

**Judge Jessica K. Ness**

(206) 919-3073

16420 38<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Bothell, WA 98012

[jessica.ness@yahoo.com](mailto:jessica.ness@yahoo.com)

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May 1, 2023

Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller Ave M/S 609  
Everett, WA 98201

**Re: Snohomish County District Court Vacancy – South Division**

Dear Snohomish County Council members:

With the urging of many judicial colleagues and attorneys, I am seeking your appointment to the judicial position in the South Division of Snohomish County District Court which is soon to be vacated by Judge Fair at his retirement. I believe that I am the only candidate with the much needed and consistent judicial experience to be an immediate asset to this Court. I have been the Presiding Judge of the Monroe Municipal Court for over three years and have served as a Judge Pro Tem at the South Division since 2012. I have established good working relationships with the entire Snohomish County District Court bench, court staff, and law enforcement officers.

This letter describes my experience as the Monroe Municipal Court Presiding Judge, Judge Pro Tem in every division of Snohomish County District Court and every Snohomish County Municipal Court, City Hearing Examiner, criminal defense attorney, Snohomish County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, and community volunteer. I am honored to be endorsed by over a hundred attorneys and judges. I believe this breadth of support speaks to the collaborative style I would bring with me to the Snohomish County District Court bench. My resume, bio, endorsement list, and letters of recommendation are included with this letter.

For over three years, I have served the City of Monroe as Presiding Judge. I've gained valuable experience leading the management and administration of the Court's business including the budget. In addition to my courtroom responsibilities, which are very similar to those of the District Court, I supervise the daily operations of the court and all personnel including work conditions, hiring, discipline, and termination of unionized employees. I am the official spokesperson for the court in all matters with the city executive and legislative branches of government. I actively engage with city officials by presenting quarterly at public safety committee meetings and council meetings. I have found that working closely with the other branches of government instills public trust and confidence in local government.

In collaboration with the City, I applied for and received grant funding to create and develop a therapeutic court. Monroe Municipal Community Court (MMCC) is a problem solving and community focused approach to respond to low level quality of life crimes. MMCC links individuals with social service providers to address substance use disorder, mental health, housing, and basic living needs. I hold individuals accountable, but in a compassionate way, by providing them with life changing social services. I believe that the MMCC team is making a

real difference in the lives of participants, their families, and our community. I'm excited about the opportunity to bring my experience to the Snohomish County District Court bench.

My experience as a Presiding Judge, Judge Pro Tem, and appointed Hearing Examiner sets me apart from other candidates. I have presided over every type of criminal hearing and every type of civil hearing in Snohomish County District Court. For nearly seven years, I served as an appointed Hearing Examiner for the City of Mountlake Terrace where I presided over contested animal and forfeiture cases rendering quasi-judicial decisions. I also served the Cities of Lake Stevens, Monroe, Mukilteo, and Kirkland by conducting hearings and rendering quasi-judicial decisions in forfeiture hearings under the Uniform Controlled Substances Act.


My legal career began as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office handling every aspect of case preparation and trial. I split my time between being the Lead Prosecutor for the Traffic Unit and prosecuting crimes in the District Court. As the Supervisor of the Traffic Unit, I recruited attorneys and interns and personally created a training program consisting of both a procedure manual and in-court, on the job training. I was then promoted to the position of the Involuntary Treatment Act Prosecutor. In this role, I worked with a team of expert and lay witnesses to commit individuals who were either gravely disabled or a danger to themselves or others for mental health evaluation and treatment. This position provided me with valuable experience and insight into the relationship between mental health, the justice system, and community safety.

To broaden my experience, I left the Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office and joined a criminal defense firm in downtown Seattle. For nearly five years, I counseled clients regarding their legal rights, explained court procedures, and represented clients during all phases of their criminal case.

Finally, I am passionate about engaging with my community and recognize the important role I have as a community leader. I have been a guest speaker at Rotary, Kiwanis, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Auxiliary Group, St. Mary of the Valley Catholic Church, and the Monroe Community Human Services Advisory Board. I invest in our youth by volunteering my time with Bothell Youth Court, a local mock trial team, and the annual Law Day event at the District Court's South Division for fifth graders. I've served as a Snohomish County Volunteer Guardian Ad Litem advocating for abused and neglected children. I volunteer in my children's classrooms and have served as a PTA board member.

