



DEBORAH KIM CHRISTOPHER
DISTRICT JUDGE



TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
STATE OF MONTANA

LAKE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
POLSON, MONTANA 59860
(406) 883-7360

SANDERS COUNTY COURTHOUSE
THOMPSON FALLS, MONTANA 59873
(406) 827-6962

February 14, 2023
Office of the Governor Gianforte
Judicial Nominations
PO Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing to register my confidence in Daniel M. Guzynski in his application for the 9th Judicial District Court (Glacier, Pondera, Teton and Toole counties). The chance to have a candidate of his quality for the 9th Judgeship is an opportunity not to be missed. His significant work in the courtroom requires a solid working knowledge of evidence and procedure which is such a bonus when it comes to taking the bench. Civil matters and written motions allow a judge to educate themselves on their own time in chambers. The pace of a jury trial requires rapid decisions on objections which can compromise the case and create appellate error. Trial experience in the wide ways a case can go sideways in an instant is critical.

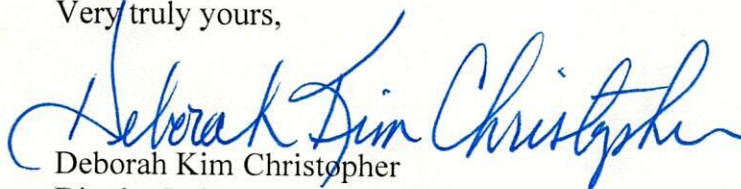
My primary knowledge of Mr. Guzynski is based on the cases he has tried and or handled before me. His cases are complex or political because that is what his office handles when requested by the county attorney. One case upon which I sat was a difficult, long, and highly contested case. Pretrial motions included 120 motions or sub-motions. Opposing counsel was often rude to everyone in the courtroom but to protect the record and the defendant's rights, I attempted to be even handed, balancing my rulings before the jury to assure the Defendant did not pay for the behavior of his counsel. There were many times I would not have been surprised to have Mr. Guzynski react to the aggravation that was constant. Instead, he remained professional, and above the fray. As a former trial lawyer, I know the best results come with good counsel on both sides. It is much more difficult when one side is behaving badly. Having been assisted by Prosecutor Service Bureau when I was the Lake County Attorney in the 90's, they were great to have as backup. Losing him as the Bureau Chief for Prosecution Services Bureau will be a loss to the County Attorneys but Mr. Guzynski could bring so much to the bench. With the travel responsibilities PSB attorneys take on to handle cases, it is time we put him to work on the bench.

I have watched Mr. Guzynski be a tremendous asset to our state in helping new or overwhelmed county attorneys with difficult, political, or unusual cases. Mr. Guzynski's performance as an attorney and then head of that office is consistent with what I received from his first boss, John Connor when John assisted me with the last capital case tried to conclusion in my first year as Lake County Attorney, and former Captain in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps, Bureau Chief, Attorney General and then Governor Marc Racicot in the position Mr. Guzynski now holds.

Mr. Guzynski is the consummate professional. He is grounded in the value system, the truth, the law and the rights of the Defendant regardless of an unethical defendant's counsel would deliberately attempt to derail a serious, ugly sexual intercourse/incest trial. In his work he demonstrates the tradition of hard work of his office in a manner of some of his predecessors, John Connor and Marc Racicot. His commitment to service and quality is unequalled except by his humility and his love for his adopted state of Montana. Those fortunate enough to have made Mr. Guzynski's acquaintance would agree his integrity requires those with whom he deals to search for the best and right resolution in what can be a sea of uncertainty. He is an advocate for truth, justice and respect for all people including both the public and especially the defendants. He brings a calm, professional, thoughtful, grounded, balanced consideration to highly charged circumstances of courtroom drama with an unquestionable air of doing the right thing in a very real sense for all.

I firmly believe that perhaps it is not brilliance, intelligence or skill as much as it is integrity, caring, and constancy that make good judges. After 20 years as a member of the judiciary, I believe you could not pick a better man to handle the specialized skill, experience, decisiveness, and sense of law necessary to perform the job of a district court judge. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Very truly yours,


Deborah Kim Christopher
District Judge

From: [Jon Bennion](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Cc: guzynskimt@yahoo.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of Support for Dan Guzynski
Date: Monday, February 20, 2023 2:39:17 PM

Governor Gianforte:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write to recommend Dan Guzynski for the open district judge position in the Ninth Judicial District. Dan would be an excellent, hard-working, and fair judge for all parties who enter his courtroom.

I have known Dan for ten years, starting when we were co-workers at the Montana Department of Justice. It didn't take long for me to figure out he was one of the best prosecutors in the state of Montana. He got to that point by working in two county attorney offices and serving in the Attorney General's office as an attorney who travels to all corners of the state to assist other prosecutors.

When Dan applied to lead the Prosecution Services Bureau five years ago, I was part of the hiring team that selected him as the bureau chief. It was one of the best management decisions we could have made. Dan has not only been a great leader of that elite team, but he has recruited other top-notch attorneys who want to work for him and with him.

I have no doubt Dan can hit the ground running as a judge, make a compelling case to the Senate to confirm him, and if necessary, retain the seat in an election. Dan's trial experience, diligence, drive, and demeanor make him an ideal candidate for the appointment. I hope you will support Dan in his effort to become Montana's newest district judge.

Sincerely,

Jon Bennion
bennionjw@aol.com
(406) 697-0568

LAW OFFICES OF
JOHNSON, BERG & SAXBY, PLLP

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KEVIN H. NESS

FIRM'S GENERAL EMAIL ADDRESS: jbslaw@jbsattorneys.com
TELEPHONE: (406) 755-5535 FACSIMILE: (406) 756-9436

Of Counsel or Retired:

KENT P. SAXBY
STEPHEN C. BERG
BRUCE MCEVOY

February 21, 2023

Dear Judicial Nomination Committee:

I am writing this letter to provide my highest recommendation for the appointment of Daniel Guzynski to the position of District Court Judge for the Ninth Judicial District. This particular District is very dear to my heart. I grew up in this District in Cut Bank, Glacier County Montana. I served as a deputy county attorney for 13 plus years in this District where I have developed long-lasting friendships and allies including practicing in front of Judge R.D. McPhillips and Judge Buyske. I continued to practice in this District when I joined the law firm of Johnson, Berg and Saxby in Kalispell, Montana where I practiced in front of Judge McKinnon and Judge Olsen. This District requires a person who understands the diversity of the people along with the ruggedness of the environment in which it sits.

I have known and worked with Daniel Guzynski since moving to the Flathead Valley in 2008. During that time, I observed Mr. Guzynski serve as a Deputy County Attorney in Flathead County. Mr. Guzynski stood as a formidable prosecutor, yet he was fair, kind and honest. Mr. Guzynski understood that as a prosecutor, he was there to promote justice, not just obtain convictions. The judges and fellow attorneys in the Eleventh Judicial District respect Mr. Guzynski. This respect speaks volumes. I continued my relationship with Mr. Guzynski when he moved to the Attorney General's Office.

From my experience in practicing in the Ninth Judicial District and my relationship with Mr. Guzynski, I cannot recommend a better person to serve as a district court judge in this District. His personality will fit well in these communities. The District will benefit immensely from his trial experience and his knowledge of the legal process. I have had a unique practice over the course of thirty years. In those thirty years, I have tried cases across this State including jury trials in Garfield and Judith Basin Counties. From this experience, I have a solid grasp of the qualities for a good judge in Eastern Montana. Mr. Guzynski possess those qualities. It would truly be an honor and a pleasure to practice in front of Mr. Guzynski. That is the highest honor I can give a person seeking this position.

Sincerely,



Thane Johnson

CASCADE COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

State of Montana

Telephone: (406) 454-6915 Criminal Department

(406) 454-6904 Civil Department

FAX: (406) 454-6949



Joshua A. Racki
County Attorney

121 Fourth Street North – Suite 2A
Great Falls, Montana 59401

February 27th, 2023

Governor's Office,
Attn: Hannah Slusser,
PO Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620.

