal for several years, current efforts remain focused on implementing e-filing across Montana courts. About half of the state’s courts currently use e-filing, with many limited jurisdiction courts still not participating. Court participation is optional.

There are several significant barriers to pro se e-filing, including the lack of a unique identifier system for self-represented litigants. Attorneys can access cases through their bar numbers, but pro se litigants do not have a comparable identifier. In addition, Montana’s 192 courts operate on separate databases, creating further logistical and technological issues. Ryan also emphasized staffing and resource limitations. His three-person team currently supports approximately 7,000 attorneys on the e-filing system. Expanding services to individual litigants would substantially increase

demands on the system and staff capacity. He suggested that future implementation efforts may involve a joint task force between the Access to Justice Commission and the Commission on Technology and recommended involving Katy Lovell and the Self-Help Law Center to assist litigants with basic support needs. Contracted services and grant funding to support expanded e-filing access for self-represented litigants could be useful.

Ryan explained that AI is not yet fully reliable for legal applications due to potential inaccuracies, confidentiality concerns, and liability risks. Courts are exploring the possibility of closed AI systems limited to Montana law to assist self-represented litigants with pleadings and navigating court processes. The State Information Technology Services Division (SITSD) recently hired an AI officer to help develop AI policies and procedures. The commission agreed that involving the Judicial Branch Security Officer, Alex Reynolds, and potentially the SITSD AI officer, would be important in evaluating security, confidentiality, and policy concerns related to AI use in the courts.

The group discussed the difference between court-provided AI tools and litigants' independent use of public AI tools. Court-provided tools, such as limited-purpose chatbots, are potentially safer because they can operate within a closed system focused solely on Montana law. Concerns were raised regarding potential state liability if court-provided AI tools provide incorrect guidance, which is a significant factor slowing AI implementation within the courts. Alison Paul shared that MLSA has developed educational resources regarding the risks and limitations of AI tools.

Judge Carter advocated for a more proactive approach to AI development within the courts, noting that self-represented litigants are already using AI tools and that courts risk falling behind if they do not engage more directly with the technology. He suggested beginning with a limited pilot project in a smaller case type, such as with orders of protection, and expanding incrementally based on experience and results. The commission agreed to form an Access to Justice AI working group to further explore these issues. Katy Lovell will coordinate outreach to participants and Justice Baker will contact Alex Reynolds regarding participation, and Justice Shea will be contacted to determine whether the Technology Commission would like to participate.

Katy briefly discussed *JusticeBench*, an online initiative from the Stanford Legal Design Lab, that monitors how states are addressing AI implementation. The link shares overviews of various AI projects and tools being used across the country, highlighting legal applications such as verifying case citations, assisting tenants with maintenance requests, and supporting Social Security applications. Katy noted that while these tools may offer significant benefits, concerns related to liability and insurance coverage could slow adoption by courts and organizations.

For more information about AI, the law school in Missoula is holding their annual Intellectual Property Day (IP Day) event on March 27<sup>th</sup>. The event is open to the public and will cover all things AI.

**Reference Only Items:**

Justice Baker shared positive news from an article published by The National Jurist recognizing the law student class of 2025 for contributing more than 5.1 million hours of pro bono legal services nationwide, valued at over \$178 million. The Land Use and Natural Resources Clinic at the Alexander Blewett III School of Law was highlighted in the article as an example of impactful student-led legal service work.

The court has set a public meeting for March 24<sup>th</sup> to discuss several different topics including the Community Justice Worker Program. The meeting will be held in person and on Zoom.

The Annual ABA National Access to Justice meeting will be held in Indianapolis in October. Registration and more details will be available in July.

**Access to Justice Programs Report:** Katy provided an overview of recent progress within the Self-Help Law Centers, including the hiring of new staff members and visits to both the centers and court-connected sites throughout the state.

The Self-Represented Litigants Committee has developed a policy governing the approval and posting of court forms to the website. A couple forms have already been drafted, approved, and posted to the state website, while additional final drafts are ready for review.

Katy also reported that five of the six AmeriCorps positions for the upcoming year have been filled. Interviews are scheduled for the remaining position, which is expected to be filled by the end of March.