I believe that my experience as the Monroe Municipal Court Judge, Judge Pro Tem, Hearing Examiner, criminal defense attorney, deputy prosecutor in both the criminal and civil divisions, and community leader gives me the kind of well-rounded, collaborative approach that would benefit Snohomish County. I would be honored to serve as a Judge for Snohomish County District Court in the South Division and look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,



Judge Jessica K. Ness

## Judge Jessica K. Ness

16420 38<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Bothell, WA 98012

[jessica.ness@yahoo.com](mailto:jessica.ness@yahoo.com) (206) 919-3073

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### **Experience** Presiding Judge, Monroe Municipal Court, Monroe, WA 1/2020 – present

- Supervise daily operations of the court and all personnel to perform court functions including work conditions, hiring, discipline, and termination of unionized employees
- Lead the management and administration of the court's business including court budget
- Act as the official spokesperson for the court in all matters with the city executive and legislative branches of government and the community
- Train and supervise Judges Pro Tem
- Implemented innovative strategies for court to remain accessible during Covid-19 pandemic
- Established an on-line payment program for legal financial obligations
- Review and authorize all search warrant requests by Monroe Police Department officers
- Manage the courtroom in an efficient and effective manner while ensuring that hearings are conducted fairly and individuals' legal rights are safeguarded
- Preside over the following types of hearings:
  - Arraignment      ○ Pretrial      ○ Motions      ○ Probation Review      ○ Civil Traffic Infractions
  - Bench/Jury Trials      ○ Saturday/Sunday Probable Cause and warrant reviews      ○ In-custody
- Created Monroe Municipal Community Court
  - Applied for and received grant funding of \$158,779.00 to develop a therapeutic court model
  - Developed community court policies and procedures by collaborating with court stakeholders
  - Organized a virtual resource center for community court participants to access services such as substance use disorder treatment, mental health treatment, housing, DSHS benefits, life-skills training, and basic needs
  - Conduct weekly hearings using evidence-based best practices
- Created Monroe Municipal Court Probation Department
  - Developed a preventative and proactive probation model to supervise and support individuals on probation, thereby promoting community safety
  - Established a Domestic Violence Moral Reconciliation Therapy program to rehabilitate domestic violence offenders

### **Judge Pro Tem, 1/2012 – present**

- Serve as a Judge Pro Tem in every division of Snohomish County District Court:
  - Cascade Division      ○ Everett Division      ○ Evergreen Division      ○ South Division
- Serve as a Judge Pro Tem in every Snohomish County Municipal Court:
  - Bothell      ○ Edmonds      ○ Everett      ○ Lynnwood      ○ Marysville
- Preside over the following types of criminal hearings:
  - Arraignment      ○ Pretrial      ○ Motions      ○ Probation Review      ○ Jail Calendar
  - Sunday Probable Cause and warrant reviews      ○ Bench/Jury Trials (presided over 28 jury trials)
- Preside over the following types of civil hearings:
  - Civil Traffic Infractions      ○ Name Change      ○ Anti-harassment Orders      ○ Civil Trials
  - Small Claims      ○ Civil Motions      ○ Domestic Violence No-Contact Orders
- Review and authorize search warrants for law enforcement officers
- Manage the courtroom in an efficient and effective manner while ensuring that hearings are conducted fairly and individuals' legal rights are safeguarded
- Promote a team environment with court staff

**City of Mountlake Terrace, City Appointed Hearing Examiner, Mountlake Terrace, WA 3/2015 – 1/2022**

- Conducted hearings and rendered quasi-judicial decisions in civil infractions, dangerous dog appeals, public nuisance complaints, and forfeiture hearings under the Uniform Controlled Substances Act

**City of Lake Stevens**, Police Chief's Designated Appointee, Lake Stevens, WA 1/2020 – 12/2021

- Conducted hearings and rendered quasi-judicial decisions in forfeiture hearings under the Uniform Controlled Substances Act

**City of Kirkland**, Police Chief's Designated Appointee, Kirkland, WA 2/2020 – 12/2021

- Conducted hearings and rendered quasi-judicial decisions in forfeiture hearings under the Uniform Controlled Substances Act