RE: Daniel Guzynski, 9th Judicial District Application

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission,

I am writing you today on behalf of Daniel Guzynski. Mr. Guzynski has been an attorney for more than twenty years. In fact, Mr. Guzynski has spent his entire career fighting for justice for victims of crime. I may be a bit biased, but I believe that there is no more noble pursuit, under the law, than to help those who have been victims of criminal offenses.

Mr. Guzynski has an excellent grasp of legal principals, the Rules of Evidence, and the ins and outs of how to conduct a trial. It is fair to say that he is one of the premiere trial attorneys in the state of Montana. If appointed to the bench, he will bring this knowledge and experience to his court. This knowledge and experience will assist him in making the correct decisions and making sure trials are conducted fairly in accordance with the rules of law.

Being a prosecutor is more than just being an advocate for justice and community safety. As a prosecutor, a person is forced to balance the community safety with a violator's rights and the need for rehabilitation. This balance is often difficult to achieve. I have witnessed Mr. Guzynski work very hard to achieve this balance. This experience and wisdom will serve him well as a judge.

Mr. Guzynski has always handled himself with compassion and professionalism when appearing in court and prosecuting cases. It is a great honor that I recommend to the Judicial Nomination Commission Daniel Guzynski for appointment as the new District Court Judge for the 1st Judicial District.

Respectfully,

A blue ink signature of Joshua A. Racki, written in a cursive style, positioned above a horizontal line.

Joshua A. Racki
Cascade County Attorney

From: [Cybulski, David](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: Daniel Guzynski
Date: Friday, February 24, 2023 10:56:49 AM

Governor Gianforte,

I am the district judge in northeastern Montana, I am in my 29th year on the bench.

In the last decade I have presided over about a half dozen major criminal trials across the state where Daniel Guzynski was one of the prosecutors. Dan (because Guzynski is as difficult to type as Cybulski) sticks in my memory more than most prosecutors because my observation was he placed fairness and honesty in the proceedings above his desire to win. Don't get me wrong, he is a competent, zealous, hardworking and successful prosecutor, but my observations are that Dan would not allow the proceedings to become unfair just to gain an advantage or advance his case. Dan goes out of his way to insure the proceedings stay fair.

Dan has a compassion, respect and kindness that he showed to all of the participants in proceedings, whether it was a potential juror in a sex crime trial who would have been uncomfortable listening to the testimony because of some trauma in their life, to a witness with difficulty recounting painful memories.

The desire that proceedings be fair and follow the law are a District Judge's highest priority. At the start of a trial I like to tell jury panels that I like to win, and I win if we have a fair trial following the rules. Almost every legal proceeding leaves some participants feeling they lost. If litigants know they were treated fairly, their voice was heard, and the law was followed, they leave with respect for the court system and the Judge's decision.

I am also going to suggest that when you look at an attorney's legal background and areas of practice for someone to be a judge, please remember, legal research and understanding the state of the law, in any area, is much simpler when you don't have an agenda, or a side that you are advocating for.

Thank you for your attention.

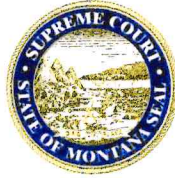
David Cybulski

District Judge

15th Judicial District

THE SUPREME COURT OF MONTANA

LAURIE McKINNON
JUSTICE



JUSTICE BUILDING
215 NORTH SANDERS
PO BOX 203001
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-3001
TELEPHONE (406) 444-5570
FAX (406) 444-3274
lmckinnon@mt.gov

Hannah Slusser
Governor's Office
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

Via Email Transmittal

February 21, 2023

Re: Reference for Daniel Guzynski; Judicial Vacancy, Montana Ninth Judicial District

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am writing in support of Dan Guzynski for appointment as District Court Judge to the Montana Ninth Judicial District Court. Dan is fair, balanced, professional, and a highly qualified trial attorney. He would make an excellent judge.

I first met Dan in 2008 when he prosecuted a homicide in Havre that I presided over as a district judge. The trial had some very difficult evidentiary issues, problems with witnesses, and involved the felony-murder doctrine. There were security concerns requiring I take special measures to ensure safety of the jury, witnesses, and court staff. The trial spanned approximately two weeks and provided numerous opportunities for the defense to build in appealable error. It is at these times that a trial judge is very grateful to have a skilled and experienced prosecutor who has common sense and integrity. Dan knew when to make concessions to the defense, without jeopardizing his case before the jury. He was skilled in laying foundations for the admission of evidence; admitting evidence; and examining witnesses. His demeanor was always professional and respectful, to me as well as court staff and the public. During the trial, one of the jurors had his car scratched with a key and believed a member of the defendant's family was responsible. Dan's questions of the juror in chambers regarding the incident were appropriate and ensured the trial could go forward without appealable error. Dan also opted for a jury instruction on the felony-murder doctrine which, while still correct, was less favorable to his case. In doing so, he again avoided building in potential appealable error. Dan's understanding of Montana law and his skillful and reasoned prosecution of the case resulted in the conviction being affirmed on appeal. His expertise saved valuable judicial and court resources and avoided the victim's family from having to go through the ordeal of a retrial.

Since I have been on the Montana Supreme Court, I have also reviewed cases that Dan has prosecuted. In these cases, as well, Dan has demonstrated his knowledge of the law and skillful prosecution. He is a fair and reasoned prosecutor who is highly respected throughout Montana. Like Dan, I also was a prosecutor and I was most comfortable trying criminal cases. However, the trial experience I gained from trying serious felonies and addressing numerous constitutional and evidentiary issues was excellent preparation for handling the complex civil litigation that came before me as a district judge. Dan's experience in front of a jury and his handling of complex constitutional and evidentiary issues will serve him well as a trial judge, and he will have no difficulty picking up any civil matter that comes before the district courts.

Finally, and probably most important, Dan will appreciate the nonpartisan responsibility of being a judge. He is an attorney with a strong commitment to the law. He understands the role of the courts and the difference between being an advocate and a judge. He has been, and will continue to be, a true public servant who willingly offers his legal expertise for the benefit of this State. Dan will represent Montana well and I strongly recommend him for appointment as District Court Judge to the Montana Ninth Judicial District Court.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any further questions you might have.

Sincerely,



Laurie McKinnon, Associate Justice
Montana Supreme Court

From: randal@midrivers.com
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Daniel Mark Guzynski, District Judge Applicant, Montana Ninth Judicial District
Date: Monday, February 27, 2023 3:10:45 PM

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am the presiding district judge for Montana's Fourteenth Judicial District where I have served for twenty-two years. I am also the current Vice-Chairman of the Montana Supreme Court Judicial Standards Commission. I have served on several Montana Supreme Court and other boards and commissions and have served as a temporary justice for the Supreme Court as well. I have been licensed to practice law in Montana state and federal courts since 1994. I am a former private practitioner and the former Musselshell/Golden Valley County Attorney.

I have known applicant Daniel "Dan" Guzynski professionally for many years from his time with the State Attorney General's Office. He has appeared before me on several occasions including cases involving violent felonies and child sexual abuse. Dan is and has always been a consummate professional with a keen intellect and a true passion to assist victims in their darkest hours. I have had hundreds of attorneys appear before me in thousands of cases across the state in my 22 years on the bench. I count Dan amongst the finest of them and he is welcome in my court anytime.

