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**To:** [Bird, Rob](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Stephen R. Brown - Chief Water Court Judge  
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Chief Justice Cory Swanson  
Montana Supreme Court  
c/o Rob Bird  
PO Box 203005  
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Chief Justice Swanson,

I am writing you today in support of reappointing Stephen R. Brown as the Chief Water Court Judge. I had the opportunity to work with Judge Brown for almost a decade when he was an attorney in private practice. We worked as a team assisting clients with their water right matters. He was great at reviewing the factual background and then carefully relating the law to the situation. Judge Brown was always thoughtful and clear with clients. He was great at explaining various options clients had and helped them think through their decisions. And although we worked mostly on the same side, even when on opposite sides of the coin I found him to be fair and honest.

As Judge Brown transitioned from private practice to the Water Court, his clear and concise thinking has migrated into his new role. Being an expert witness now testifying in front of him, I see firsthand how he considers all perspectives and ensures everyone has the opportunity to explain their perspective. When reviewing his Orders, it is obvious that he is able to quickly understand complicated facts and legal nuances, then distill the information into clear analysis and decisions. Judge Brown is not only smart and levelheaded, but equally important he is fair and honest.

I hope you will consider reappointing him as Chief Water Court Judge.

Sincerely,

**Deborah Stephenson**  
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