

UPPER MISSOURI BAR ASSOCIATION
Serving the Legal Profession in Divide, McKenzie, Mountrail & Williams Counties
P.O. Box 2686, Williston, ND 58802-2686

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CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

Officers for 2023

Hernando Perez, President
Thomas Jeffrey Corcoran, Secretary-Treasurer

April 10, 2023

North Dakota Supreme Court
600 E. Boulevard Ave
Bismarck, ND 58505

Re: Vacancy in Judgeship No. 3, with Chambers in Williston, Northwest Judicial District

Honorable Supreme Court,

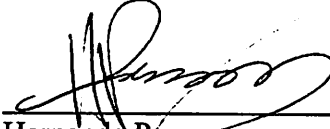
My name is Hernando Perez. I am the president of the Upper Missouri Bar Association. Our organization consists of attorneys who live and practice in Divide, McKenzie, Mountrail and Williams Counties. There are approximately fifty plus (50+) attorneys working in these areas. Our organization would like to express our support to retain Judgeship No. 3 chambered in Williston.

Our organization agrees that our courts are busy and we need to retain the judgeship in order to keep up with the numerous caseloads. Retaining judgeship is imperative for the proper administration of justice. Having four judges chambered in Williston allows the criminal matters in the Northwest Judicial District to be seen and heard in a timely manner. Attorneys that practice civil law have expressed concern that if the judgeship is not retained, civil matters will take longer to litigate and trial dates will be delayed.

The judges chambered in Williston and in Watford City are tasked with covering multiple counties, this requires extensive travel. The judges that sit on the bench in Watford City have to travel to Crosby, this is a 230-mile trip a four-hour drive round trip. The judges chambered in Williston and Watford City rotate when they must travel to Divide County. If the judgeship is not retained this will create more burden on the remaining judges in the Northwest Judicial District.

Williston continues to grow in population. Our schools are at capacity and some are over capacity. This is an indication that the growth will continue in the future and the court system will need all the judges it currently has. Retention of the judgeship is imperative in order to keep up with the continued growth in Williston.

Therefore, on behalf of the Upper Missouri Bar Association, I submit this letter in support of retention of Judgeship no. 3 chambered in Williston. This will help to guarantee that the citizens of the Northwest Judicial District will have access to the court system in a timely manner when needed.



Hernando Pérez

President, Upper Missouri Bar Association