

Message: Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler-District Judge position

 **Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler-District Judge position**

From Eyad Yehyaw

Date Friday, June 01, 2018 1:28 PM

To Meaghan.Obrien@iowa.gov

Cc

 **June 1st.docx** (14 Kb HTML)

Dear Ms. Meaghan O'brien,

Attached is my letter of recommendation for Jason Besler regarding his application for a District Judge position. If you would also like a hard copy-- I would be happy to mail one early next week.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eyad H. Yehyaw

June 1st, 2018

Dear Ms. Meaghan O'Brein:

My name is Eyad Yehyawawi, and I am an optometrist in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. This letter is regarding Jason Besler and his recent application for a District Judge position.

I first met Jason in 2012 at La Petite Daycare Center where our children were attending. I know very little about the legal process, and even less about what it takes to become a District Judge. But what I can speak about, without hesitation, is Jason's character.

First and foremost, Jason is a tremendous father. I have seen many interactions between him and his daughter and never once have I come away with anything but admiration for him as a father. He is always patient, caring, and loving toward his daughter. Jason's demeanor is always calm and collected. There are few people that I would trust with my son, but I would not hesitate to have Jason look after my child.

Jason is also highly intelligent. Although having a law degree speaks for itself, I have always been impressed with his knowledge in various areas—from politics to education—as well as his empathy and understanding for those who do not share his view points. Even when opinions are opposite his own, he is respectful and listens intently while trying to see both sides of any situation.

Despite my limited knowledge of the law and legal process—as a civilian and health care provider—I could not imagine a more qualified candidate than Jason Besler for a District Judge position. I know he would be hard working, open minded, and non-biased in his decision making. I have seen these qualities firsthand and have the utmost confidence in him as a father, lawyer, and future District Judge.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eyad H. Yehyawawi

Eyad H. Yehyawawi, O.D.

[REDACTED]

Cedar Rapids, IA [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Message: Sixth Judicial District Court Judge Vacance

 **Sixth Judicial District Court Judge Vacance**

From Johnna Rairdin **Date** Friday, June 01, 2018 3:52 PM
To Meaghan.Obrien@Iowa.Gov
Cc Mark Fisher

 **Besler recommendation letter.pdf** (115 Kb HTML)

Dear Ms. O'Brien:

Please see attached correspondence from Mark Fisher.

Thank you,

Johnna Rairdin
Legal Assistant
Nidey Erdahl Fisher Pilkington & Meier, PLC
425 2nd Street SE, Suite 1000
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
319-369-0000 Telephone
319-369-6972 Facsimile
Website: <http://www.eiowalaw.com>
Email: <mailto:jrairdin@eiowalaw.com>

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NIDEY ERDAHL FISHER PILKINGTON & MEIER, PLC

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

WWW.EIOWALAW.COM

FRANK J. NIDEY*

CLEMENS A. ERDAHL

MARK D. FISHER*

JOHN W. PILKINGTON

PATRICIA J. MEIER

ELIZABETH A. ARAGUÁS*

JONATHON MUÑOZ

*MEDIATOR

OF COUNSEL: LEI BEI

RICHARD C. WENZEL (1945-2010)
KENNETH R. MARTENS (1946-2010)

AUTHOR'S E-MAIL: MFISHER@EIOWALAW.COM
REPLY TO: CEDAR RAPIDS OFFICE

June 1, 2018

The Honorable Kim Reynolds
c/o Meaghan O'Brien
Office of the Governor
1007 E Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50319

By email and regular US mail

Re: Sixth Judicial District Court Judge Vacancy

Your Honor:

I am writing today to express my full support for Jason Besler for District Court Judge for the Sixth Judicial District. I have known Mr. Besler for a number of years and believe he possesses all of the qualities needed to make him an excellent judge.

I have been practicing law in Cedar Rapids, Iowa for over 10 years. My practice includes a wide variety of legal issues, which brings me into contact with judges, county attorneys, and litigants on a regular basis. I regularly practice in family, criminal, civil, juvenile and other areas of law, which have allowed me to regularly see Mr. Besler at the courthouse.

In my opinion, the most important qualities for any judge are good demeanor, knowledge of the areas of law regularly presented to them, respect for litigants and attorneys, and the ability to efficiently and effectively deal with cases. Based on my experience with Mr. Besler I have no doubt that he can fulfill all of these expectations.

Mr. Besler is very knowledgeable in criminal law and has dedicated many hours to advocacy for abused and neglected children. Indeed I understand he was awarded the Outstanding Service Award. In addition, every time I have come into contact with Mr. Besler he has had a good demeanor and has been willing to talk. I believe that his knowledge of criminal law and his willingness to reach out to others in the community is a strong indicator of how well he will function as a judge. Mr. Besler has a tremendous reputation in the community for integrity and fair dealing, and I fully support his appointment.

