

**JUDICIAL NOMINATION COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF MONTANA**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: February 23, 2015

To: All media organizations

From: Lois Menzies
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Subject: Public Comment Sought on 4th Judicial District Judge Applicants

In January, the Judicial Nomination Commission began accepting applications for the position of district court judge for the 4th Judicial District (Missoula and Mineral counties) to fill the seat to be vacated by Judge Ed McLean in May.

The Commission received applications from the following attorneys:

- Brenda Constance Desmond
- Barbara Leslie Halligan
- Lisa B. Kauffman
- Thomas Charles Orr
- Brian J. Smith
- Shane Anthony Vannatta
- Leta J. Womack

The Commission is now soliciting public comment on the applicants. The applications may be viewed through a link available at <http://www.courts.mt.gov>. Comments will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 25, 2015.

The Commission welcomes public comment, either in writing (e-mail or paper) or via telephone. These comments, which become part of an applicant's file, will be posted on the Commission's web page and forwarded to the Governor. Public comment may be submitted to:

Judicial Nomination Commission

c/o Lois Menzies

Office of Court Administrator

P.O. Box 203005

Helena, MT 59620-3005

mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

The Commission will forward the names of three to five nominees to the Governor for appointment after reviewing the applications and public comment and interviewing the applicants, if necessary. The person appointed by the Governor is subject to election at the primary and general elections in 2016. The candidate elected in 2016 will serve for the remainder of Judge McLean's term, which expires January 2019.

Judicial Nomination Commission members are District Judge Richard Simonton of Glendive; Hal Harper of Helena; Mona Charles of Kalispell; Patrick Kelly of Miles City; Lane Larson of Billings; Ryan Rusche of Columbia Falls; and Nancy Zadick of Great Falls.