Dan has now expressed an interest in serving the citizens of this great state as a district judge. I believe he possesses all the qualities a good jurist should possess and wholeheartedly recommend him to you and the governor for appointment to fill the position of the Hon. Robert Olsen (Ret.). Should you or the governor wish to speak further regarding Mr. Guzynski, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Randal I. Spaulding
District Judge

From: [Jeffrey Sherlock](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Dan Guzynski
Date: Wednesday, March 1, 2023 12:38:46 PM

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I write this letter in support of Dan Guzynski's application to be the new District Judge for the 9th Judicial District. I was a District Judge here in Helena for 27 years. During that time Dan appeared in front of me a number of times. My last trial occurred in 2016 and involved a factually and complex homicide case near Augusta. Dan was up against skilled and aggressive litigators for the defense. That trial showcased Dan's skill in the courtroom. Dan did an excellent job representing the State of Montana.

Dan possesses all the qualities of a good Judge. Not only does he possess an unparalleled amount of courtroom experience, but Dan is also patient, thoughtful and in possession of an excellent temperament. Unlike some lawyers, Dan treats everyone in the courtroom with respect. Perhaps the best quality Dan has, is his desire to do the right thing under the law.

Thank you for your time.

Jeffrey Sherlock
Helena, Mont 59601

From: [VanLuchene, Derek J](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Mr. Dan Guzynski recommendation for the 9th Judicial District Court Judge
Date: Thursday, March 2, 2023 11:35:20 AM

Hello, I hope this letter finds you well and looking forward to springtime in our wonderful State of Montana!

I am writing to give Dan Guzynski my full endorsement and wholehearted support for superseding the Honorable Judge Robert Olson in the 9th Judicial District Court of Montana.

Having grown up in Conrad and starting my Law Enforcement career with the Conrad Police Department, I still have strong ties to the surrounding communities and people. Dan and his family will be a great addition to the area. Dan's wife Erin has family in the area (Grammar's) and her brother, Gavin lives in Conrad.

I have also had the honor of working with Dan for many years, both as a law enforcement officer (Montana Division of Criminal of Investigation) and with my non-profit, Ryan United. My non-profit is dedicated to my little brother Ryan, who at 8 years old was abducted and murdered by a repeat sex offender. I have dedicated my life to helping crime victims. In my current capacity as the founder of Ryan United, I have called on Dan's expertise on reports we receive regarding sexually abused children. Dan is quick to return my calls and get involved. Dan is an unwavering resource in these cases.

From talking to Dan, and keeping up with his impeccable reputation around the state as an Assistant Attorney General, I know that he has built a reputation of being a "go to" resource for many prosecutors around the State of Montana. As a result, Dan has been able to see a wide array of legal proceedings and learn firsthand what it takes to be an impartial officer of the court. His addition as Judge to the District Court will be invaluable to the citizens and crime victims of the 9th Judicial District.

Thanks to Dan, families like mine can do what we do in terms of helping crime victims.

Please feel free to call or email me with any questions you may have.

Best,

Derek

Derek J. VanLuchene
(406) 439-8748 (cell)

National Child Abduction Response Team (CART) Coordinator
AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program
National Criminal Justice Training Center of Fox Valley Technical College
United States Department of Justice.

Visit AMBER Alert at <https://www.amberadvocate.org> [[amberadvocate.org](https://www.amberadvocate.org)]

NOTE: I have a new email address- please update your contacts to: derek.vanluchene5383@fvtc.edu

Thursday, March 2nd 2023

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am asking for your consideration for Dan Guzynski as Ninth Judicial District Judge. As a commissioner in Liberty County, I have personally observed several cases Dan has prosecuted, followed both up close and from afar. The cases that he will hear will affect Montanans every day and their future as residents here in this great state.

Dan Guzynski is family oriented, and in these present times, that will be a large factor in the value he would add to the Ninth District. He has a passion for all things Montana; getting justice for Montanans is a large part of who he is. Dan has a knowledge of the law that is superior, his fairness and impartiality are first class. Dan's lack of favoritism along with his ability to be just with facts would only be an asset to the Ninth Judicial District. I would also add that his professionalism is impeccable and lacks nothing.

In my opinion, I believe Dan Guzynski is the best choice for the Ninth District Judgeship.

Thank you for taking your time to consider my recommendation.

Sincerely,

Joette Woods

From: [Nels Swandal](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter of Recommendation for Dan Guzynski
Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2023 1:30:31 PM

I am writing this email in support of Dan's application to become the new district court judge for the Ninth Judicial District.

When I was an active judge Dan appeared before me numerous times. He was always well-prepared and organized and a professional in the courtroom. Dan exhibited an even temperament and was concerned that justice was done. He is a good listener and I am sure will treat all who appear in his courtroom with respect. Dan has all the qualities needed to be an effective, fair judge and will well serve the citizens in the Ninth Judicial District well.

--

Wm. Nels Swandal, Esq.

Swandal Law PLLC

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GREGORY G. PINSKI

March 7, 2023

The Honorable Greg Gianforte
Governor
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

Re: Dan Guzynski / Ninth Judicial District Court vacancy

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am honored to recommend Dan Guzynski for appointment to the district judge vacancy in the Ninth Judicial District Court.

As a retired district judge, I observed hundreds of attorneys over my time on the bench. Dan is easily the finest trial attorney I've encountered. Dan is a highly skilled advocate, understanding not only procedure and evidence, but more importantly, how to effectively relate to judges and jurors. Dan is always respectful, candid, and prepared whenever he appears in court. The same skills that make Dan successful in the courtroom also appear in his written work product, which is thoroughly researched, organized, and concise.

Dan's command of the courtroom is impressive. I observed Dan as the lead prosecutor in a three week homicide trial. Dan knew the record cold, and there is no way an attorney could be more prepared or organized. Dan skillfully selected a jury in a small town where nearly everyone knew the case. He examined dozens of witnesses and handled hundreds of exhibits, all while navigating myriad legal issues that arise in a lengthy jury trial. Although the jury acquitted the defendant, Dan accepted the verdict with poise and professionalism.

These same qualities that make Dan a successful attorney will make him an exceptional jurist. Dan is smart, hard working, patient, open-minded, courteous, firm, compassionate, and humble. What more could the citizens of Montana want in a district court judge? Having observed Dan in the courtroom many times, I know he will deal with people calmly and courteously with the ability to consider all sides of a case.

Dan will bring the same energy and enthusiasm to the bench. Through many conversations, I know Dan is passionate about criminal justice reform, including his strong support for treatment courts. Dan truly believes that courts don't exist simply to dispense justice, they exist to make the community a better, safer place. I am confident Dan will work tirelessly to fulfill that principle as a district court judge. I proudly and enthusiastically support his nomination.

Yours truly,



Gregory G. Pinski
District Court Judge (Ret.)

March 6, 2023

Governor's Office
Attn: Hannah Slusser
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
Nomintatejudges@mt.gov

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

Please accept this letter of personal endorsement for the nomination of Dan Guzynski for District Court Judge in the Ninth Judicial District. I have come to know and respect Dan personally and professionally while serving as an Assistant Attorney General under his supervision at the Montana Attorney General's Office and collaborating with Prosecution Services Bureau in my service as Madison County Attorney. Dan has earned my respect and support due to his moral principles, keen legal mind, and work ethic.

Dan's legal background, which importantly includes extensive experience in prosecuting complex criminal cases and his position as Prosecution Services Bureau Chief make him well qualified to serve as District Judge. As a former member of the Prosecution Services Bureau team I had the opportunity to serve as Dan's co-counsel on numerous prosecutions and observe not only his legal skills but the professional manner in which he treats the court, opposing counsel, law enforcement, and witnesses. Furthermore, Dan always treats victims with compassion, listens to their input, and does whatever he can to help them through all stages of a criminal prosecution.

Dan's legal skills combined with his demeanor will make him an excellent District Court Judge. The legal community and public would be fortunate to have Dan serve as District Court Judge in the Ninth Judicial District.