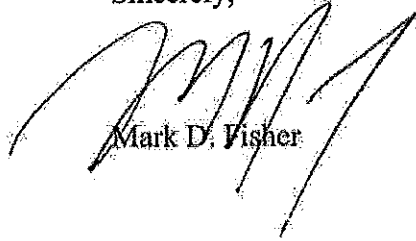
Cedar Rapids Office
425 2nd Street SE, Suite 1000
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401
Phone: (319) 369-0000
Fax: (319) 369-6972

Marengo Office
1017 Court Avenue
Marengo, Iowa 52301
Phone: (319) 642-3411
Fax: (319) 642-3411

Muscatine Office
300 East 2nd Street
Suite 300A
Muscatine, Iowa 52761
Phone: (563) 263-2971
Se habla español

If you have any questions about Mr. Besler please do not hesitate to contact me. My personal cell phone is [REDACTED] and my office is 319-369-000. Thank you, again, for considering Mr. Besler. He will make a terrific judge.

Sincerely,



Mark D. Fisher

Message: Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler

 **Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler**

From Edward Hayes

Date Saturday, June 02, 2018 10:46 PM

To Meaghan.obrien@iowa.gov

Cc

 **Jason Besler Character Letter- Gov Reynolds 06-02-18.odt** (7 Kb HTML)

Dear Meaghan,

Attached is a letter of recommendation to Governor Reynolds for Jason Besler who is seeking a judgeship position.

A hard-copy of this letter will be mailed to your office.

Bernie Hayes
Cedar Rapids, IA



[REDACTED]
Cedar Rapids, IA [REDACTED]

June 2, 2018

Re: Character Reference Letter for Jason Besler

To the Honorable Governor Kim Reynolds,

This letter is written on behalf of Jason Besler as testament, not only to his outstanding service to our community, but his consistent demonstration to live in an engaging way for the welfare of others. He presently serves as a board member for Isaac Newton Christian School.

I have known Jason for over a decade as a fair and able leader particularly from our mutual involvement on local community boards. One such board was Bridgehaven (Pregnancy Support Center, formerly known as Aid to Women) where we served as board members and officers at various times. Jason's knowledge, insight, and judgment was not only timely but invaluable when it came to addressing many organizational challenges. Even after stepping down from the board, his advice was still sought after, and he would make himself readily available to supply it.

I've witnessed how Jason's calm demeanor and winsome attitude have allowed him to be welcomed into some of the most contentious debates and result in positive outcomes. He is as articulate as they come while being both clear and firm. He is willing to work through difficult circumstances and assignments to arrive at a just conclusion.

It is for these reasons that I can wholeheartedly recommend Jason for the judgeship position he is seeking.

Sincerely,

E. Bernard Hayes

Elder Chair

Noelridge Park Church
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Message: Ellen Ramsey-Kacena

✉ Ellen Ramsey-Kacena

From Molly Williams **Date** Sunday, June 03, 2018 1:31 PM
To Meaghan.Obrien@iowa.gov
Cc

Meaghan,

I would like to fully endorse Ellen Ramsey-Kacena as a finalist for the Sixth Judicial District Judge position.

Ellen has been an outstanding leader for the Cedar Rapids Concert Chorale since I've known her. She has worked tirelessly and successfully to bring this group leaps and bounds during her years as board president.

Ellen is a wonderful wife - wonderful mother and fantastic friend who would do just about anything for anyone. What's amazing to me is that she has done ALL THIS while running a successful practice and fully serving her clients.

She is a listener - contemplative and a problem solver.

I've been honored to have known two other female judges personally - Judge Lynn Brady Neuhaus and Judge Jane Spande. And I can say without a doubt that Ellen Ramsey-Kacena is equally qualified to serve in this capacity.

Thank you,

Molly Williams

Cedar Rapids Concert Chorale

Board Member


Message: Re: 5C Judicial Recommendation - Block

✉ **Re: 5C Judicial Recommendation - Block**

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Monday, June 04, 2018 10:58 AM
To Jon Jacobsen
Cc

Thank you!

On Sun, Jun 3, 2018 at 9:09 PM, Jon Jacobsen <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Governor Reynolds and Ms. O'Brien,

Letter of Support
Regarding 5C Judicial Recommendation - Block

I support the nomination of current Polk County Probate Judge Craig Block to be appointed District Court Judge to fill the current vacancy for the 5th District.