**City of Mukilteo**, Police Chief's Designated Appointee, Mukilteo, WA 6/2015 – 1/2020

- Conducted hearings and rendered quasi-judicial decisions in forfeiture hearings under the Uniform Controlled Substances Act

**City of Monroe**, Police Chief's Designated Appointee, Monroe, WA 8/2015 – 7/2018

- Conducted hearings and rendered quasi-judicial decisions in dangerous dog appeals and forfeiture hearings under the Uniform Controlled Substances Act

**JRC Practice**, Criminal Defense Attorney, Seattle, WA 9/2010 – 3/2015

- Counseled clients regarding their legal rights and explained court procedures
- Appeared in Western Washington courts to represent clients during all stages of a criminal case

**Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office**, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, Everett, WA 10/2007 – 7/2010

- Criminal Division
  - Responsible for all aspects of case investigation and trial preparation; including witness and victim coordination, pre-trial motions, briefing, trial, and sentencing
  - Recruited, screened, trained, and directly supervised prosecutor interns and attorneys handling traffic infractions. Created established procedures and a training program for interns and attorneys
- Civil Division
  - Represented the State at Involuntary Commitment hearings for individuals in mental health crisis
  - Directed a legal team of two expert witnesses, lay witnesses, and paralegal

**Washington State Supreme Court**, Judicial Extern to Justice Susan J. Owens, Olympia, WA 1/07 – 5/07

- Conducted research and drafted memoranda and a published dissenting opinion

**City of Kirkland**, Rule 9 Prosecuting Attorney, Kirkland, WA 5/2006 – 1/2007

- Responsible for all aspects of case investigation and trial preparation including pre-trial motions, briefing, and sentencing

**Northwest Women's Law Center (Legal Voice)**, Information and Referral Line Volunteer, Seattle, WA 5/2005 - 8/2005

- Assisted women in identifying legal issues and provided guidance and referral resources

**Greentree Residential Appraisal**, Home Appraiser, Edmonds, WA 9/1997 – 7/2004

- Tracked and maintained expenses, billed clients and collected revenue, managed small office

**Northwest Justice Project**, Extern, Seattle, WA 1/2003 – 4/2003

- Administered a Washington State Supreme Court mandated survey to address homelessness to individuals at the Seattle Men's Gospel Mission
- Revised NJP publications for readability to aid low-income individuals navigating the legal system.

## **Volunteer**

### **Faculty Presenter**

- Presented on procedural justice at the 63<sup>rd</sup> state-wide Judicial Conference  
**Judicial Presenter**, Safety & Wellness Task Force, Northshore School District

- Presented on restorative justice principles

### **Mock Trial Coach**, Archbishop Murphy High School, Everett

- Teach High School students evidence rules, case theory development, and trial preparation
- Preside over mock trials providing feedback to students to promote growth and learning

### **Volunteer Guardian Ad Litem**, Snohomish County

- Advocate for abused and neglected children

### **Law Day Attorney Volunteer**, Snohomish County District Court – South Division

- Assist Edmonds School District fifth graders at annual one-day event

### **Bothell Youth Court**, Bothell Municipal Court

- Assist students with prosecuting and defending traffic infractions

### **Leadership Snohomish County**

- Engage with Snohomish County leaders on law-related topics and assist with a mock trial

### **Campaign Volunteer**, Committee to retain Snohomish County Superior Court Judge Thompson

- Distribute promotional materials and participate in parades in a county-wide election

### **Campaign Volunteer**, Committee to retain Snohomish County Superior Court Judge Okoloko

- Distribute promotional materials and participate in parades in a county-wide election

### **Campaign Volunteer**, Committee to retain Snohomish County District Court Judge Goodwin

- Distribute promotional materials and canvassing in county-wide election

### **Campaign Volunteer**, Committee to elect Snohomish County District Court Judge Howard

- Distribute promotional materials, participate in parades, and canvassing in county-wide election

### **Guest Speaker**

- Engage with Monroe community members to foster trust and confidence in the judicial system
  - Rotary
  - Kiwanis
  - Ahmadiyya Muslim Women Auxiliary Group
  - St Mary of the Valley Catholic Church BIPOC members
  - Community Human Services Advisory Board

