

June 23, 2017

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VIA EMAIL

Senator Steve Daines
1 Russell Senate Courtyard
Washington D.C. 20510
Jason_thielman@daines.senate.gov

**Re: U.S. Attorney for the District of Montana
Letter of Support for Kurt Alme**

Dear Senator Daines:

I write in strong support of the potential nomination of Kurt Alme of Billings for U.S. Attorney for the District of Montana. I have no doubt that many people will express support for Kurt because of his first-rate character, experience, and professional temperament. I would like to speak to Kurt's legal ability. I am presently a partner at a law firm in Seattle, but I grew up in Circle. Along with U.S. District Judge Brian Morris in Great Falls, I believe I am one of only two Montanans to clerk at the U.S. Supreme Court. I clerked for Justice Scalia from 2000-2001. I have worked with many exceptional lawyers over the years. Kurt is one of them.

I worked with Kurt as a fellow Assistant U.S. Attorney in Billings from 2005-2009. At one time, he and I both interviewed as potential candidates to replace U.S. Attorney Bill Mercer. It is a testament to my high regard for Kurt that even though we were once rivals for that job, I am extremely pleased to support him.

Kurt went from growing up in Miles City to Harvard Law School. That is a significant achievement, as Harvard Law School is very difficult to get into (and then pay for). He then returned to practice law and make his career in Montana. I don't know how many native Montanans have attended Harvard Law School (or Yale or the other top law schools) and returned to Montana, but I'm fairly confident it is not many. And Kurt certainly didn't have to do that. He had numerous classmates—including other kids who were standouts from small cities or rural states—who graduated and then went to New York City, Los Angeles, and other places to practice law at large law firms and never returned to Montana. For someone of Kurt's talent to return to Montana is a big deal. To return and be committed to public service is an even bigger deal. I have no doubt that he has inspired other talented Montana kids by his example.


As an attorney in Montana, Kurt has demonstrated superior legal skill and commitment to high ideals. My work with Kurt at the U.S. Attorney's office was almost entirely pure legal

Senator Daines
June 23, 2017
Page 2

work, as opposed to administrative tasks. We worked together writing and reviewing briefs, preparing for arguments, researching issues, and so forth. Kurt is a first-rate lawyer. He spots issues, he drills down to find the right answer, he discusses questions with his colleagues, and he insists on high-quality submissions to courts. In particular, I handled one appeal that was in a case involving tax protesters that Kurt tried to a jury. I thought his handling of the case from start to finish was a model of careful, high-quality government lawyering against difficult adversaries. Representing the United States is not the same as representing a private party, and there must always be sensitivity to justice and the appearance of justice. Kurt's work always reflected strong commitment to those ideals.

Kurt is a very skilled lawyer, a very good guy, and a first-rate Montanan. I would be extremely proud to learn that he was selected to be U.S. Attorney for Montana. All Montanans could and should be proud of that. And they would be well represented by Kurt as their U.S. Attorney in federal district and appellate courts.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "EBW", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric B. Wolff

EBW:sb