



March 19, 2026

Senator Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senator Richard J. Durbin
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Letter of support from Montana Department of Justice staff for Katie Lane's nomination to the United States District Court for the District of Montana

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Durbin:

We write as current and former staff of the Montana Department of Justice who had the privilege of working with Katie (Smithgall) Lane during her service from 2021 to 2023. In roles spanning attorneys, administrative professionals, and support staff, we observed Ms. Lane's work closely and across a wide range of responsibilities. We are united in our strong support for her nomination to the United States District Court for the District of Montana.

From the outset of her tenure, Ms. Lane distinguished herself through her professionalism, diligence, and respect for every member of the Department. Regardless of title or position, she treated colleagues with courtesy and genuine consideration. She was generous with her time, approachable in her demeanor, and consistently willing to assist others in meeting the Department's shared goals. Her conduct fostered a collaborative and respectful workplace environment that benefited both her colleagues and the public we serve.

Ms. Lane's work ethic was exceptional. She approached each matter—whether large or small—with careful preparation, attention to detail, and a strong sense of responsibility. She routinely handled demanding assignments under tight deadlines while maintaining a high standard of excellence. Even in high-pressure situations, she remained organized, thoughtful, and focused, setting a steady example for those around her.

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Equally notable was Ms. Lane's temperament. She approached her work with patience, sound judgment, and an even-handed perspective. In discussions and decision-making processes, she listened carefully to differing viewpoints and engaged constructively with others. Her ability to remain calm, respectful, and solutions-oriented—even in challenging circumstances—earned the trust and respect of colleagues throughout the Department.

Ms. Lane also demonstrated a deep commitment to public service. She understood the broader impact of the Department's work on the people of Montana and carried out her responsibilities with integrity and care. Her dedication to fairness and the rule of law was evident in both her professional conduct and her interactions with others.

Based on our firsthand experience working alongside Ms. Lane, we are confident that she possesses the character, temperament, and work ethic necessary to serve with distinction as a United States District Judge. We respectfully urge the Committee to support her nomination and confirm her to the bench.

Respectfully submitted,

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