Judge Block has performed with great competency, work ethic, and character in his performance on the bench, with respect to this particularly complex, comprehensive, and adversarial area of the law. The Probate field encompasses issues relevant to contract, property, tort, tax, criminal, and Constitutional law.

Judge Craig Block enjoys the confidence of those of us attorneys who practice in the area of Probate, Trusts, and Estates. He also is respected by the clientele whose matters come before him, despite the differences they almost inherently have between and amongst each other within their respective cases.

Judge Block has interpreted the law very well, especially with respect to statutes and case law augering for the protection of vulnerable elders and people with special needs.

Judge Block has the intellect, integrity, and demeanor to preside most capably as a District Court Judge for the 5th District. I recommend him heartily for this position.

Respectfully yours,

Jon Anthony Jacobsen, J.D.
V.P., Senior Trust Officer
Nat'l Dir., Practice Devlpmt

Security National Trust, DM
Security National Bank, CB/ Omaha

Sent from my iPhone

--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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www.hgovernor.iowa.gov

Message: Re: Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Monday, June 04, 2018 11:09 AM
To Mike Mesch
Cc

Thank you!

Your electronic copy is perfectly fine.

On Thu, May 31, 2018 at 10:52 AM, Mike Mesch <mmesch@tld-inc.com> wrote:

Good morning Meaghan! I have attached to this email a letter of recommendation for Jason Besler for the district judge position. Jason asked that I forward the letter directly to you via email but if you would like a hard copy please let me know.

Also, if you could please let me know you received this that would be great!

Mike

We appreciate your business and referrals.

Michael Mesch, CPA/ABV, ASA, CFF
Business Valuation and Advisory Services

Cedar Rapids Phone: (319) 364-2945

Cedar Rapids Fax: (319) 362-4487

Iowa City Phone: (319) 339-4884

Iowa City Fax: (319) 358-9113

mmesch@tld-inc.com

www.realfinancialstrategies.com

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Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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Message: Re: 6th Judicial District Judgeship support letter

 **Re: 6th Judicial District Judgeship support letter**

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Monday, June 04, 2018 11:20 AM
To Barbara Davis
Cc

Thank you!

On Mon, Jun 4, 2018 at 10:27 AM, Barbara Davis <bdurdendavislaw@gmail.com> wrote:

Ms. O'Brien,

Please see the attached letter in support of Ms. Ramsey-Kacena for 6th Judicial District Judge. Thank you.

--

Barbara Durden Davis, P.C.
Attorney at Law
1200 Valley West Drive, Suite 206-16
West Des Moines, Iowa 50266
Phone: 515-225-9300
Fax: 515-225-7546
www.barbaradurdendavis.com

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www.ltgovernor.iowa.gov

Message: Re: Letter in support of Judicial Candidate, Ellen Ramsey Kacena

✉ **Re: Letter in support of Judicial Candidate, Ellen Ramsey Kacena**

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Monday, June 04, 2018 11:27 AM
To Antonuccio, Rachel
Cc

Thank you!

On Thu, May 31, 2018 at 11:45 AM, Antonuccio, Rachel <rantonuccio@spd.state.ia.us> wrote:

Dear Ms. O'Brien:

I hope this email finds you well. Attached, please find my letter of support for Ellen Ramsey Kacena. Please let me know if you have any difficulty opening the attachment.

Thank you,

Rachel Antonuccio

--

Rachel Antonuccio

Iowa City Public Defender's Office, Juvenile Division

725 South Clinton Street, Ste. A

Iowa City, IA 52240

Phone: (319) 351-1327

Fax: 319-351-0042

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Message: Re: Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Monday, June 04, 2018 11:30 AM
To James&Peg Moses
Cc

Thank you!

On Thu, May 31, 2018 at 10:00 PM, James&Peg Moses <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Meaghan,

Please find attached a Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler for the position of District Judge for the Sixth Judicial District.

I appreciate your consideration and ask that this information is forwarded to Governor Kim Reynolds.

Thank you.

James Moses, Jr.

Probation/Parole Officer II

Department of Correctional Services, Sixth Judicial District

--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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www.ltgovernor.iowa.gov

Message: Re: Letter of Recommendation; Jason Besler

Re: Letter of Recommendation; Jason Besler

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Monday, June 04, 2018 11:31 AM
To Randy Cole
Cc

Thank you!

On Thu, May 31, 2018 at 11:17 PM, Randy Cole <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Ms. O'Brien,

Attached is a letter of recommendation in support of Jason Besler for the next Judgeship appointment. It was my pleasure and honor to write the letter. I truly believe Jason would make an excellent Judiciary.