Sincerely,



David A. Buchler

STATE OF MONTANA

NINTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
TOOLE, GLACIER, TETON, PONDERA COUNTIES

ROBERT G. OLSON
DISTRICT JUDGE

(406) 424-8360 OFFICE
(406) 424-8361 FAX



TOOLE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
226 1ST STREET SOUTH
P.O. Box 822
SHELBY, MT 59474

March 3, 2023

Office of Governor Gianforte
Judicial Nominations
PO Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

RE: Dan Guzynski

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am writing this letter in support of Daniel Guzynski for appointment as the new Judge in the Ninth Judicial District.

I have known Dan since 2013 when he tried a deliberate homicide case over which I presided in Teton County. Dan is a very skilled trial attorney. Even more importantly, he plays by the rules. Any questionable evidentiary issue was first discussed in chambers with defense counsel present to ensure nothing inadmissible was presented to the jury. The Defendant was ultimately found guilty, and in large part due to Dan's excellent work as a prosecutor, the conviction was affirmed on appeal.

During my ten years on the bench, Dan has handled several other criminal cases in our district. Not only is Dan very skilled, but he holds himself to the highest ethical standards. Dan has all the attributes needed to be an excellent District Court Judge, and I give him my highest recommendation.

In fairness, I have no doubt Greg Bonilla is also well-qualified for the job. I just haven't had the opportunity to work with him.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Olson", is written over the typed name.
Robert G. Olson
District Court Judge



STATE OF MONTANA BOARD OF PARDONS AND PAROLE

GREG GIANFORTE, GOVERNOR

STEVEN HURD, CHAIRMAN

OFFICE: (406) 846-1404
FAX: (406) 846-3512
bopp@mt.gov

1002 Hollenbeck Road
Deer Lodge, MT 59722

March 6, 2023

Hannah Slusser
Appointments Advisor
Montana Governor's Office
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

Re: Daniel Guzynski, professional reference (Montana Ninth Judicial District Court vacancy)

Dear Ms. Slusser and Governor Gianforte:

I am pleased to support Dan Guzynski's application for appointment to the vacant District Judge position in the Montana Ninth Judicial District (Glacier, Pondera, Teton and Toole Counties).

By way of introduction, I served as Silver Bow County's chief prosecuting attorney from 1987 through 2006 and as a district judge in Silver Bow County from January 2007 through July 2018. I served two terms in the Montana Legislature. I currently serve as a member of the Montana Board of Pardons and Parole. In short, my professional career has been devoted to the core principles of fair treatment to all citizens and equal access to justice. I am proud to say that Dan Guzynski is also committed to those same standards.

Dan Guzynski appeared in my courtroom on behalf of the State of Montana and, more importantly, the victims of crime, in several complex cases. More recently, Dan appeared before the Parole Board in several cases to advance the interests of victims and public safety. In his role with the Attorney General's Prosecution Services Bureau, Dan has tried numerous cases across Montana. Dan's extensive trial experience provides him with solid understanding of the rules of evidence and procedure governing criminal cases. Dan's knowledge and professional skills also will translate well to the wide range of civil cases that fall within the jurisdiction of the district court.

Dan Guzynski is an effective legal researcher and writer. He also is a powerful oral communicator. Those abilities are essential to success on the district court bench. A judge's decisions must be reasoned and clear to be fully implemented and enforced.

I am confident Dan will uphold the high ethical standards required of a district judge. He is a tough prosecutor while still recognizing and practicing his obligation of fairness and honesty to opposing parties and the courts. That professional balance and commitment will serve Dan well on the bench.

Based on my contact and communication with trial judges, prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, law enforcement authorities and victims, Dan is held in high esteem. Such respect is the direct

result of his professionalism and integrity.

Dan looks forward to making a home in the Ninth Judicial District and to be a contributing member of the community. His wife's parents farm and ranch in the Sweet Grass Hills area.

I am pleased that an attorney of Dan's caliber and ability aspires to a position on the district court bench. The citizens of Glacier, Pondera, Teton and Toole Counties will be the beneficiaries of Dan Guzynski's appointment as a district judge.

Dan Guzynski has earned your strong consideration for the vacant trial judge position.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about Dan's qualifications and my recommendation.

Sincerely,



Brad Newman, Member
Montana Board of Pardons and Parole

Brenda R. Gilbert
P.O. Box Five
Clyde Park, MT 59018

March 6, 2023

Governor Greg Gianforte
Governor's Office
P.O. Box 2008001
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing in support of the application of Dan Guzynski for the District Court position in the Ninth Judicial District. In my time on the bench, I have had the opportunity to have Mr. Guzynski appear before me on multiple occasions.

Without exception, Mr. Guzynski has been very well-prepared and professional when appearing before my Court. Although a zealous advocate, Mr. Guzynski is respectful and courteous to the Court, opposing parties, and counsel. He practices law with the mindset of wanting to see justice done, a quality that he has displayed consistently.

Mr. Guzynski is well-versed in the law. He is a deliberate thinker. Mr. Guzynski has the intellect, organizational skills, and energy to serve successfully as a District Court Judge.

Mr. Guzynski's temperament would be beneficial in his serving as a judge. He is patient and fair, and would, in my opinion, be an even-handed judge. While possessing a high level of intellect, Mr. Guzynski combines this with a great deal of common sense. I believe he is capable of running a district court efficiently and would enter timely decisions.

I respectfully recommend, without reservation, Mr. Guzynski's appointment as District Judge in the Ninth Judicial District.

Very truly yours,



Brenda R. Gilbert



Blair Jones
8 River View Road
Park City, Montana 59063
(406) 697-1054
willisblairjones@gmail.com



March 6, 2023

Governor Greg Gianforte
Attn.: Hannah Slusser
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

Re: Application of Dan Guzynski – Ninth Judicial District Court Judge

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I consider it a privilege to provide this letter of recommendation on behalf of Dan Guzynski for the position of District Court Judge of the Ninth Judicial District. As a retired district judge who served the 22nd Judicial District for almost two decades, I know what the job requires and the skills necessary to competently discharge the duties of a district judge. I can assure you without hesitation that Dan Guzynski possesses the requisite skills.

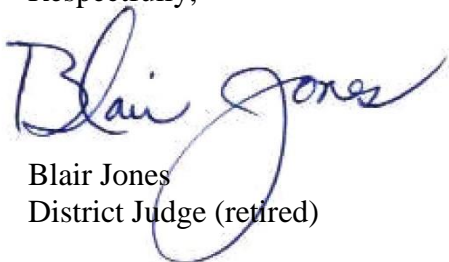
Dan is a highly respected Assistant Attorney General for the State of Montana. He has appeared before me on numerous occasions on behalf of the State, prosecuting high profile criminal cases. Dan was always knowledgeable on the pertinent law, well prepared at hearing, and ably represented the interests of the State of Montana. Moreover, he was invariably respectful to the Court and opposing counsel and always displayed a genuine desire to see justice served.

Dan is an extremely competent and skilled trial litigator, having participated in more than 40 felony trials, many of which were lengthy and complex. Additionally, Dan has generously shared his knowledge and expertise with his colleagues as evidenced by Dan's many presentations to other prosecutors on a variety of important topics.

In my judgment, Dan Guzynski has the skills, temperament, and dedication to justice necessary to make an outstanding district judge. I give Dan Guzynski my highest possible recommendation for this important position.

Thank you for considering this recommendation and for your outstanding service as Governor.

Respectfully,



Blair Jones
District Judge (retired)



Blair Jones
8 River View Road
Park City, Montana 59063
(406) 697-1054
willisblairjones@gmail.com



March 6, 2023

Governor Greg Gianforte
Attn.: Hannah Slusser
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

Re: Application of Dan Guzynski – Ninth Judicial District Court Judge

Dear Governor Gianforte:

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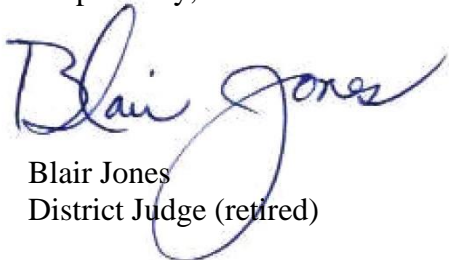
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Thank you for considering this recommendation and for your outstanding service as Governor.