The Family Transition Project continues to see success with a growing caseload. Plans are in place to refill Emma Schmelzer's position later this calendar year. In the meantime, funds from the vacancy are being used to support mediation services.

Katy has been traveling across the state for Community Justice conversations, with several additional meetings scheduled through the end of the year.

**MLSA Update:** Alison Paul introduced Hayden Ramsey, the new Community Justice Worker Project Coordinator. Hayden has focused on public benefits work, with much of the role involving community outreach and education regarding available public benefits, particularly following the closure of local OPA offices in 2018. Hayden is

specifically trained in public benefits law and serves as a trained Social Security representative.

Jamie Campbell was also introduced as the AmeriCorps Coordinator. Jamie has worked with MLSA in various roles over several years, including assisting with updates to the Economic Impact Report. She reported that recruitment efforts are currently underway and preparations are being made for mid-year training. MLSA has also submitted its third-year continuation grant application for the Fall 2026-Fall 2027 term and expects to receive a response soon.

Alison reported that MLSA received a grant to support domestic violence services in Billings, which will fund the hiring of an attorney and legal assistant in partnership with the new family violence center in Billings. MLSA also received a grant in Kalispell, in partnership with the Abbie Center, to provide a domestic violence attorney in the area.

Finally, Alison shared that MLSA successfully negotiated terms for a new HUD Fair Housing grant and has begun establishing a new fair housing program for Montana.

**Karla Gray Award Information:** Nominations are now open for the Karla Gray Award, presented annually by the State Bar to honor a Montana judge from any court who has demonstrated dedication to improving access to Montana courts. Ann Sheahan reviewed the award criteria and reminded members to send their nominations to the Montana Justice Foundation by May 15. The submissions will be considered at the June meeting, and the Commission will send nominations to the State Bar President's Committee for final selection.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates and Judicial Meet and Greets:**

Justice Baker noted the next four meeting dates listed on the agenda, June 5, 2026, September 11, 2026, and December 4, 2026.

**Public Comment:** No Public Comment. The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

# Tab 2

## IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

No. AF 11-0765

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IN RE THE PROPOSAL TO ADOPT  
RULES AUTHORIZING CERTIFIED  
LAY ADVOCATES TO PROVIDE  
LIMITED LEGAL SERVICES IN  
JUSTICE COURTS AND CITY  
COURTS

ORDER

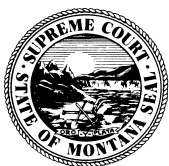
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Upon the request of Montana Legal Services Association (“MLSA”), through the Working Group appointed by this Court in its March 27, 2026 Order, for additional time to file the Working Group’s recommendations regarding proposed rule changes and an implementing order for the Community Justice Worker Program (“CJW Program”), and for good cause shown.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Working Group is granted a 30-day extension, until June 10, 2026, to file its recommendations with the Clerk of Court.

This Order will be published on this Court’s website. In addition, the Clerk is directed to provide copies to: the State Bar of Montana, with the request that they be posted on the State Bar’s website; the State Law Library; the members of the Access to Justice Commission; the Executive Director of the Montana Legal Services Association; and the Dean of the Alexander Blewett III School of Law.

# Tab 3



**The Supreme Court of Montana Access to Justice Commission.**

June 5, 2026

Sent Via E-mail to [bergmanc@lsc.gov](mailto:bergmanc@lsc.gov)

Board of Directors  
Legal Services Corporation  
3333 K Street, NW 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20007-3522

**DRAFT**

c/o Carol Bergman, Vice President for Government Relations & Public Affairs

Dear LSC Board of Directors,

Please accept this letter on behalf of the Montana Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission to offer our observations about the critical need for LSC-funded services in Montana.

Montana's Access to Justice Commission, which the Supreme Court established in 2012, exists in part to provide long-range, integrated planning among legal assistance providers and to foster the development of a statewide integrated legal services delivery system. Our Commission has spent several years studying the availability of and need for resources to meet the civil legal needs of low- and moderate-income Montanans. We have found that, although Montana is a national leader in providing innovative solutions and volunteer services toward achieving access to justice, increasing numbers of people still are left to navigate complex legal situations on their own, and many more remain without even the basic information or skills to understand that they have a legal problem or how to begin to address it.

