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March 2, 2025

The Honorable Steve Daines  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tim Sheehy  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Recommendation of Kurt Alme for Montana U. S. Attorney

Dear Senator Daines and Senator Sheehy:

By way of introduction, my name is Ken Bray. I retired in 2016 after 27 years of service as a special agent with the U. S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). I served in the position of resident agent in charge (RAC), overseeing all criminal enforcement personnel and operations in Montana, for the last ten years of my federal law enforcement service (2007-2016).

During my tenure in Montana, I had the privilege of working in concert with then-First Assistant United States Attorney Kurt Alme (2007-2010). As you know, the relationship between a district's U. S. Attorney's Office (USAO) and the federal law enforcement agencies in that district are among the most crucial in the criminal justice system. During this time, I worked in continuous contact with First Assistant Kurt Alme.

In our respective roles, our efforts together ranged from a broad strategy on combatting violent crime in Montana, formulating and executing policy decisions with regard to prosecution guidelines, case file reviews of special agents and assistant U. S. attorneys, discussion of charging decisions on specific, unusual and complex criminal investigations, and addressing personnel issues of mutual concern.

After my retirement from federal service, I worked alongside then-U. S. Attorney Kurt Alme (2017-2020 term) as a member of the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Selection Committee.

Under the leadership of U. S. Attorney Alme, the PSN team, working in conjunction with ATF and other law enforcement partners, this team was able to substantially increase U. S. Attorney's Office prosecutions that focused on the most dangerous and repeat offenders.

Montana stands at a crossroads with respect to violent crime. Since the start of COVID, violent crime is up statewide in Montana by more than 10% (through 2023) and in Billings by more than 50% (through 2023). I am confident that, led by Mr. Alme as the U. S. Attorney, we can reverse this trend substantially. As Kurt has proven time and time again when he is at the helm, this will be achieved with seamless cooperation among tribal, state, local, and federal prosecutors and law enforcement agencies.

I would like to pass on my observations of Kurt Alme during our time working together with respect to three specific and important categories: 1) prosecution experience 2) law enforcement issues, and 3) management abilities.

**Prosecution Experience:** During my time working with Mr. Alme, Kurt enjoyed a well-deserved reputation as an aggressive, fair, honest, and effective advocate for the government and for victims of crime. Kurt was well-rounded in the kinds of cases that he pursued and the various roles he played in working these cases (case intake/evaluation, charging/indictment, pre-trial briefs and hearings, trials, sentencings, supervised release revocation hearings, appellate briefs, appellate oral arguments). All parties involved in Kurt's work respected his effectiveness and honesty throughout the judicial process. In short, Kurt exhibited all the skills and abilities to prosecute cases in an effective manner.

**Law Enforcement Issues:** In my 27-year federal law enforcement career, I have seen very few professionals in the criminal justice system with the breadth of working knowledge of virtually all issues that face law enforcement. I was amazed watching how Kurt could gain a deep understanding of a specific law enforcement issue, actively engage those from partner organizations on the issue at hand and implement a set of policies that effectively address the issue; with substantial "buy-in" from the affected partner organizations. Kurt's ability to both understand the issues and lead others in the implementation of a solution is among the best I have ever seen.

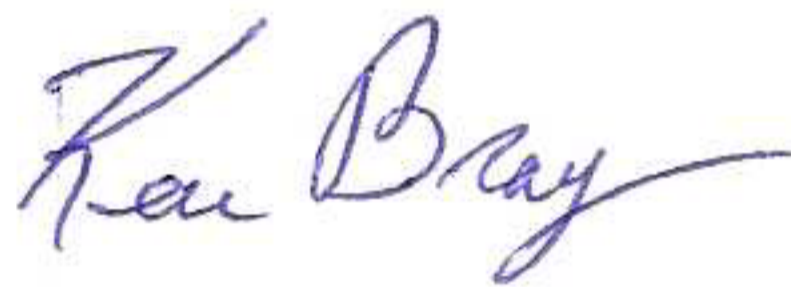
**Management Abilities:** Kurt is a leader. I have personally seen him lead both his organization as well as lead other partner organizations that are stakeholders in the criminal justice system. Leading a U. S. Attorney's office is difficult. In Montana, one needs to effectively manage both professional and support staff in four offices located hundreds of miles apart. One also needs to effectively enlist the support of well over a dozen federal law enforcement agencies in the district's mission, all without direct authority over those other agencies. I was amazed at the

ability that I observed regarding Kurt's leadership in both his office and in those offices who work directly with him. I found him to be compassionate, personable, and skillful in how he related to others. I observed him hold to account those whom he led in a way to ensure that his office's mission was accomplished. I found him to possess all the skills needed to be an extremely effective manager in an environment with many moving parts and strong personalities.

After having worked as a federal law enforcement supervisor in the District of Montana for a total of 13 years (2001-2004, 2007-2016), and in an advisory capacity for two (2) years (2018-2019), I have gained a deep understanding of the various missions and styles of the law enforcement agencies involved, the United States Attorney's Office's inner workings, the judiciary, and the defense bar. I have personally seen Kurt Alme interact with personnel from each of these offices. There is no doubt in my mind that, should Mr. Alme be given the opportunity to be nominated and confirmed as the U. S. Attorney for the District of Montana, he would be well received by those people and agencies that he would be leading. His reputation as a prosecutor, manager, and individual is above reproach. He is respected throughout all quarters of the criminal justice system in Montana. I am confident that he would serve honorably in this position and would be an effective advocate for the citizens of Montana.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide input into such an important matter. I know Kurt Alme well and highly recommend him for the position of United States Attorney, District of Montana. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ken Bray". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kenneth J. Bray

ATF Special Agent/Resident Agent in Charge (Montana) (Retired)