### **Street Law Teacher**, Ballard High School, Seattle

- Teach High School students law, democracy, and human rights

### **WSBA Legal Discipline Investigator**

- Investigate and research complaints for the Washington State Bar Association Office of Legal Discipline

### **Basketball Coach**, Mill Creek Parks and Recreation

- Teach second and third grade girls basketball fundamentals, emphasizing teamwork

### **Goodwill-Fill-a-Truck**, Bothell

- Collect donated items to raise money for the PTA

### **Tutor**, Edmonds School District

- Work one-on-one with elementary age students in a variety of subjects

### **Reading Volunteer**, Heritage Christian Academy, Bothell

- Teach kindergartners phonetics and reading skills

### **Room Parent**, Heritage Christian Academy, Bothell

- Liaison between teacher and parents

### **Room Parent**, Kids at the Creek Pre-School, Bothell

- Liaison between teachers and parents

### **Sunday School Teacher**

- Teach children in a church environment

### **Daisies Girls' Club Leader**

- Assist elementary age girls in reaching their potential through activities and community service

**Boards**

**Public Engagement and Education Committee, 1/2021 - present**

- General Board Member representing the District and Municipal Court Judges Association
  - Strategic Planning Committee 2022 – present

**Council on Independent Courts, 6/2022 – present**

**Bothell Youth Court Advisory Committee, 9/2022 – present**

**Parent Teacher Association, 2018-2019**

- Staff Appreciation Chair responsible for 40% of PTA budget

**Associations**

District and Municipal Court Judges Association, Snohomish County Bar Association, Municipal Court Judges Break-out Room, Therapeutic Court Judges Workgroup

**Education**

**Seattle University School of Law, Seattle, WA**

- Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, 5/2007
- Women's Law Caucus 2004 – 2007, Community Outreach Chairperson 2007

**University of Washington, Seattle, WA**

- Bachelor of Arts, Women's Studies, *magna cum laude*, 6/2003

Snohomish County Council members:

I have enclosed for your review my endorsements, ratings letters, and 24 letters of recommendation for the Snohomish County District Court judicial position.

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### Minority Bar Associations

Cardoza Society of Washington State  
Joint Asian Bar Association of Washington  
Latina/o Bar Association of Washington  
QLaw Bar Association of Washington

### Judges

Judge Jeffrey Goodwin – Snohomish County District Court  
Judge Steve Clough (ret.) – Snohomish County District Court  
Judge Michelle Gehlsen – King County District Court  
Judge Rozzano – Bothell Municipal Court  
Judge Kara Murphy Richards – Renton Municipal Court  
Judge Kevin Peck – King County District Court

### Attorneys

Christine Olson – Snohomish County Public Defender Association  
Paul G. Hanson – Private practice defense attorney  
Katrina E. Thornton – Former Monroe City Prosecutor  
Chris Griffen – Monroe public defense conflict attorney  
Albert Guadagno – Private practice defense attorney  
Meredith Hutchison – Monroe public defense conflict attorney  
Ted C. Barr – Private practice defense attorney  
Crystal Fry – Marysville Prosecutor  
Jason Schwisow – Monroe Public Defender  
Winston Choe – Monroe Prosecutor  
Adam Ballout – Private practice attorney

### Community Leaders

Mayor Geoffrey Thomas – Monroe Mayor  
Dawnelle Carroll – Director of St. Vincent de Paul  
Christopher P. Damitio – former mock trial student  
Roger Brodniak – Archbishop Murphy High School Mock Trial Coach  
Sallie Brown – Heritage Christian Academy Kindergarten Teacher  
Courtney White – Bothell Court Administrator  
Stacy Kaufman – Everett Law Association Social Worker