Respectfully,

Randy E. Cole

--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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Message: Re: Jason Besler Letter of Endorsement

Re: Jason Besler Letter of Endorsement

From: O'Brien, Meaghan **Date:** Monday, June 04, 2018 11:32 AM
To: Carol Galli
Cc:

Thank you!

On Fri, Jun 1, 2018 at 8:22 AM, Carol Galli [REDACTED] > wrote:

To: Governor Kim Reynolds

Fr: Matthew Petrzelka

Carol Galli, Secretary
Petrzelka & Breitbach, PLC
1000 42nd Street SE, Suite A
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403
Ph: 319-365-3787
Fx: 319-365-3788
Tf: 866-900-3787

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Message: Re: Jason Besler Recommendation

Re: Jason Besler Recommendation

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Monday, June 04, 2018 11:34 AM
To Zimmerman Kevin J
Cc

Thank you!

On Fri, Jun 1, 2018 at 11:06 AM, Zimmerman Kevin J <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Meaghan,

Attached is a letter of recommendation for Jason Besler. Please let me know if you have any questions.

R/

Kevin

Kevin J. Zimmerman
Senior Manager/Labor Attorney
Global Labor Relations and Continuous Improvement
One John Deere Place
Moline, IL 61265
Office: (309) 765-8341 Mobile: (309) 912-4259

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Message: Re: Letter in support of Jason Besler (I have also attached a signed copy)

☑ Re: Letter in support of Jason Besler (I have also attached a signed copy)

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Monday, June 04, 2018 11:39 AM
To Aaron Jones
Cc

Thank you!

On Fri, Jun 1, 2018 at 8:49 AM, Aaron Jones <ajones@co.mower.mn.us> wrote:

6/1/2018

...

Aaron Jones

Austin, Minnesota

Honorable Kim Reynolds

Office of the Governor of Iowa

C/o Meaghan O'Brien

Re: Letter in support of Jason Besler as a district court judge.

Dear Governor Reynolds:

I am writing a letter in support of my law school classmate, co-worker, and friend, Jason Besler, to be a district court judge.

First, who am I and why would my opinion on a good judge be relevant? I am from Ames, but I graduated from the University of Iowa in 1996 and the University of Iowa College of Law in 1999. During law school I worked with Mr. Besler at Student Legal Services, representing students in all sorts of matters. During the 1998-1999 school year Jason Besler and I were the co-directors of Student Legal Services, meaning we were in charge.

After graduating I moved to Minnesota, was admitted to the bar in 2000, worked as a law clerk until 2003 when I started as a prosecutor. I have been an assistant county attorney since 2003, mainly focusing on child protection, delinquency prosecution and DWI prosecution. For the last 12 years I have been an assistant county attorney in Mower County, Minnesota. If you eat Spam it came from here in Austin. In my years I have appeared in front of many, many judges. I would not be surprised if I have experienced working with over 100 judges in that time.

Why would Jason Besler be a great judge? The biggest reason I would see would be his ability to be respectful in sticking to his principles and to be respectful in disagreements. He is someone with whom I disagree on a lot of topics. However, I have never felt condescended to, nor observed him condescending to anyone he disagrees with. He has reasons for his positions and can explain them. In my experience, when a judge does not have this ability it leads to problems, quickly.

His legal experience would also be a substantial benefit. It may be my personal bias, but I believe attorneys with county attorney experience make better judges. Nothing can make up for actual courtroom experience, and prosecutors have the most time in court by far.

I am certainly willing to follow up if there are any questions you have about Mr. Besler, but when he mentioned to me that he was a candidate, my immediate thought was that he is a person with the right disposition for the job, which is pretty rare.

Aaron Jones

Assistant Mower County Attorney

Austin, Minnesota

507-380-6773

--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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Message: Jason D. Besler -- Letter of Recommendation

✉ Jason D. Besler -- Letter of Recommendation

From Jeffrey schulte Date Monday, June 04, 2018 12:33 PM
To Meaghan.Obrien@iowa.gov
Cc

[REDACTED]
North Liberty, Iowa [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

4 June 2018

The Honorable Kim Reynolds

Office of the Governor

1007 E. Grand Avenue

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Governor Reynolds:

I am writing in recommendation of Jason D. Besler for appointment to State of Iowa 6th Judicial District Judge. In the approximately eighteen (18) years I have interacted with Mr. Besler in my position as a deputy sheriff -- both on patrol and as a transport officer, it has always been reassuring to have one of the most rational and conscientious individuals I have ever known representing the citizens of Linn County. He is not only extremely knowledgeable of the law, but also careful to ensure that justice be served.

