OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Stanley L. Garnett, District Attorney

March 27, 2014

Via Email and Regular U.S. Mail
Helen Stone, Chair
20th Judicial District Judicial Performance Commission
4710 Table Mesa Drive, Ste. B
Boulder, CO 80305

Re: Judicial Evaluation of Judge Judith LaBuda

Dear Ms. Stone:

It is my pleasure to provide observations and comments to the Judicial Evaluation Commission as part of the evaluation process of Judges of the 20th Judicial District. As I have mentioned many times, Colorado has an excellent judiciary and the 20th Judicial District, in particular, has an excellent set of judges dispensing justice in both civil and criminal matters. The intent of my office in providing written comments about each judge is to make certain that the point of view of my deputies who appear in front of many of these judges several times a day is included in the evaluation process undertaken by your Committee. Also, I believe, as District Attorney, part of my job involves providing input to the public about our judges and passing along helpful suggestions to the bench. Although occasionally, every judge issues a legal ruling with which my staff does not agree, those are matters for the appellate courts, not for the Judicial Evaluations Committee.

This year, there are nine judges up for evaluation. We will provide separate, written comments on each one addressed to you, with copies to the reviewed Judge and to the Chief Judge of the Judicial District.

Judge Judith LaBuda was appointed to the bench in 2012. She has yet to serve a criminal rotation so my office has had somewhat limited interaction with her. She has handled a couple of trials for us and she has handled them appropriately, although she seemed somewhat unfamiliar with criminal trials, evidence and procedure. My office's occasional interactions with her on administrative matters have been pleasant. She works hard and is fair-minded. She has a reputation among the domestic relations bar for being tough and demanding which is an asset in a trial judge, so long as she is fair and courteous, has a dose of humility and shows an appreciation for the scheduling and logistical challenges faced by parties and counsel. Handling additional and repeated criminal matters will help her become more comfortable and streamlined in the conduct of jury trials.

Judge LaBuda should be retained.

I look forward to appearing before your committee on April 2nd at 5:30 p.m.

Best regards,

Stan Garnett

SLG/psm

cc: The Honorable Judith LaBuda
The Honorable Maria Berkenkotter