Sincerely,



Jessica K. Ness



# Judge Jessica K. Ness

Monroe Municipal Court

candidate for  
Snohomish County District Court Judge  
South Division

## Ratings

Cardozo Society – Exceptionally Well Qualified

Joint Asian Bar Association of Washington – Exceptionally Well Qualified

Latina/o Bar Association of Washington – Extremely Well Qualified

QLaw – Exceptionally Well Qualified

## Snohomish County Judges

Judge Valerie Bouffiou  
*Lynnwood Municipal Court*

Judge Stephen Moore (ret)  
*Lynnwood Municipal Court*

Judge Steve Clough (ret)  
*Snohomish County District Court*

Judge Edirin Okoloko  
*Snohomish County Superior Court*

Judge Fred Gillings  
*Marysville Municipal Court*

Judge Whitney Rivera  
*Edmonds Municipal Court*

Judge Jeffrey Goodwin  
*Snohomish County District Court*

Judge Mara Rozzano  
*Bothell Municipal Court*

Judge Amy Kaestner  
*Everett Municipal Court*

Judge Tim Ryan (ret)  
*Snohomish County District Court*

Judge Cindy Larsen  
*Snohomish County Superior Court*

Judge Jon Scott  
*Snohomish County Superior Court*

Judge Remy Leonard  
*Everett Municipal Court*

Judge Paul Thompson  
*Snohomish County Superior Court*

Judge Patrick Moriarty  
*Snohomish County Superior Court*

Judge Lorrie Towers  
*Marysville Municipal Court*



Judge Laura Van Slyck (ret)  
*Everett Municipal Court*

### Other Washington Judges

Judge Sandra Allen  
*Gig Harbor Municipal Court*

Judge Anthony Gipe  
*Kent Municipal Court*

Judge Brad Bales  
*Federal Way Municipal Court*

Judge Jennifer Grant  
*Lake Forest Park Municipal Court*

Judge Anrea Beall  
*Puyallup Municipal Court*

Judge Jeff Gregory  
*Mercer Island Municipal Court*

Judge Anneke Berry  
*Buckley Municipal Court*

Judge Jill Klinge  
*King County District Court*

Judge Alicia Burton  
*Pierce County Superior Court*

Judge David Larson  
*Federal Way Municipal Court*

Judge Thomas Cox  
*Garfield County District Court*

Judge Lisa Leone  
*Des Moines Municipal Court*

Judge Joanna Daniels  
*Bonney Lake Municipal Court*

Judge Deb Lev  
*Bellingham Municipal Court*

Judge Michael Finkle  
*King County District Court*

Judge John Olson  
*Kirkland Municipal Court*

Judge Michael Frans  
*Kent Municipal Court*

Justice Susan Owens  
*Washington Supreme Court*

Judge Pauline Freund  
*SeaTac Municipal Court*

Judge Kevin Peck  
*King County District Court*

Judge Michelle Gehlsen  
*King County District Court*  
*former Bothell Municipal Court Judge*  
*Past President, District & Municipal Court*  
*Judges Association*

Judge Linda Portnoy (ret)  
*Lake Forest Park Municipal Court*

Judge Kara Murphy Richards  
*Renton Municipal Court*

Judge Angelle Gerl  
*Airway Heights Municipal Court*

Judge Kevin Ringus  
*Fife Municipal Court*

Judge Jessica Giner  
*Renton Municipal Court*

Judge Andrea Robertson  
*King County Superior Court*

Judge Rebecca Robertson  
*King County District Court*  
*former Federal Way Municipal Court Judge*  
*Past President, District & Municipal Court*  
*Judges Association*

Judge Michael Schwartz  
*Pierce County Superior Court*

Judge Scott Stewart  
*Issaquah Municipal Court*

Judge Krista White Swain  
*Black Diamond Municipal Court*

Judge Kimberly Walden  
*Tukwila Municipal Court*

Judge Matthew York  
*Presiding Judge*  
*King County District Court*

Justice Mary Yu  
*Washington Supreme Court*

Commissioner Stef Ellis  
*Clark County Superior Court*

Commissioner Heather Shand  
*Skagit County Superior Court*

### **Attorneys Practicing in Snohomish County Courts**

James Zachor, Jr.  
Yelena Stock  
Chad Krepps

*Prosecuting Attorneys for 13 Municipalities, including Arlington, Edmonds,  
Lake Stevens, Lynnwood, Mill Creek, Monroe, Mukilteo, Sultan, and Woodway*

Brian Ashbach  
Bud Ashbach  
Adam Ballout  
Ted Barr  
Dustin Burk  
Craig Cahoon  
Winston Choe  
Katherine Chrostowska  
Prairie Cloutier  
Jonathan Dichter  
Daniel Ehrlich  
Brandon Feldman  
Patrick Feldman  
Natalya Forbes  
Rachelle Francis  
Katie Fraser  
Crystal Fry  
Mark Garka  
Christopher Griffen  
Albert Guadagno  
Paul Hanson