Recent data show that approximately thirteen percent of Montanans live at or below 125% of the federal poverty level and qualify for civil legal aid under the LSC guidelines. Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA), the only statewide provider of civil legal aid, consistently receives almost twice as many requests for help as it has resources to handle. In 2025 alone, nearly 10,000 individuals contacted MLSA for assistance, but it could serve only just over 5,000. Because many parts of Montana are considered "legal deserts," with seven or fewer attorneys in nearly half of the state's counties, the resources MLSA provides across the state are invaluable and unmatched. MLSA also responds to

changing needs and adapts its services to meet those demands.

LSC grants are nearly a quarter of MLSA's annual budget, an anticipated investment of \$1,895,048 in 2026. A 50% cut to LSC would put over 1,454 Montanans and their household members (including more than 600 children) per year at risk of eviction, loss of health care, and domestic violence. MLSA could expect to place 170 fewer Montanans with attorney volunteers each year.

And these impacts have real-world economic implications. The total economic impact of MLSA's statewide civil legal aid services in 2024 was \$7,253,650. This includes direct recovery to clients, cost savings, and other indirect benefits. With a 50% cut to LSC, Montana's economy can expect a total negative economic impact of \$1,173,645 per year.

More and more Montanans are coming to court on their own with truly desperate situations that the courts need to address, while resulting pressures on the court system bring hardship to everyone waiting their turn in a crowded docket. Montana courts have seen a steady increase in workload without a corresponding increase in resources. The Judicial Branch's 2024 workload assessment study showed that Domestic Relations cases—cases with a high percentage of self-represented litigants—are the third most time-consuming case types, behind only criminal cases and cases involving child abuse and neglect. What is more, Domestic Relations cases were the only area in which the time judges spent per case *increased* since 2014. Meanwhile, we estimate that current civil legal aid resources, both publicly and privately funded, can help only one in ten Montanans of limited means with their civil legal needs.

MLSA, which has been providing civil legal aid to Montanans for 60 years, is a vital partner in our equal justice efforts. Indeed, it is often the key player in coordinating collaborative efforts among governmental and private entities to make sure people with civil legal needs have access to a range of legal information and advice, up to full-service representation. For over a decade, the Montana judiciary has had modest state funding for its Court Help Program, which coordinates self-help services around the state through community self-help centers and works to develop and streamline legal forms and information for people facing legal challenges on their own. Despite an extremely austere budget, the program has prospered in large part because of our partnership with MLSA and the AmeriCorps program—federal funding that also is uncertain. Finally, MLSA is the key statewide leader in coordinating local pro bono programs and alternative service delivery models, such as access to online information, clinics, and limited advice services. Without LSC funding to update and host self-help materials and forms, the over 17,000 Montanans who research their legal issues, finalize court documents, and ask live-help questions annually will not have this assistance available.

The data show that when MLSA attorneys provide people with legal advice or representation, nearly 95% of the cases are resolved by settlement, administrative action, or limited scope services. These services clearly improve people's lives and the efficiency of the court system. But MLSA is at maximum capacity for providing assistance and coordination among pro bono attorneys. Meanwhile, the demand does not diminish but continues to grow. At the same time, with the exception of a small fee diverted to domestic violence advocacy and a general fund appropriation less than \$200,000 annually for court-connected mediation services, Montana does not provide general state funding for civil legal aid. Private funding also falls far short of meeting the need and is unlikely to make up for the anticipated loss of federal grant funds to legal aid and domestic violence organizations across the state. Despite extensive efforts to diversify funding sources to include more private foundations and individual donors, non-federal funding sources currently account for 40% of MLSA's total budget.