Respectfully,



Blair Jones
District Judge (retired)



Stephens|Brooke PC

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Daniel P. Kamienski
Private Investigator
dan@stephensbrooke.com

Ellen McCullough
Legal Assistant
ellen@stephensbrooke.com

March 5, 2023

Gov. Greg Gianforte
Office of the Governor
Montana Capital Building
Helena, MT 59601

Re: Appointment of Dan Guzynski for Ninth Judicial District

Governor Gianforte:

I write to recommend Daniel Guzynski for district court judge for the Ninth Judicial District. Although I live in Missoula, I remain a resident of Teton County as do my extended family and my in-laws. Having practiced in Teton, Pondera, Glacier, and Toole counties for many years, I can think of no better person to fill the giant shoes left by Judge Robert G. Olson than Dan Guzynski.

As a criminal defense attorney, I first encountered Dan's name in an appeal I was handling in *State v. Dennis Aguado*. He represented the State in prosecuting Mr. Aguado. What struck me the most from reading the trial transcript was his total command of the Rules of Evidence. Judge Spaulding presided over the trial and it was soon evident that Judge Spaulding deferred to Dan on almost all questions of evidence. Even the defense attorney appeared to defer to Dan on evidentiary issues such as the proper rule for impeaching a witness with extrinsic evidence and the methodology for refreshing a witness's

recollection. I lost that appeal. I've lost many appeals in which Dan was trial counsel for the State of Montana.

Since the *Aguado* case, I've had the honor of getting to know Dan personally and professionally. This last year I tried a homicide case in which Dan represented the State. As with the appeals, I did not win the trial. Dan's command of the Rules of Evidence has not diminished nor have his professionalism and skill.

After almost 20 years of writing appeals and trying cases, I have come to realize that knowledge of the rules is the single biggest asset a lawyer and judge can master. As with any activity or job, the rules are the great unifier. In the practice of law, knowledge of the Rules of Evidence, the Rules of Criminal Procedure, and the Rules of Civil Procedure level the playing field. That knowledge is also becoming a rare skill rather than the norm for lawyers.

As a judge, Dan will bring his understanding of the Rules and his ability to apply them fairly to each party regardless of his personal belief. He will fulfill the judicial role as "umpire" rather than "participant" in the proceedings. Dan would be a great asset and carry on the tradition of great judges we have had in the Ninth Judicial District, from Judge Olson to Judge (now Justice) McKinnon.

As a lawyer, as a resident of Teton county, and a 4th generation Montanan, I truly believe Dan will excel as both a judge a member of the communities that comprise the Ninth Judicial District Court.

Respectfully,
STEPHENS BROOKE, P.C.



Colin M. Stephens

From: [Holly Frederickson](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Nomination of Dan Guyzynski
Date: Saturday, March 11, 2023 7:40:00 AM

March 10, 2023

Good morning, Governor Gianforte!

I am writing to express my profound support for Dan Guyzynski for Judge in the Ninth District following the retirement of Judge Robert Olson.

I have known and worked with Dan at various times during his career with the Montana Department of Justice. I have found him to be a consummate prosecutor with a genuine desire for justice to be served. Dan is a zealous supporter of the Montana Judiciary. His integrity is without question.

Dan is well acquainted with the "Golden Triangle" area both as a prosecutor and because his family has ties to the area. That knowledge of the area and its residents is vitally important in understanding juries, trial dynamics, perceived privilege (by both jurors and witnesses) and the ins and outs of seating a jury during harvest. :-)

I worked with Dan on various projects during my tenure with the MT Division of Criminal Investigation. He is incredibly knowledgeable and an excellent resource for working through intricacies of the law. He is zealous in his pursuit of justice. The Ninth District would benefit tremendously in having Dan as District Judge!

Sincerely,

Holly Frederickson
Retired Justice of the Peace

March 10, 2023

Dear Governor Gianforte,

I am writing to recommend Dan Guzynski for the Ninth Judicial District Judgeship.

I have had the privilege of working with Dan at the Montana Attorney General's Office, and I am confident that he would make an excellent judge.

Dan and I worked on a case together and I was impressed by his attention to detail, creative thinking, and knowledge of the law. Dan is interested in hearing all sides of a story, and he examines a case from every angle. This is one of many qualities that would serve Dan well as a judge.

Dan's decades of experience as a prosecutor, trying the most serious cases in the State of Montana, are proof of his commitment to the principles of fairness and justice. I have watched Dan in trial as an advocate for victims and for the State. His work shows careful consideration of the facts of every case, diligent engagement, and respect for all parties involved in a case. Dan has done justice time and time again.

What I admire most about Dan is his passion for public service. This is clear from Dan's illustrious career as a prosecutor and now his pursuit of the Ninth Judicial District Judgeship.

I believe that as District Court Judge in the Ninth Judicial District, Dan will bring a steadfast dedication to serving the people of Montana and a commitment to justice.

Sincerely,

Alwyn Lansing



PARK COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

414 East Callender Street • Livingston, MT 59047 • Telephone: (406) 222-4150 • Fax (406) 222-4152

March 13, 2023

Office of the Governor Greg Gianforte
Judicial Nominations
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Re: Nomination of Dan Guzynski – District Court Judge Montana Ninth Judicial
District Court

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I submit this correspondence in support of the appointment of Dan Guzynski as Judge for the Ninth Judicial District Court.

I met Dan soon after I took office as the Park County Attorney. Almost immediately after I took office, the mother of the victim of a negligent vehicular homicide contacted me, and implored me to refile the case against the individual who allegedly caused her daughter's death. The case had been tried on two previous occasions, each concluding with a hung jury. Because I had only recently made the transition from a private civil practice to the County Attorney position, I sought assistance from the Attorney General's Office.

Dan agreed to review the case and, while we knew litigating it would be difficult given its history, he agreed to try the case with me. Here's what I know about Dan, after working together: Dan is a consummate professional, he has a commanding knowledge of the law, he has an impeccable work ethic and – what stood out to me the most during our collaboration – he treats victims, defendants, and defense counsel with respect.

The mother of the victim in this case, even in her grief, had nothing but praise for Dan and expressed to me, during many conversations, how much she respected his demeanor and his competence. I'm confident that you, as members of the Judicial Nomination Commission, are familiar with the intensity of litigation. While that fact can give rise to a tremendous level of stress, the upside is that, within that environment, one's true character is revealed. After working in that environment with Dan, his character was revealed to be one of honesty, diligence, and empathy. In other words, a character ideal for that of a Judge.

Subsequent to that time, Dan and his office have assisted the Park County Attorney's Office in the prosecution of two homicide cases, and the evaluation of another potential homicide case. Dan's management of the Prosecution Services Division, as demonstrated not only by him, but also by the attorneys working at his direction, has proven to be invaluable to the effective prosecution of these cases. His staff respects, admires and strives to emulate his work ethic and level of professionalism. Although I will regret losing him as the head of Prosecution Services, I so appreciate that the attorneys in his office have benefitted from his leadership and example, and will be able to continue the level of legal proficiency he has established.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge you, without reservation, to support Dan's application for Ninth Judicial District Court Judge. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any further inquiry regarding this correspondence.

Sincerely,



KENDRA K. LASSITER
Park County Attorney

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

Teton County Courthouse

P.O. Box 899

Choteau, Montana 59422

JOE COBLE, COUNTY ATTORNEY

DIANE E. GRAF, LEGAL ASSISTANT

PHONE: (406) 466-2860

FAX: (406) 466-2027

March 12, 2023

Ms. Hannah Slusser
Office of Governor Gianforte
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
nominatejudges@mt.gov

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

RE: Candidate Daniel Guzynski

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I write to recommend Dan Guzynski be chosen as the next district court judge to preside over the Ninth Judicial District. It is my pleasure to provide this endorsement on his behalf.

