

Spokane County Court House

SUPERIOR COURT FOR SPOKANE COUNTY

January 19, 2023

Dear Members of the United States Senate Judiciary Committee,

The Spokane County Superior Court unanimously and enthusiastically submits this letter of support for our colleague, Judge Charnelle Bjelkengren, to fill the vacant judicial position at the United States Federal District Court Judge for the Eastern District of Washington state. We highly recommend that you confirm Judge Bjelkengren. We have worked closely with Judge Bjelkengren and know her work, character, and reputation. Based on our firsthand experiences, we collectively share firm confidence in Judge Bjelkengren's demonstrated abilities as an exceptionally well-qualified trial judge.

Simply put, Judge Bjelkengren has proven herself to be a very high-quality, hard-working, ethical, and incredibly competent trial judge who has served our local court system and community with distinction and without regard to partisanship.

Throughout her work history on our bench, Nominee Judge Bjelkengren has consistently demonstrated integrity, as well as skillful capacity for competence in complex and diverse legal matters. She proficiently and efficiently managed a high-volume workload while ensuring fundamental fairness and justice. Judge Bjelkengren exhibited appropriate judicial temperament. She is highly intelligent and follows the law without fear or favor. She consistently displayed an exceptional work ethic and embodied ethical behavior. Judge Bjelkengren's work showed a fundamental understanding of the nonpartisan role of the judicial branch. If confirmed by the Senate, the citizens and Federal Judicial institution will be very well served.

Judge Bjelkengren joined the Spokane County Superior Court bench in May 2019. She has since served as one of its twelve elected Judges. Before becoming a Superior Court Judge, the nominee served as an Administrative Law Judge based in Eastern Washington. Judge Bjelkengren's exceptional reputation working in that capacity paved the way for her gubernatorial appointment to Superior Court, which is the highest trial court level within the State. As a court of general jurisdiction, Spokane Superior Court handles diverse cases in a varied areas of law with an exceptionally high volume of case assignments. While working as a Superior Court judge, Nominee Judge Bjelkengren has demonstrated an ability to quickly master various areas of complex law. She frequently and regularly served as a trial judge in numerous criminal and civil trials. Judge Bjelkengren has been tasked with high-volume docket assignments. She has competently handled all her work assignments, which included to name some illustrative case types: felony criminal jury and bench trials, motions, pleas, sentencings; complex civil jury trials and motions, which frequently involved significant amounts in controversy; numerous family law trials and motions;

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guardianships; probate matters (e.g., wills and trusts); juvenile law; unlawful detainer bench trials (e.g., landlord/tenant disputes); dependency cases; adoptions; and domestic violence protection hearings. In addition, Judge Bjelkengren's judicial duties have included presiding in an appellate capacity for decisions from lower trial courts and state administrative agencies.

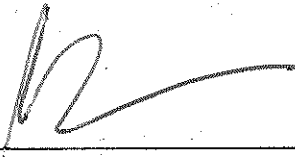
As she carried out her judicial duties and civic work related to the court system, Judge Bjelkengren quickly earned her well-deserved community-wide reputation for fairness, legal competence, and leadership. Judge Bjelkengren is dedicated to upholding the law, and committed to protecting and maintaining the integrity of the judicial institution while understanding and adhering to its nonpartisan, constitutionally prescribed role. Judge Bjelkengren enjoys an excellent reputation in Eastern Washington. She is respected by its legal community, including both prosecution and the criminal defense bar, as well as the civil bar, law enforcement, and the community at large.

Judge Bjelkengren has practical leadership skills and abilities. In addition to her consistent successes in managing her voluminous and complex court-work assignments, Judge Bjelkengren has also excelled in carrying out the administrative responsibilities of the Superior Court. She has worked collaboratively and effectively alongside her judicial colleagues to help to improve and manage our local justice system. Whenever a judicial colleague requests assistance, Judge Bjelkengren readily volunteers to assist her coworkers, including taking on additional work from other judicial departments. Judge Bjelkengren also frequently volunteered and currently serves on multiple committees related to our State Superior Court Judge's Association (SCJA) and local county bar. In short, Judge Bjelkengren is known and respected as a leader within Eastern Washington's community.