Quite simply, the loss of federal funding would have a devastating impact on Montana's justice system—*an essential government function*. We cannot overstate the importance of Montana Legal Services Association to the people and the courts of the State of Montana. Continuing adequate funding for this vital service is critical if we ever hope to meet the promise of our United States Constitution to “establish Justice . . . and secure the Blessings of Liberty” to all.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Justice Beth Baker, Chair  
Montana Access to Justice Commission

Voting Members of the Access to Justice Commission:

Ed Bartlett, Esq.  
Business/Communications Leader

Hon. David A. Carter  
Yellowstone County Justice of the Peace

Rick Cook  
Clerk of District Court, Chouteau County

Sen. Wendy McKamey

Letter to LSC Board of Directors

June 5, 2026

Page 4

Montana Senate

Aimee Grmoljez, Esq.  
Crowley Fleck law firm

Hon. Leslie Halligan  
District Court Judge, 4<sup>th</sup> Jud. Dist.

Hon. John Kutzman  
District Court Judge, 8<sup>th</sup> Jud. Dist.

Hon. Stacie FourStar  
Chief Judge, Fort Peck Tribal Court

Gretchen Hall  
Aging Services Bureau, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services

Juli Pierce, Esq.  
State Bar of Montana

Margaret Weamer, Esq.  
Montana Justice Foundation

Jacob Griffith, Esq.  
Montana Attorney General's Office

Rep. Alanah Griffith  
Montana House of Representatives

Lillian Alvernaz, Esq.  
Representative of Indigenous Communities

Professor Kekek Stark  
Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana

Olivia Riutta  
Montana Primary Care Association

*ATJC Member Alison Paul, who is the Executive Director of Montana Legal Services Association, abstained from voting on this letter of support.*

# Tab 4

Billings:  
D. Michael Eakin



Sidney:  
Daniel J. Eakin

## Attorneys at Law

May 15, 2026

Becky Schupp Watson  
Montana Justice Foundation  
VIA EMAIL

Re: Nomination for Karla M. Gray Equal Justice Award

Dear Ms. Schupp Watson,

Please consider this letter with the enclosed nomination form for the Honorable Olivia Rieger, District Court Judge for the Montana Seventh Judicial District.

In my experience, Judge Rieger has demonstrated a dedication and commitment to improving access to Montana courts for everyone. This includes encouraging citizen involvement in her Court through jury duty, CASA volunteers, and remote appearance options. Judge Rieger is very proactive in involving others to find the best possible outcomes to cases. This is particularly shown in Youth in Need of Care cases, and in her treatment courts.

Judge Rieger also has shown her commitment to increasing involvement of attorneys in representing the indigent and those of limited means. This can be seen in her relationships with attorneys and her tireless advocacy for the Office of Public Defender and for access to court information for *pro se* litigants. Judge Rieger would be a worthy recipient of this award.

If you any questions or concerns about this, please do not hesitate to contact me at 406-694-3174, or dan.406law@gmail.com.

Thank you,

  
Dan Eakin

# Karla M. Gray Equal Justice Award

This award honors a judge from any court who has demonstrated dedication to improving access to Montana courts. Consideration for this award will be given to nominees who demonstrate this dedication and commitment with a combination of some or all of the efforts described below:

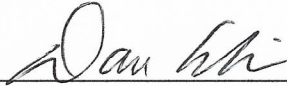
- Personally done noteworthy and/or considerable work improving access of all individuals, regardless of income, to the Montana court system.
- Instrumental in local Access to Justice efforts, including program development, cooperative efforts between programs, and support for community outreach efforts to improve understanding of and access to the courts.
- Active support of citizen involvement in the judicial system.
- Active support and commitment to increasing involvement of volunteer attorneys in representing the indigent and those of limited means.
- Other significant efforts that exhibit a long-term commitment to improving access to the judicial system.

The Access to Justice Commission selects nominees for the award, and the State Bar of Montana Past Presidents Committee selects one award winner. Nomination materials will be retained and considered by the Access to Justice Commission for three years.

Nominee: Hon. Olivia Rieger, Montana 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Address: P.O. Box 1249, Glendive, MT 59330

In a separate document, please describe how the nominee has demonstrated dedication to improving access to Montana courts. Please attach the description and other supporting documents to this nomination form.