Justice being fulfilled does not simply mean it is completed in favor of the prosecution either. It has always impressed me how -- whether in the courtroom or in personally speaking to Mr. Besler about a case -- he has no interest in seeking conviction of anyone he truly fails to believe is guilty, and will seek to amend or dismiss charges as necessary. When his position on a matter is sought, he is very reasonable, objective, and harbors no animosity towards a defendant. I have never heard Jason request a sentence for an individual that could be considered vindictive, and he instead endeavors to deliver the most fair and ethical outcome to a case.

It would be shocking to me if there were a law enforcement or Department of Corrections officer, fellow prosecutor, Judge, or even defense attorney, who views Mr. Besler with a different perspective than what I have described above. As I reflect on my experiences with him, I cannot recall a single instance in which I have ever seen Jason get upset, much less lose his composure or appear condescending to whomever he is in contact....either professionally or in his private life. Perhaps more important than anything, Mr. Besler is the consummate family man and absolutely adores his daughter, Chloe.

For selfish reasons, part of me would be happy for Jason to be overlooked so he will instead remain at the Linn County Attorneys Office. But because he aspires to the bench, is exceptionally dedicated, qualified, and has an integrity unrivaled, I understand his desire to serve a greater good. Impartiality, adaptability and patience are core traits that are necessary to be a jurist, and Mr. Besler is a shining example of those qualities. He would be an outstanding selection to be our next District Court Judge, and I hope you concur.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey L. Schulte

Message: Letter of Recommendation

 **Letter of Recommendation**

From Speth, Cory R. **Date** Tuesday, June 05, 2018 5:10 PM
To Meaghan.Obrien@Iowa.Gov
Cc

 **Letter.pdf** (68 Kb HTML)

Dear Ms. O'Brien-
Please find attached a letter of recommendation for Mr. Jason Besler as he is a finalist for the District Court Judge position open in the Sixth Judicial District. Thank you.

Cory

Cory Speth
Assistant Linn County Attorney
51 3rd Ave. Bridge
Cedar Rapids, IA. 52401
Phone: (319) 892-6350
Fax: (319) 892-6389

Cory R. Speth

[REDACTED]
Mt. Vernon, IA.

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

June 5, 2018

Meaghan O'Brien
Office of the Governor
1007 E. Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA. 50319

Dear Ms. O'Brien-

My name is Cory Speth and I am an Assistant Linn County Attorney. I work with Jason Besler in the Linn County Attorney's Office. I am submitting this letter on his behalf as a finalist for the District Court Judge position that is upcoming in the Sixth Judicial District. I believe that Mr. Besler would make an excellent District Court Judge, and that Governor Reynolds should strongly consider appointing him to the position.

I have been practicing law in Linn County for over thirteen (13) years, but I have only been in the Linn County Attorney's Office for a little over a year and a half. I knew Mr. Besler prior to joining the Linn County Attorney's Office because I practiced in criminal defense in the Cedar Rapids area. Although I had no cases directly with Mr. Besler, my interaction with the office led to my getting to know him and seeing him in Court.

Since joining the office, I have had the privilege of getting to know Mr. Besler much more. In fact, I have served (and am currently serving) as second chair in two separate murder cases with Mr. Besler. In serving in this capacity, I have witnessed firsthand Mr. Besler's dedication to his cases. Not only does he put the time in to make sure he knows all the facts and circumstances of the case, but he also is very knowledgeable of the applicable law. If research needs to be done to verify, he is very thorough to make sure that he has the understanding of the applicable law. No one in the office is more prepared than Mr. Besler. But what I find most impressive about Mr. Besler is his handling of witnesses and victims in our cases. He is very down to earth when he speaks; has a great temperament; and has a rare ability to explain to folks what the law is and how it applies to their particular situation in such a way that they understand.

The attributes described above would serve Mr. Besler, as well as the people of the Sixth Judicial District, well if he were to be appointed a District Court Judge. And I believe these attributes to be essential to whomever serves as a Judge. Finally, Mr. Besler is fair. My understanding of his reputation throughout the practicing bar is that he is fair and honest. Again, two attributes that are absolutely essential to a Judge. Not only do I recommend Mr. Besler for the position, but I would welcome and questions or concerns that you have regarding Mr. Besler. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Cory R. Speth

Message: Letter of Endorsement - Jason Besler, 6th District Judge

 **Letter of Endorsement - Jason Besler, 6th District Judge**

From Michelle McIllece **Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 8:22 AM
To Meaghan.Obrien@iowa.gov
Cc

 **Besler, Jason Recommendation~6th District Judge.pdf** (38 Kb HTML)

Good morning,

Jason Besler is a candidate for 6th District Judge, and I am attaching a letter of endorsement that I have written on his behalf. If you have any questions, you are welcome to call me at [REDACTED].