Andrew Huff  
Meredith Hutchison  
Jim Johanson  
Steve Karimi  
Matthew Knauss  
Kaia Kopitnik  
Scott Lawrence  
Chris Lewis  
Jonathan Lewis  
Sotha Lor  
Reece Merrill  
Rick Merrill  
Toni Montgomery  
Omar Nur  
Christine Olsen  
Kari Petrasek  
Angelina Petrosyan  
Andrew Phipps  
Saad Qadri  
Steven Ritchie  
Rooein Roshandel

Matt Russell  
Phil Sayles  
Jason Schwisow  
Michelle Scudder  
Lindsay Serbousek  
Laura Shaver  
Danny Sheed  
Michael Sheehy  
Susan Stark  
Lindy Stone  
Charlotte Storey  
Jeremiah Styles  
Melissa Sullivan  
Katrina Thornton  
Paul Wagner  
Kimberly Walker Olsen  
Lauren Wegener  
Elaine Whaley  
Aaron Wolff  
Brian Zuanich



CARDOZO SOCIETY  
of Washington State



*VIA EMAIL*

Dear Judge Ness:

Thank you for taking the time to participate in our judicial evaluation. After careful consideration, our committee has concluded that you are Exceptionally Well Qualified for the position you seek with a Snohomish County District or Municipal Court. This remains effective three years from today.

Dated: May 3, 2023.

Regards,

*/s/ Geoffrey Burg and /s/ Blair Russ*  
Cardozo Society Judicial Evaluation Committee Co-Chairs

**Joint Asian Judicial Evaluations Committee  
Asian Bar Association of Washington  
Filipino Lawyers of Washington  
Korean American Bar Association of Washington  
South Asian Bar Alliance of Washington  
Vietnamese-American Bar Association of Washington  
Middle Eastern Legal Association of Washington**

April 20, 2023

**VIA EMAIL TO:** *Jessica.ness@yahoo.com*

Jessica K. Ness  
Jessica.ness@yahoo.com

Dear Judge Ness:

Thank you for participating in the JAJEC evaluation process. In consideration of your experience, references, and interview, your JAJEC rating is as follows:

**Snohomish County District Court**

**Exceptionally Well-Qualified**

This rating expires on April 19, 2026. We wish you all the best in your endeavors.

Very truly yours,  
2023 Co-Chairs, Joint Asian Judicial Evaluation Committee  
s/ Min K. Kang  
s/ Ron Park  
[KABAwaJAJEC@gmail.com](mailto:KABAwaJAJEC@gmail.com)

Cc:  
Asian Bar Association of Washington, President  
Filipino Lawyers of Washington, President  
Korean American Bar Association of Washington, President  
South Asian Bar Alliance of Washington, President  
Vietnamese-American Bar Association of Washington, President  
Middle Eastern Legal Association of Washington, President  
Office of General Counsel, Office of the Governor



*"Representing the Concerns and Goals of Latino Attorneys and the Latino Community"*

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May 11, 2023

Judge Jessica Ness

Sent via email to [jessica.ness@yahoo.com](mailto:jessica.ness@yahoo.com)

Dear Judge Ness:

On behalf of the Latina/o Bar Association of Washington, we want to thank you for taking the time to meet the Judicial Evaluations Committee on April 20, 2023. We consider it a great privilege and responsibility to evaluate candidates for judicial office.

After careful consideration of your materials, the references we contacted, and your interview in support of an appointment/election to the **Snohomish County District Court**, the Judicial Evaluations Committee found you **Extremely Well Qualified** for that position.

Please note that the aforementioned statement is a rating only. You should not construe the rating as an endorsement. LBAW may publish this rating as it chooses, but LBAW will consider this rating expired and void after a period of three years from the date above.

Again, thank you for your time and interest in a rating from the Latina/o Bar Association of Washington.

Sincerely,

/s/

Peggy Rodriguez

Ashley Gomez

Co-Chairs, Judicial Evaluations Committee

Latina/o Bar Association of Washington

cc: Tyler Quillin, President, Latina/o Bar Association of Washington  
Andre Dayani, President-Elect, Latina/o Bar Association of Washington



May 1, 2023

P.O. Box 1991  
Seattle, WA 98111-1991  
[www.qlaw.org](http://www qlaw.org)

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Justice Mary Yu, Washington State Supreme  
Court

Via email: [Jessica.ness@yahoo.com](mailto:Jessica.ness@yahoo.com)

Hon. Jessica Ness

Re: QLaw Judicial Evaluation Rating

Dear Judge Ness:

Thank you for interviewing with the QLaw Judicial Evaluation Committee on April 20, 2023.