Your signature: 

Print your name: Dan Eakin

Your address: 609 S. Central Ave., Suite 16,  
Sidney, MT 59220

Your phone number: 406-694-3174

Please email the nomination by May 15, 2026, to  
Becky Schupp Watson at the Montana Justice Foundation, [becky@mtjustice.org](mailto:becky@mtjustice.org)



Billings:  
D. Michael Eakin



Sidney:  
Daniel J. Eakin

## Attorneys at Law

May 15, 2026

Becky Schupp Watson  
Montana Justice Foundation  
VIA EMAIL

Re: Nomination for Karla M. Gray Equal Justice Award

Dear Ms. Schupp Watson,

Please consider this letter with the enclosed nomination form for the Honorable Matthew Wald, District Court Judge for the Montana Twenty-Second Judicial District.

In my experience, Judge Wald has demonstrated a dedication and commitment to improving access to Montana courts for everyone. This includes encouraging citizen involvement in his Court, and Judge Wald being proactive in involving others to find the best possible outcomes to cases. This is particularly shown in Youth in Need of Care cases.

Judge Wald also has shown his commitment to including tribal courts and tribal resources in cases where they are needed. He has supported tribal jurisdiction, and he has consistently encouraged and supported increasing attorney involvement in his judicial district. This is seen in his relationships with attorneys and remote appearance options. Judge Wald would be a worthy recipient of this award.

If you any questions or concerns about this, please do not hesitate to contact me at 406-694-3174, or [dan.406law@gmail.com](mailto:dan.406law@gmail.com).

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Dan Eakin'.

Dan Eakin

# Karla M. Gray Equal Justice Award

This award honors a judge from any court who has demonstrated dedication to improving access to Montana courts. Consideration for this award will be given to nominees who demonstrate this dedication and commitment with a combination of some or all of the efforts described below:

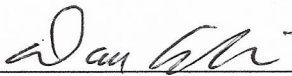
- Personally done noteworthy and/or considerable work improving access of all individuals, regardless of income, to the Montana court system.
- Instrumental in local Access to Justice efforts, including program development, cooperative efforts between programs, and support for community outreach efforts to improve understanding of and access to the courts.
- Active support of citizen involvement in the judicial system.
- Active support and commitment to increasing involvement of volunteer attorneys in representing the indigent and those of limited means.
- Other significant efforts that exhibit a long-term commitment to improving access to the judicial system.

The Access to Justice Commission selects nominees for the award, and the State Bar of Montana Past Presidents Committee selects one award winner. Nomination materials will be retained and considered by the Access to Justice Commission for three years.

Nominee: Hon. Matthew Wald, Montana 22nd Judicial District Court

Address: P.O. Box 1268, Columbus, MT 59019

In a separate document, please describe how the nominee has demonstrated dedication to improving access to Montana courts. Please attach the description and other supporting documents to this nomination form.

Your signature: 

Print your name: Dan Eakin

Your address: 609 S. Central Ave., Suite 16,  
Sidney, MT 59270

Your phone number: 406-694-3174

Please email the nomination by May 15, 2026, to  
Becky Schupp Watson at the Montana Justice Foundation, [becky@mtjustice.org](mailto:becky@mtjustice.org)



We hereby nominate Justice Beth Baker for the Karla M. Gray Award in recognition of her exceptional leadership and sustained commitment to advancing access to justice throughout Montana.

Justice Baker, who was sworn into office on January 3, 2011, has worked tirelessly to advance access to justice for all Montanans. She served ten years on the State Bar of Montana's Justice Initiatives Committee, is currently an ex officio director of the Montana Justice Foundation, and has served as the Montana Supreme Court's representative on the Court's Access to Justice Commission since its inception in 2012. Justice Baker has served as Chairperson for the Access to Justice Commission for over a decade. Justice Baker's leadership has promoted cooperative efforts between the courts, legal aid organizations, administrators, lawyers, the State Bar, legislators, and community partners. By encouraging coordination and shared purpose, Justice Baker has helped build a more cohesive network of support for access to justice efforts, ensuring on a practical level that individual Montanans are better supported by an accessible network of services as they interact with the legal system.

Recognizing the need for evidence-based decision-making, Justice Baker's leadership encouraged the Access to Justice Commission to support a collaborative statewide Justice Gap study assessing the needs of low-income Montanans, an assessment of the legal needs of elders in Montana, and a collaborative Economic Impact Report on Civil Legal Aid in Montana. Justice Baker provided knowledge, connections, and editing support to ensure that these reports and studies formed a solid foundation on which to launch efforts to increase access to justice in Montana.

