

# Netzer, Krautter & Brown<sup>PC</sup>

ATTORNEYS & AT LAW

DONALD L. NETZER\*\*  
don@nkbattorneys.com  
RYAN ALEXANDER PAYNE\*  
ryan@nkbattorneys.com  
1060 South Central Ave., Ste 2  
Sidney, MT 59270  
T: (406)433-5511  
F: (406)433-5513

JOEL G. KRAUTTER\*\*  
joel@nkbattorneys.com  
CHASE E. BROWN\*\*  
chase@nkbattorneys.com  
JAMES REAVIS\*  
james@nkbattorneys.com  
301 North 27<sup>th</sup> Street #100  
Billings, MT 59101  
T:(406)534-7800

*\*\*licensed in North Dakota and Montana*

Offices in Sidney and Billings

*Licensed in Montana\**

*Sent to Rob Bird by email only: [rbird@mt.gov](mailto:rbird@mt.gov).*

January 9, 2025

**Re: Letter in Support of William C. Fanning as Associate Water Court Judge**

Dear Chief Justice Swanson:

I am writing today in support of William C. Fanning as Associate Water Court Judge. I have known Mr. Fanning since we began law school together at the University of Montana in the fall of 2011. It is from my experiences with Mr. Fanning from the time we were law school classmates to then following his work as an attorney that I am writing to support his application.

While there are many qualified applicants to this position, I believe Mr. Fanning possesses the broad well-rounded experience that will allow him to best serve the Montanans who come before him as judge. Not only has he spent time as a Water Master previously but critically he has also represented a diverse range of water users and property owners over his years of practice.

As an attorney in private practice myself, I can say that the experiences one gains by representing regular people is invaluable and informative for any other position one may pursue and I was appreciative to have experience representing regular hard-working Montanans when I served in the 66<sup>th</sup> Montana Legislature. I am sure that the experience that Mr. Fanning has of representing people would likewise serve him well as a Water Court Judge.

I know Mr. Fanning cares deeply about water issues in this state and his resume shows he has dedicated his career to water related issues and to helping the people these issues impact. If appointed, I am certain that Mr. Fanning would serve our state with distinction, compassion and common sense – all of the things needed in an Associate Water Court Judge.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/ Joel G. Krautter  
Joel G. Krautter, Esq.