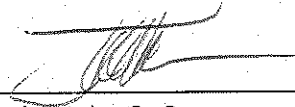
This letter represents the unanimous support from every judicial colleague working on the same bench as Nominee Judge Bjelkengren. We are confident that she will serve the people of the United States as an excellent Federal District Court Judge. We respectfully urge the United States Senate to confirm her nomination. We thank the members of the United States Senate Judiciary Committee for considering this letter of support and for your public service to this great nation.

Respectfully submitted,

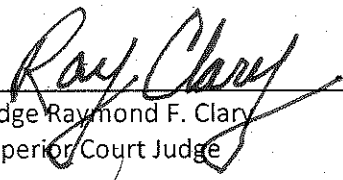
All Judges of the Spokane County Superior Court



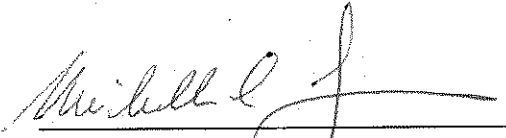
Judge Annette S. Plese
Superior Court Judge



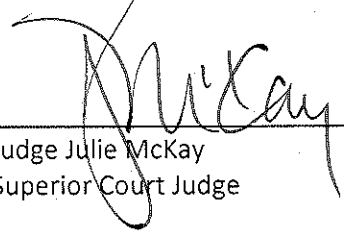
Judge John O. Cooney
Superior Court Judge



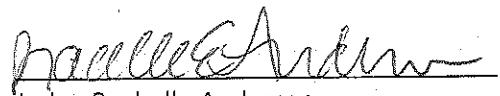
Judge Raymond F. Clark
Superior Court Judge



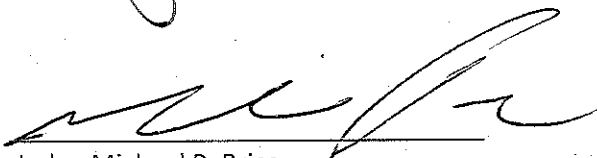
Judge Michelle D. Szambelan
Superior Court Judge



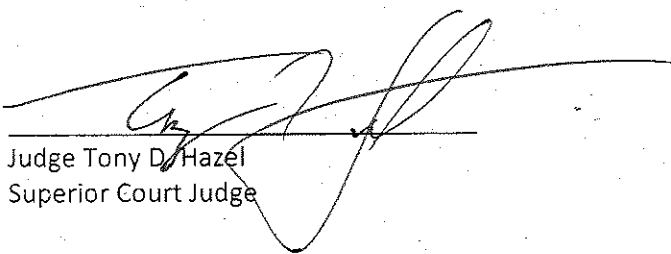
Judge Julie McKay
Superior Court Judge



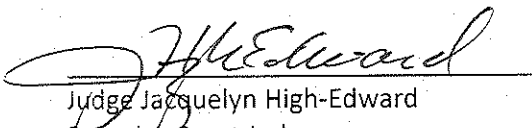
Judge Rachelle Anderson
Superior Court Judge



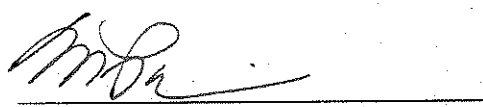
Judge Michael P. Price
Superior Court Judge



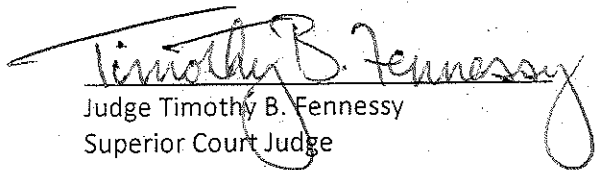
Judge Tony D. Hazel
Superior Court Judge



Judge Jacquelyn High-Edward
Superior Court Judge



Judge Marla Polin
Superior Court Judge



Judge Timothy B. Fennessy
Superior Court Judge