Thank you,

Michelle McIllece

Image 1

Michelle & Jens McIllece

[REDACTED] • Hiawatha, IA [REDACTED] • [REDACTED] • [REDACTED]

June 6, 2018

Meaghan O'Brien
Office of the Governor
1007 E. Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Ms. O'Brien:

I am writing to express endorsement of Jason Besler for the position of District Judge in the 6th judicial district.

Jason and his wife, Karen, have been personal friends of ours for about 15 years. We met through mutual involvement in Daybreak Rotary in Cedar Rapids; although none of us are involved with that group at this point in our lives, we have continued to remain close friends and we socialize together regularly. Even our kids are friends!
Our social outings over the years have regularly involved late-night chat sessions at one of our homes,

those types of talks where we dissect and solve the world's problems together. We are also on Facebook with Jason, so we regularly gain insight into how he thinks through his posts. Given his profound interest in government, politics, and the law, many of our conversations and most of his social media posts address these types of issues. In other words, we know how he thinks, and we know why he thinks the

way he does because he does an amazing job explaining it.
In considering the qualities of a judge who will exercise compassion, fairness and impartiality, I cannot

recommend Jason highly enough. He has a personal commitment to integrity and justice, along with an ability to examine issues from all possible angles before drawing conclusions or developing opinions.
He

thoughtfully and carefully uses facts to build to logical conclusions, and although he has personal opinions like everyone else, even those are rooted in carefully thought-out analysis. In terms of temperament, he is calm, thoughtful and rational. In all of our time together over the years, I've never

seen him rattled. I have seen him have feelings about things, but I have never seen those feelings translate into reactions. His compassion is evident not only in his work as an attorney, but also in his outside activities, where he regularly volunteers, serves on boards, and generally lives a life of personal service to others.

All of this together, along with his propensity for logical thinking and his knowledge of and passion for the law, suggests to me that he has exactly what it takes to be a judge whose work will reflect both fairness and compassion. I cannot recommend him strongly enough!

Respectfully,
Michelle McIllece

Message: Re: 5A Judicial Recommendation - Hemphill**☑ Re: 5A Judicial Recommendation - Hemphill**

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 9:23 AM
To Patrick Spellman
Cc

Thank you!

On Tue, Jun 5, 2018 at 5:20 PM, Patrick Spellman <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Ms. O'Brien,

Would you kindly deliver to Governor Reynolds and Lieutenant Governor Gregg the attached letter recommending the selection of **Mathew Hemphill of Adel** as District Court Judge for the 5th Judicial District, **5A** ?

Thank you,

Patrick J. Spellman, Sr.

Spellman, Spellman, Spellman, Spellman, Kealhofer, & Spellman, Attorneys At Law
1024 Second Street, P.O. Box 550, Perry, Iowa 50220

Telephone: 515-465-5326 Fax: 515-465-3193 Cell: 515-979-6144
Email: [REDACTED] Website: www.spellmanlawfirm.com

Des Moines Office:

319 SW 5th Street

Des Moines, Iowa 50309

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--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

Office of the Governor, State of Iowa
Gov. Kim Reynolds & Lt .Governor Adam Gregg
515-725-3517 | meaghan.obrien@iowa.gov
www.governor.iowa.gov

www.ltgovernor.iowa.gov

Message: Re: Letter of Support for Ellen Ramsey-Kacena

✉ Re: Letter of Support for Ellen Ramsey-Kacena

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 9:26 AM
To Rebecca Farmer
Cc

Thank you!

On Wed, Jun 6, 2018 at 7:29 AM, Rebecca Farmer <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Ms. Obrien,

Attached please find my letter of support for selection of Ellen Ramsey-Kacena as a judge in the Sixth Judicial District.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Farmer


--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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Gov. Kim Reynolds & Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
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www.governor.iowa.gov

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Message: Re: Letter of Endorsement - Jason Besler, 6th District Judge

 **Re: Letter of Endorsement - Jason Besler, 6th District Judge**

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 9:30 AM
To Michelle McIllece
Cc

Thank you!

On Wed, Jun 6, 2018 at 8:22 AM, Michelle McIllece <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Good morning,

Jason Besler is a candidate for 6th District Judge, and I am attaching a letter of endorsement that I have written on his behalf. If you have any questions, you are welcome to call me at [REDACTED].