Over the years, Justice Baker has also demonstrated a strong commitment to community outreach, recognizing that improving access to justice begins with broad understanding. For example, in 2015, Justice Baker worked to create a successful statewide Access to Justice Forum Series which took place in seven different locations across Montana. This series helped to gather information regarding the needs and challenges of low-income Montanans in accessing justice throughout Montana, to promote pro bono legal services and volunteerism, to advocate for adequate levels of funding and supportive policies and laws for fair access to justice, and to educate Montanans about the limits and challenges of the courts regarding unrepresented litigants. Justice Baker helped ensure that speakers and Listening Panel members at the Series included both people with lived experience, justice stakeholders, and policy makers to not only improve the knowledge of the Listening Panel members, but to facilitate the exchange of information between the speakers and their organizations to help build a community and statewide dialogue.

Based on this groundswell of growing support built by the Access to Justice Forum Series and needs reports, the Access to Justice Commission, as guided by Justice Baker, launched into a cooperative effort to access out-of-state funding to complete a detailed Strategic Plan for the Access to Justice Commission. The cooperation between the Office of the Court Administrator, the Montana Justice Foundation, the Access to Justice Commission, and the Montana Legal Services Association unlocked funding to create this informative Strategic Plan based on the unique realities in Montana and an implementation plan of projects focused on increasing access to justice at the local level.

Based on this strategic plan, Justice Baker was instrumental in strengthening support for access to justice. In addition to supporting two bills for funding for civil legal aid for low-income Montanans, which helped raise the profile of access to justice needs, the Access to Justice Commission supported a successful policy to recognize civil legal aid as a necessary beneficiary of unclaimed Cy Pres funds. These efforts have not only expanded the availability of resources but have also improved community understanding of access to local justice systems.

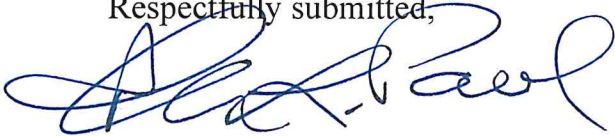
Throughout her time on the Access to Justice Commission, Justice Baker's work has reflected a deep appreciation for the real barriers faced by actual Montanans navigating the legal system and supported program development based on collaboration among justice stakeholders. In that vein, Justice Baker helped a collaborative effort to fund a Family Transition Project, which offers free, confidential mediation services for couples with children navigating divorce or parenting plans. This project provides real access to legal remedies in one of the most common touch points for individual Montanans, helping them create personalized parenting plans and avoid courtroom litigation. The Access to Justice Commission also supported the passage of Informal Domestic Relations Trials for cases where at least one party is self-represented. This process allows individuals to speak directly to the judge, simplifies evidence rules, and can be opted out of for a formal trial if needed. Justice Baker was also instrumental in forming a partnership between the Montana Judicial Branch and MLSA to access out-of-state funding to create infrastructure to train community justice workers to provide in-court representation for low-income people in courts of limited jurisdiction. These programs demonstrate Justice Baker's dedication to reducing access to justice barriers through practical, community-centered solutions.

Justice Baker has also supported an increasing commitment of Montana's Bar to provide volunteer services. This took the form of the Access to Justice Commission supporting a pro bono requirement for admission to the Montana Bar and supporting a Statewide Pro

Bono Coordinator position to support volunteering and creating Voluntary Pro Bono Report to help show the impact of volunteering.

In the spirit of Justice Karla M. Gray's legacy, Justice Baker exemplifies dedication, innovation, and collaboration in the pursuit of equal justice – all in a pragmatic, get-things-done way appropriate to Montana. Her contributions will have a lasting and meaningful impact on the accessibility of the legal system in Montana, making her a truly deserving recipient of this honor.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alison Paul", written in a cursive style.

Alison Paul  
Executive Director, Montana Legal Services Association

On behalf of the following supporters of this nomination:

- Montana Justice Foundation
- Katy Lovell, Access to Justice Program Coordinator
- Former Chief Justice Mike McGrath