I currently serve as the Teton County Attorney. As you know, Teton County is within the Ninth Judicial District. I have served as County Attorney and practiced in the Ninth Judicial District for over twenty-three years. Your selection will have a direct impact on myself, my practice and the citizens I represent. Therefore, this recommendation is not merely an academic exercise, or a favor for a friend.


My knowledge of Dan indicates he is the best candidate for this important position. Dan's breadth of experience is unparalleled in this state. He has practiced before most district court judges in Montana and has a firm grasp of what works and what doesn't. His knowledge of law, rules of evidence and rules of procedure more than qualifies him to serve as judge.

In the Ninth Judicial District, we pride ourselves in having cordial and professional relationships with the bench and fellow members of the local bar. We have worked diligently to maintain this culture, and Dan appreciates our efforts. Dan and his assistants at Prosecution Services Bureau have practiced in the Ninth. He has experienced our environment first-hand and understands the values we have fostered.

Dan places the facts, the law and respect for the judicial system above whatever his own personal feelings might be. Even in heated situations he remains calm, professional and stays above the fray. He treats those around him with dignity and respect. These skills and values make him an ideal prospect to be on the bench. Dan is a person who would never attempt to inject his personal values into his decisions or his treatment of the cases and parties before him.

I endorse Dan without reservation. I hope you will seriously consider him to serve the citizens residing within the Ninth Judicial District. Please feel free to contact me with questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Joe Coble
Teton County Attorney

From: [Kelsey McAlpine](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Judicial nomination
Date: Thursday, March 9, 2023 7:13:44 PM

Kelsey McAlpine
PO Box 817
Cut Bank, MT 59427

March 9, 2023

Office of Governor Gianforte
Attn: Hannah Slusser
Judicial Nominations
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

RE: Daniel Guzynski, 9th Judicial District Nomination

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission:

I am writing this letter in support of Dan Guzynski for his nomination as the Ninth Judicial District Court Judge.

I have worked in the judicial system for the past 18 years. I was a deputy clerk for the Glacier County Clerk of Court's office and court reported for the Honorable Robert G. Olson the last 6 years. I recently began as Judge Olson's Judicial Administrative Assistant in the Ninth Judicial District.

Over the last several years, I've had the pleasure of working with Dan Guzynski as a prosecutor for the Attorney General's office on high profile cases in our district.

In my opinion, Mr. Guzynski would be a great fit in our district and would make an exceptional district court judge. He is well respected by court personnel and has shown himself to be ethical and fair in the proceedings. I believe Mr. Guzynski's extensive legal expertise, knowledge of the justice system, integrity and personality makes him the best candidate for the job.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Kelsey McAlpine

STATE OF MONTANA
TWELFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT TREATMENT COURT
Chouteau, Hill and Liberty Counties
Hill County Courthouse
315 Fourth Street, Havre, MT 59501
Phone 406.265.5481 • Fax 406.265.0160

HON. KAYDEE N. SNIPES RUIZ
District Court Judge



BREANNA BOGNER
Judicial Assistant

SCOTT SHEFLOE
Law Clerk

March 13, 2023

Governor's Office
Attn: Hannah Slusser
PO Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620
nominatejudges@mt.gov
transmitted electronically

RE: Public Comment—Ninth Judicial District vacancy

Governor Gianforte,

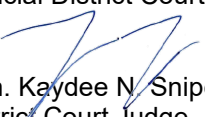
I am writing in to give comment regarding Mr. Guzynski for the Ninth Judicial District Court Judicial position. This letter is not intended to give an opinion as to the qualifications of the other candidate, Mr. Bonilla— as I have no personal knowledge of him or his credentials. This is merely to provide my reflections on my professional observations of Mr. Guzynski over the years of interaction both on and off the bench.

I have known Mr. Guzynski over a decade in various legal matters. Mr. Guzynski has an impressive legal background and has always displayed a keen sense of professionalism and integrity. Based on my experience with Mr. Guzynski, I can confidently say that he would be an excellent addition to Montana's judicial branch.

I believe I carry a unique perspective because most of my interactions with Mr. Guzynski have been prior to my tenure on the bench, as opposing counsel when I represented Defendants through the Office of the State Public Defender against the Attorney General's Office. These were difficult, emotionally charged cases, often involving either violent or sex-based charges, where stakes for both sides were high. I have seen him handle difficult situations with composure and empathy, always striving to ensure that justice was fairly served. This level of integrity and commitment to justice is essential for a judicial position. I have seen Mr. Guzynski approach these legal matters with a high level of diligence and dedication, and his legal knowledge and experience makes him well-suited for a judicial position.

In addition to his legal expertise, Mr. Guzynski has a strong moral compass and consistently demonstrates ethical behavior. He is respected by his colleagues and clients alike for his honesty, consistency, and devotion to justice. He has a deep sense of responsibility to the legal system, and he takes this responsibility very seriously.

Based on this, I would happily welcome Mr. Guzynski as a neighboring colleague on the Ninth Judicial District Court bench.


Hon. Kaydee N. Snipes Ruiz
District Court Judge
315 4th Street, Havre, MT 59501
(406) 400- 2348; Fax: (406) 265-0160
ksnipesruiz@mt.gov

JAY RENO, pllc.

Attorney at Law

February 24, 2023

Governor's office
Attn: Hannah Slusser
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620

RE: Endorsement of Dan Guzynski for District Court Judge

Dear Governor:

I am writing this letter to express my enthusiastic support of Dan Guzynski's for the position of district court judge for the Ninth Judicial District. Working across the courtroom aisle from Dan in his position of Chief Deputy Attorney General for the State of Montana in a wide range of cases, I have come to know Dan as a sharp and insightful adversary, and a constant advocate for truth and justice. Dan has an exceptional legal mind and deep experience with Montana's unique perspectives and people, and I am confident that he will make a creative, level headed, and qualified District Court Judge.

I spent the first 10 years of my career working as a lawyer in the Ninth Judicial District, and consider it my "home district." Because the Ninth Judicial District and its people are so near and dear to my heart, I take a keen interest in this particular appointment. The person who fills the position of district court judge in the Ninth will set the tone for the entire legal community, and Dan Guzynski is an excellent candidate for that heavy responsibility. If appointed to the bench, Dan will bring the same clear-sighted, hardworking integrity to the judgeship that he brings to his personal pursuits and his professional work at the Attorney General's office.

Over the course of my legal career in Montana, I have worked with numerous attorneys and judges in jurisdictions all across the state. What sets Dan apart from other legal professionals is not only his acute understanding of the principles of law, but also his perception of how the law relates in the real world to the people of Montana and their legal matters. Dan never loses sight of the true impact of his work.

In addition to his legal acumen, Dan is a deeply experienced trial attorney, having litigated a huge variety of cases across the state. Dan's professional reputation is that of an honorable, ethical, diligent, and extremely capable attorney. In my personal experience working with Dan, often in an adversarial position, I have found him to be not only thoughtful and fair, but also fully committed to achieving the best overall end result, regardless of his personal feelings. He advocates like a bulldog, and his unfailing tact and respectful approach to victims, defendants, colleagues, and opposing counsel put him at the top of any list of high-quality judicial candidates. I and many of my colleagues often breathe a sigh of relief

P.O. Box 4376 Whitefish, Montana 59937

Phone: (406) 261-6606

email: jayrenolaw@gmail.com

when we see that Dan is prosecuting a particularly heated or difficult matter because we know he will work hard, be fair, and keep a level head.

I have written recommendations for others seeking similar positions, but I cannot think of another reference where I felt so strongly about an individual's potential to excel in the position of district court judge. Dan Guzynski has the ability, desire, and temperament to set the bar for judges in Montana, and the Ninth Judicial District deserves someone of his quality and ability on the bench.