Thank you,

Michelle McIllece

--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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Message: support letter

 **support letter**

From Jama R

Date Wednesday, June 06, 2018 9:39 AM

To meaghan.obrien@iowa.gov

Cc

 **Ellen reference letter 6-6-18.pdf** (28 Kb HTML)

Please find attached a letter in support of Ellen Ramsey-Kacena for Sixth Judicial District Judge.

--

Jama Robinson

June 6, 2018

Meaghan O'Brien
Office of the Governor
1007 E. Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50319

RE: Ellen Ramsey-Kacena

I am providing this letter of support as requested by Mrs. Ramsey-Kacena for the Sixth Judicial District Judge position. I am a social worker and have worked with Mrs. Ramsey-Kacena for more than 12 years. I am familiar with her practice as an attorney through our work with families together.

Mrs. Ramsey-Kacena is a very strong advocate for her clients. You would be hard pressed to find an attorney who fights harder for what they believe is in their client's best interest. Mrs. Ramsey-Kacena does not back down to controversial opinions. However, when she has a solid working relationship with another professional, she is able to take in information from that professional and reconsider her position on an issue.

Mrs. Ramsey-Kacena has mentioned her goal of being a judge many times over the years. She is extremely honored to be a finalist and hopeful to have the chance to serve the Sixth District as a judge.

Sincerely,



Jama Robinson

[REDACTED]
Cedar Rapids, IA [REDACTED]

Message: Re: support letter

 **Re: support letter**

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 9:48 AM
To Jama R
Cc

Thank you!

On Wed, Jun 6, 2018 at 9:39 AM, Jama R [REDACTED] > wrote:

Please find attached a letter in support of Ellen Ramsey-Kacena for Sixth Judicial District Judge.

--

Jama Robinson

--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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Message: Letter of Support for Jason Besler**✉ Letter of Support for Jason Besler**

From Christy Ryan **Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 10:10 AM
To Meaghan.OBrien@Iowa.Gov
Cc

06 June 2018

Dear Governor Reynolds,

I am writing this letter in support of Jason Besler for the judicial vacancy. I have had the pleasure of having Mr. Besler as my sons lawyer for the past year and a half. I was truly honored when Mr. Besler asked me to write this letter of support for him.

Mr. Besler and I began working together when he was assigned my sons case in 2016. Mr. Besler took the time to meet with me and my son to explain the case and make sure we understood what to expect. He answered our questions and helped us feel comfortable while dealing with a very uncomfortable case. I was fully confident in how he was handling our case and fighting for us. Mr. Besler kept in contact with us and set up meetings to keep us informed of changes and updates in our case, as there were many.

While working on my sons case, I saw Mr. Besler take the time to get to know my son. He talked sports and favorite movies which formed a connection between them. Mr. Besler left us feeling supported and that someone cared. Mr. Besler went above and beyond what I expected of a lawyer. If he said he would call, he did. During this process I never felt we were just another case but he made us feel like a priority. Mr. Besler was someone I could depend on and was always there for us.

I wish luck to those you are considering for this position and I pray this letter of support helps you understand Jason Besler.

Sincerely,

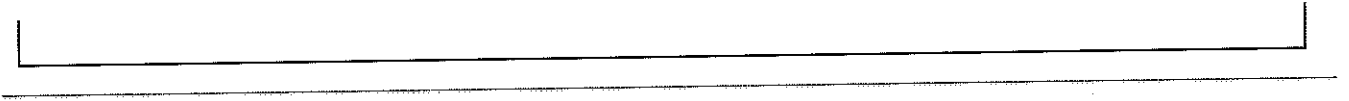
Christina Ryan

[REDACTED]

Clinton, Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Message: Re: Letter of Support for Jason Besler**✉ Re: Letter of Support for Jason Besler**

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 11:36 AM
To Christy Ryan
Cc

Thank you!

On Wed, Jun 6, 2018 at 10:09 AM, Christy Ryan <[REDACTED]> wrote:

06 June 2018

Dear Governor Reynolds,

I am writing this letter in support of Jason Besler for the judicial vacancy. I have had the pleasure of having Mr. Besler as my sons lawyer for the past year and a half. I was truly honored when Mr. Besler asked me to write this letter of support for him.

Mr. Besler and I began working together when he was assigned my sons case in 2016. Mr. Besler took the time to meet with me and my son to explain the case and make sure we understood what to expect. He answered our questions and helped us feel comfortable while dealing with a very uncomfortable case. I was fully confident in how he was handling our case and fighting for us. Mr. Besler kept in contact with us and set up meetings to keep us informed of changes and updates in our case, as there were many.

While working on my sons case, I saw Mr. Besler take the time to get to know my son. He talked sports and favorite movies which formed a connection between them. Mr. Besler left us feeling supported and that someone cared. Mr. Besler went above and beyond what I expected of a lawyer. If he said he would call, he did. During this process I never felt we were just another case but he made us feel like a priority. Mr. Besler was someone I could depend on and was always there for us.