The Committee has issued you a rating of **Exceptionally Well Qualified** for Snohomish County District Court.

Please note our Committee's rating does not constitute an endorsement by QLaw of your candidacy. Also, in the email and below, we have included a link to QLaw's Judges' Bench Guide on the LGBTQ Community and the Law:

[http://www.courts.wa.gov/committee/pdf/LGBTQ\\_Bench\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.courts.wa.gov/committee/pdf/LGBTQ_Bench_Guide.pdf)

Our association appreciates the time you took to meet with us, and your interest in our evaluation. We wish you well in your endeavors.

Best Regards,

Peder T. Punsalan-Teigen, Co-Chair QLaw JEC

Sarah Jael Dion, Co-Chair QLaw JEC



District Court of the State of Washington  
for Snohomish County

**JUDGES**  
PATRICIA L. LYON  
JEFFREY D. GOODWIN  
TAM T. BUI  
BETH A. FRASER  
ANTHONY E. HOWARD  
DOUGLAS J. FAIR  
JENNIFER J. RANCOURT  
RICK S. LEO

**SNOHOMISH COUNTY COURTHOUSE**  
3000 Rockefeller Avenue  
M/S #508  
Everett, WA 98201-4060  
(425) 388-3895

**PRESIDING JUDGE**  
JENNIFER J. RANCOURT  
**COURT COMMISSIONER**  
JENNIFER W. MILLETT  
**ADMINISTRATOR**  
KATHRYN F. KOEHLER

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3 May 2023

Council Chair Jared Mead  
Council Vice-Chair Nate Nehring  
Councilmember Megan Dunn  
Councilmember Strom Peterson  
Councilmember Sam Low

**RE: District Court – South Division – Judicial Appointment  
Letter of Recommendation for Judge Jessica Ness**

Dear Councilmembers:

Monroe Municipal Court Judge Jessica Ness should be appointed to the District Court seat made available by the retirement of Judge Douglas Fair. I have had the pleasure of serving the citizens of Snohomish County as a District Court Judge since 2004. I have served as Presiding Judge of the District Court and will serve again as Presiding Judge starting in 2024. I have served in numerous leadership positions in the District and Municipal Court Judges Association and will serve as President in 2026. My time on the bench and my leadership experience means that I understand the qualities necessary to successfully serve as a Judge. Jessica Ness will be an outstanding District Court Judge.

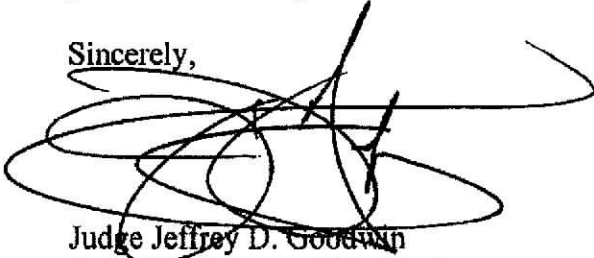
I first met Judge Ness when she started serving as a Pro Tem Judge in the South Division. She very quickly became one of our best pro tems because she had the demeanor, temperament, and knowledge to preside over every issue from traffic infractions to civil and criminal jury trials. She was respected by both sides and quickly became sought after for pro tem assignments.

The next important transition for Judge Ness was her appointment to the Monroe Municipal Court where she has excelled. Monroe is a one-Judge court and she has the sole leadership responsibility for all aspects of the court, including personnel, budget, planning, and daily court operations. She is an advocate for her community and her court, active in community service, and a collaborative partner with the Mayor and Councilmembers.

You have the opportunity to select a public servant with unmatched judicial experience, the temperament and demeanor necessary, and the work ethic and civically minded attitude required to become a truly excellent District Court Judge. I have met with many candidates interested in this position and no one else is equally prepared to step into a judgeship. Jessica Ness will be an outstanding addition to the Snohomish County District Court, and I encourage you to appoint her to this South Division position.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this recommendation and please feel free to contact me if you would like any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey D. Goodwin", is written over a large, circular scribble.