Warmest Regards,

Jay Reno
Attorney at law

Judicial Nomination Commission
Attn: Hannah Slusser
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
NominateJudges@mt.gov

Dear Judicial Nomination Committee:

I am pleased to write this letter supporting Daniel Guzynski's application for appointment to the Montana Ninth Judicial District Court. One of my favorite stories about Dan came from a survivor he had worked with over a decade ago. She told me a story about Dan baking her cookies, bringing them to a meeting with the defense team, and, instead of having a chance to eat the cookies, they watched as the defense attorney gobbled them all down. Despite the horrendous circumstances that brought this survivor and Dan together, this is the memory this survivor carries with her. She and the countless other survivors Dan has worked with remember him for his kindness and ability to support them through traumatic, atrocious experiences.

The criminal justice system is offender-centric and often does not consider the worries, concerns, and trauma experienced by victims and their families. Dan is the exception in this system. He has left lasting impressions on the hearts of those he has supported. Some survivors remember him for his cookies, others for his ability to truly hear their stories. He has helped and guided people with significant trauma through additional traumatic experiences and through a system that often does not listen to their voices. Dan has given victims and their families a voice in a system not built to include them.

When I began my career in systems-based victim services in Montana, Dan sat down with me to discuss how we could work together. Over the years, we collaborated to ensure survivors have voices during parole hearings. We have also collaborated to increase victim services from victimization through sentencing and into post-conviction.

Dan has diligently championed victims and their families, going so far as to sit and support them during parole hearings. Parole hearings force a survivor to relive their trauma, often years after it has occurred. Dan and I have talked extensively about this process, the trauma it can cause, and the best way we can work together to support the victims of Montana through such a trying time.

Dan's experience, compassion, and ability to balance offender rehabilitation, public safety, and victim care make him an exceptional candidate for judge. He takes a comprehensive view and would bring his significant background and balanced moral view to a system that needs truly compassionate and good people to bring change.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Tawny Rogers, MACJ

She/Her/Hers

State Victim Liaison

Montana Board of Crime Control

Office: 406-444-0213 | Cell: 406-781-3406

Email: tawny.rogers@mt.gov

5 S. Last Chance Gulch | PO Box 201408 | Helena, MT 59620

ROSANNE LOCKHART
4552 Toyon Dr. Billings, MT 59106
(917) 566-5865 | rosannelockhart7@gmail.com

March 14, 2023

Hannah Slusser
Governor's Office
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
nominatejudges@mt.gov

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing in strong support for Daniel Guzynski's appointment to the Ninth Judicial District Court Judgeship. I know Dan best in his capacity as Chief of Prosecution Services Bureau (PSB). When I was appointed Pondera County Attorney in 2020, which is a full-time and single attorney office, I was 31 years old with only 3 years of District Court clerkship experience. I called PSB, spoke to Dan, and he made sure that I was properly mentored, guided, and supported throughout my entire county attorney appointment. With Dan's help, I was able to carry out my criminal justice duties, effectively handle my caseload and properly serve the people of Pondera County.

Prior to this appointment, I worked as Judge Robert Olson's law clerk in the Ninth Judicial District. For those three years, I watched Dan handle some of our District's most onerous cases in a thoughtful and intelligent manner. I noted how he maintained a high level of professionalism and continually garnered respect within our community. Through his trial work, Dan demonstrated that he is not only exceedingly knowledgeable in the legal field, but he also employs the common sense necessary to approach the nuisances of practicing law in rural Montana.

When I think of Dan, I think of a natural leader, a problem-solver and, quite frankly, a good person. I have no doubt that his skill set and personality would enable him to be a fair and sensible District Court Judge. And although my family and I have recently transitioned to Billings, we still own land in Teton County. I know I speak for many community members when I say that we would like to see our legal system thrive and benefit from Dan as our District Court Judge.

I respectfully recommend, without reservation, Daniel Guzynski to the Ninth Judicial District Judgeship.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Rosanne Lockhart
Rosanne Lockhart

From: [Derek Oestreicher](#)
To: [NominateJudges](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Daniel Guzynski
Date: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 10:30:49 PM

Governor Gianforte,

It is my sincere pleasure to write in support of Daniel Guzynski for appointment as the District Court Judge for the 9th Judicial District.

I first met Dan in 2020 while working as the General Counsel to Attorney General Austin Knudsen. At our first meeting, I was struck by Dan's passion for service and his dedication to pursuing justice for the victims of crime. Dan has spent his entire career dedicated to the pursuit of justice and has been a steadfast leader for the Prosecution Services Bureau at the Department of Justice. In that role, he provides guidance to a staff of prosecutors assigned to high profile criminal matters, and also provides training and resources to the County Attorney's offices throughout the state. Dan is not only respected by fellow prosecutors, but has earned the respect of criminal defense attorneys as well. Dan has a reputation for handling difficult matters with compassion and professionalism, and I know these character traits would serve him well as a District Court Judge.

From my perspective, Dan is the finest prosecutor in Montana and has served the state with honor and distinction. His experience as a trial attorney has prepared him well for the role of a judge. I have all the confidence that, if appointed to the bench, Dan would utilize his knowledge and experience to render justice with wisdom and fidelity to the law.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, Dan is committed to doing the right thing for the right reasons. Dan's legal acumen and his great character make him the best choice for the 9th Judicial District. For all these reasons, I highly recommend Daniel Guzynski for appointment to the bench.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Derek J. Oestreicher

March 15, 2023

Governor Greg Gianforte
Attn: Hannah Slusser
nominatejudges@mt.gov

Re: 9th Judicial District Court vacancy
Recommendation-Daniel Guzynski

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I am writing to recommend Daniel Guzynski for appointment to the open 9th Judicial District Court bench. I believe that his application should be given the strongest consideration.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Dan personally and professionally since our first year together at the University of Montana School of Law in 1997. I have always been impressed by Dan's honesty, integrity, and inherent sense of justice and fairness. He is hard-working, open-minded, a good listener, patient, and slow to anger. These qualities will serve him well on the bench.

These opinions are not only those of a friend. I know from speaking with other attorneys and judges throughout Montana that Dan enjoys an excellent reputation for both his trial skills and professionalism. As you read through the public comments, I am certain that you will hear from many judges and attorneys attesting to his trial skills, thorough knowledge of the law, ethics, and consideration for others.

I have practiced law in Montana for nearly 23 years and have appeared in 19 of Montana's 22 District Courts. I have watched how many different District Court Judges have run their courtrooms (some better than others) and developed an informed opinion as to the qualities that make for a good judge. Dan will make an excellent District Court Judge, and I strongly encourage you to appoint him as the next Judge of the 9th Judicial District Court.

If you would like to discuss my recommendation further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

HIGH PLAINS LAW, PLLC



WILLIAM M. GILBERT

SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

*Phillips County Courthouse
P.O. Box 470
Malta, MT 59538
(406) 654-1062 Office
(406) 654-2363 Fax*

Yvonne Laird
District Judge

Kathy King
Court Administrator

Kelley A. Barstad
Court Reporter

Phillips County - Malta
Blaine County - Chinook
Valley County - Glasgow

March 15, 2023

Governor's Office
Attn: Hannah Slusser
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, Montana 59620
Via email: nominatejudges@mt.gov

RE: Daniel Mark Guzynski – Ninth Judicial District Judge Applicant

Dear Governor Gianforte:

Please accept my letter of support for Daniel Mark Guzynski's appointment as a District Court Judge in the Ninth Judicial District. Mr. Guzynski is uniquely qualified to serve as a District Court Judge. During Mr. Guzynski's professional career he has practiced in many different District Courts all around the State of Montana, before many different District Court Judges. This breadth of experience has allowed him insight into the "best practices" of a presiding district court judge. He will be able to pull together all of the positive judicial practices he has observed and enhance them with his own insights. This will allow him to run an orderly and judicially sound court. Given the geographic makeup of the Ninth Judicial District and the volume of cases handled in that district, this will be a necessary skill. It should be noted that Mr. Guzynski's affinity for rural Montana and his close ties within the Ninth Judicial District will be invaluable to him in assuming the bench in the Ninth Judicial District.