I wish luck to those you are considering for this position and I pray this letter of support helps you understand Jason Besler.

Sincerely,

Christina Ryan

[REDACTED]

Clinton, Iowa



Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

Office of the Governor, State of Iowa
Gov. Kim Reynolds & Lt .Governor Adam Gregg
515-725-3517 | meaghan.obrien@iowa.gov
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www.ltgovernor.iowa.gov

Message: Re: Recommendation

 **Re: Recommendation**

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 2:45 PM
To Boettcher, Ali
Cc

Thanks!

On Wed, Jun 6, 2018 at 1:26 PM, Boettcher, Ali <ali.boettcher@iowa.gov> wrote:

June 6, 2018

The Honorable Kim Reynolds

Iowa State Capitol

1007 East Grand Ave

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

RE: Recommendation for Ellen R. Ramsey-Kacena

Dear Governor Reynolds:

It is my privilege to write a letter in support of Ellen Ramsey-Kacena for the position of District Court Judge. I have known Ellen for more than ten years, after meeting during our time with the Junior League of Cedar Rapids. Ellen has served in leadership roles for several community organizations, including the Junior League of Cedar Rapids, Foundation 2, Family Treatment Court Board and the History Center. She is also a graduate of Leadership for Five Seasons. Her passion for serving these organizations and the community is inspiring; she is always willing to share her experience and expertise.

Ellen is intelligent and knowledgeable in many areas of law; able to immediately grasp the issues and offer thoughtful resolutions. She is

passionate about the families she has served in her role as an attorney.

Ellen will be an excellent Judge in our community; giiving thoughtful and measured responses to challenges. She treats individuals with respect and is also very well-respected leader in the community.

Thank you for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Susie Weinacht

Susie Weinacht

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cedar Rapids, Iowa [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (H)

--

Ali Boettcher | Administrative Assistant

Office of the Governor, State of Iowa

Gov. Kim Reynolds & Lt. Gov. Adam Gregg

515.725.3518 | ali.boettcher@iowa.gov

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--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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Message: Re: Jason Besler District Court Judge Recommendation

Re: Jason Besler District Court Judge Recommendation

From O'Brien, Meaghan **Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 2:47 PM
To Clark Nate
Cc

Thank you!

On Wed, Jun 6, 2018 at 12:01 PM, Clark Nate <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Miss O'Brien,

I hope you are having a lovely day. Attached here please find a letter of recommendation for Jason Besler to serve as an Iowa District Court Judge. I understand the Office of the Governor is kindly receiving these letters.

Thanks so much in advance, and please advise if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Nate Clark
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

--

Meaghan O'Brien | Administrative Assistant

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Message: Fwd: Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler**✉ Fwd: Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler****From** Jacobs, Austin**Date** Wednesday, June 06, 2018 4:09 PM**To** O'Brien, Meaghan; Colin Smith; Ryan Koopmans**Cc**

FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Megan Heneke [REDACTED] >
Date: Wed, Jun 6, 2018 at 2:09 PM
Subject: Letter of Recommendation for Jason Besler
To: austin.jacobs@iowa.gov

Dear Mr. Jacobs,

I practiced law in Cedar Rapids from 2011 to 2014. Jason Besler was often my opposing counsel. Jason would make an excellent judge. Jason has the knowledge and curiosity to excel at tackling legal issues, but most importantly, Jason has the temperament to treat all parties equally and with respect. As a prosecutor, Jason understood his role. He began each case as a neutral fact finder. He never approached cases with preconceived notions regarding the outcome.

Jason knew he wielded tremendous power as a prosecutor and he took this power very seriously. He never made arbitrary decisions. He understood that a conviction comes with many consequences for the defendant and he sought a just outcome in every case. He used his independent judgment and understood that a prosecutor's role is to seek justice for the state.

Finally, I know Jason to be an upstanding individual. We would all be fortunate if more people like Jason went into public service. Jason and I disagree on many political issues, but I know him to be compassionate, polite, and respectful. He builds relationships on these characteristics and I'm confident he would bring these characteristics to the bench.

Best,

Megan Heneke

--

Austin S. Jacobs | Scheduler & Communications Advisor

Office of the Governor, State of Iowa
Governor Kim Reynolds & Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
515-725-3513 | austin.jacobs@iowa.gov
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Because Governor Reynolds' schedule changes frequently, and at times virtually at the last minute due to her obligations to the state, you will be notified as quickly as possible if the governor must miss your event.