Mr. Guzynski has a keen legal mind and exceptional litigation skills. Despite his nimbleness of mind and legal skill, Mr. Guzynski does not lose sight of the fact the cases he is handling involve real people and that his actions or inactions make life-long impacts on the lives of all persons affected by those cases. Such true empathy and compassion are rare gifts in our current society and are traits that will only add to Mr. Guzynski's effectiveness on the bench.

Sincerely,



Yvonne Laird
District Court Judge

Toole County Attorney

153 Main Street
P.O. Box 730
Shelby, Montana 59474
Merle Raph, County Attorney

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Autumn Running, Paralegal

March 15, 2023

Honorable Governor Gianforte
Attn: Hannah Slusser
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620
nominatejudges.mt.gov

Re: Application of Dan Guzynski, Ninth Judicial District Court Judge

Dear Governor Gianforte:

It is without reservation that I write in support of Dan Guzynski's application for appointment as District Judge for the Ninth Judicial District. I have served as a prosecutor for Toole County for thirty-seven years and Toole County Attorney for thirty-three years. In that time, I appeared before more than fifty district court judges in both civil and criminal matters representing people from this district.

I have had the opportunity to observe Dan Guzynski when he appeared in court in Toole County, Pondera County and Teton County. In those cases, Dan treated everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect. With his breadth of experience and his knowledge of evidence and procedure, many would lose patience and become condescending in legal arguments before the court, however, Dan did not.

I have known Dan for the last twenty years and he possesses the intellect, experience and temperament to be a great district judge. I have also consulted Dan regarding complicated factual issues and complex legal issues in cases. Dan provided quality advice in every case.

If you want to evaluate the legal acumen and personality of an attorney, the perfect tool is observing an attorney pick a jury. Good attorneys interact with prospective jurors and engage them in a conversation rather than lecturing them on the process and the law. I have watched Dan engage prospective jurors in this district and, for lack of a more articulate term, he "fits our community".

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Re: Application of Dan Guzynski
Governor Gianforte

In this process, I respectfully suggest that you have the opportunity to appoint the right person, Dan Guzynski as the Ninth Judicial District Judge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MRaph', is positioned above the printed name.

Merle Raph
Toole County Attorney

MR:ar



PARK COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

414 East Callender Street • Livingston, MT 59047 • Telephone: (406) 222-4150 • Fax (406) 222-4152

March 13, 2023

Office of the Governor Greg Gianforte
Judicial Nominations
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620-0801

REC'D MAR 15

Re: Nomination of Dan Guzynski – District Court Judge Montana Ninth Judicial District Court

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I submit this correspondence in support of the appointment of Dan Guzynski as Judge for the Ninth Judicial District Court.

I met Dan soon after I took office as the Park County Attorney. Almost immediately after I took office, the mother of the victim of a negligent vehicular homicide contacted me, and implored me to refile the case against the individual who allegedly caused her daughter's death. The case had been tried on two previous occasions, each concluding with a hung jury. Because I had only recently made the transition from a private civil practice to the County Attorney position, I sought assistance from the Attorney General's Office.

Dan agreed to review the case and, while we knew litigating it would be difficult given its history, he agreed to try the case with me. Here's what I know about Dan, after working together: Dan is a consummate professional, he has a commanding knowledge of the law, he has an impeccable work ethic and – what stood out to me the most during our collaboration – he treats victims, defendants, and defense counsel with respect.

The mother of the victim in this case, even in her grief, had nothing but praise for Dan and expressed to me, during many conversations, how much she respected his demeanor and his competence. I'm confident that you, as members of the Judicial Nomination Commission, are familiar with the intensity of litigation. While that fact can give rise to a tremendous level of stress, the upside is that, within that environment, one's true character is revealed. After working in that environment with Dan, his character was revealed to be one of honesty, diligence, and empathy. In other words, a character ideal for that of a Judge.

Subsequent to that time, Dan and his office have assisted the Park County Attorney's Office in the prosecution of two homicide cases, and the evaluation of another potential homicide case. Dan's management of the Prosecution Services Division, as demonstrated not only by him, but also by the attorneys working at his direction, has proven to be invaluable to the effective prosecution of these cases. His staff respects, admires and strives to emulate his work ethic and level of professionalism. Although I will regret losing him as the head of Prosecution Services, I so appreciate that the attorneys in his office have benefitted from his leadership and example, and will be able to continue the level of legal proficiency he has established.

Thank you for your consideration. I urge you, without reservation, to support Dan's application for Ninth Judicial District Court Judge. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any further inquiry regarding this correspondence.

Sincerely,


KENDRA K. LASSITER
Park County Attorney



Dan L. Spoon
Bryan L. Spoon
Karl Pitcher
Megan Hansen
John R. Gordon 1942-2011

March 15, 2023

TRANSMITTAL BY EMAIL ONLY

Governor Greg Gianforte
Attn.: Hannah Slusser
Office of the Governor
nominatejudges@mt.gov

Re: Application of Dan Guzynski – Ninth Judicial District Court Judge

Dear Governor Gianforte:

I cannot stress the immense level of pride I feel in being able to offer this letter of support on behalf of Dan Guzynski for the position of District Judge in the Ninth Judicial District for the State of Montana.

I have had the privilege of knowing Dan for six years. I feel it is appropriate to share a story which demonstrates the profound affect that Dan's leadership, professionalism, and dedication to the safety of each and every citizen of Montana has had not only on my career as a young attorney, but most importantly, on the life of a very wonderful young woman who was the victim of two atrocious criminal acts.

Dan and I met while I was working as the victim advocate in Liberty County. Dan, as the head of the Prosecution Services Bureau, had agreed to assist the Liberty County Attorney with the prosecution of two very difficult sexual intercourse without consent cases that occurred in Chester, Montana. The victim of these horrendous offenses was a young woman from the nearby town of Shelby, in Toole County.

Throughout the process, Dan demonstrated an unparalleled level of compassion for this young woman who, over a year after the attacks, was still afraid to leave her home. From the moment I was asked to work with her, it was painfully obvious that she was struggling to come to grips with the enormity of the task she was being asked to undertake: to face her attackers and tell her story to strangers in the hope that they would believe her. The magnitude of this task did not end there as she was being asked to repeat this feat over the course of not one but two separate jury trials.

I was so fortunate to be a part of this young woman's advocacy team and watch her build strength and confidence in the face of overwhelming obstacles. This was in no small part due to the approach that Dan took with these difficult cases and with this specific victim. Watching Dan

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March 15, 2023

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interact with her, I was inspired by his level of professionalism, understanding, and overall appreciation for the delicacy of this victim's current state of being. While at the same time, it was a master class in how to recognize and adhere to the boundaries incumbent upon one in the role of a prosecutor and the fine line that must be observed in forming relationships with a victim. I was witness to Dan's ability to be gentle with a victim on one hand, while also maintaining the ethically appropriate distance expected from a prosecutor, trusting me to fulfill my role as the victim's advocate.

Dan was able to bring this amazing woman the closure she so desperately needed, securing guilty verdicts in both trials. As a result of my work with Dan, I became a prosecutor, and I know that I am an all-around better and more ethical attorney after watching him work. Even now, working in a civil defense capacity I would feel confident knowing that Dan, as a member of the judiciary, would be fair and consider any case before him with the same level of open-mindedness and ethical deference that he demonstrated during our prior work together.

The residents of Glacier, Pondera, Teton, and Toole Counties deserve the best. There is no one better suited for this position than Dan Guzynski.

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

Very truly yours,

SPOON GORDON PC



Megan Hansen

(406) 541-2200

Megan@SpoonLaw.com