Judge Jeffrey D. Goodwin  
Snohomish County District Court  
South Division



April 14, 2023

Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller Ave, M/S 609  
Everett, WA 98201

RE: *Judge Jessica Ness for Snohomish County District Court, South Division*

Dear Snohomish County Council members,

The upcoming vacancy to the Snohomish County District Court, South Division presents you with an opportunity to appoint someone with the kind of judicial experience that our County deserves. I am writing to recommend the **Honorable Judge Jessica Ness** for this position.

I retired from the Snohomish County District Court, Evergreen Division after 44 years of judicial service to our community. I was the longest sitting judge in the State of Washington and know first-hand the requisite qualities and skills of a successful judge. Judge Ness possesses those qualities and skills.

I have personally observed Judge Ness while serving as the Monroe Municipal Court Judge. Her court dockets are busy, and while she is efficient, she takes time to hear from each party, treating everyone with dignity and respect. She has mastery of the rule of law for municipal and district courts, applying the law fairly and equally.

Judge Ness created Monroe Municipal Community Court, and it has had a profound impact on our community. The Evergreen Division of Snohomish County District Court is in Monroe, and I'm familiar with her service to our community and to many of the individuals in the program. Therapeutic Court programs are designed to provide compassionate justice to individuals with substance use disorder treatment, mental health treatment, housing, and basic living needs - all while reducing recidivism and saving taxpayer money.

Judge Ness has served as a Judge Pro Tem in every division of Snohomish County District Court. Because her work is so consistently excellent on the bench, she has been called to serve by every judge in the District Court. Judge Ness has presided over thousands of cases from traffic infractions to criminal misdemeanors and small claims trials to domestic violence orders. She has consistently demonstrated the common sense, judicial temperament, and fairness essential for a District Court Judge.

I first met Judge Ness when she worked as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney in the Evergreen Division of the Snohomish County District Court. She was always prepared and worked well with opposing counsel. She appeared to be firm, fair, and reasonable when working with both attorneys and unrepresented defendants.

Judge Ness sought to balance her prosecutor experience by working as a criminal defense attorney for nearly five years. She appeared before me in that capacity. Her work was distinguished by the highest degree of professionalism and distinction. Her experience as both a prosecutor and defense attorney contribute to her balanced approach and perspective when making decisions on the bench.

So while you may have a number of other applicants for the South District Court position, with Judge Ness, you have the unique opportunity to place a highly experienced judge in that position. I believe that Judge Jessica Ness would be an asset to the South Division of Snohomish County District Court and I highly recommend her appointment.

Sincerely, 

The Honorable Steve Clough (retired)  
Snohomish County District Court  
Evergreen Division



**King County**  
**District Court- Redmond Division**  
8601 160<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast  
Redmond, Washington 98052  
Telephone: (206) 688-0418  
Fax: (206) 296-0592

March 28, 2023

Snohomish County City Council  
Robert J. Drewel Building, Eighth floor  
3000 Rockefeller Avenue, M/S 609  
Everett, Washington 98201

**Re: Judge Jessica Ness - Appointment to Snohomish County District Court- South Division**

Dear Snohomish County Councilmembers,

It is my pleasure to recommend Judge Jessica Ness for appointment to the Snohomish County District Court bench, specifically the vacancy that exists at the Court's South Division.

Three years ago, I was appointed by the King County Council to the King County District Court bench. Prior to this, I served the City of Bothell as the Municipal Court Judge for nine years. My first-hand experience demonstrates the numerous ways in which my previous judicial experience has been an asset to the community I now serve. Because of Judge Ness's years on the Monroe Court and prior experience as a regular Judge Pro Tem throughout Snohomish County, Judge Ness has had similar experiences which make her the strongest candidate and best choice for the South Division of Snohomish County District Court.

I first met Judge Ness 15 years ago when we worked at the Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office. She took over my caseload as the Involuntary Treatment Act Prosecutor when I first became a judge. We worked to provide mental health treatment and resources to those in mental health crisis. The skills learned in that role are ones that Judge Ness and I use every day on the bench as mental health is one of the most difficult and consistent issues facing the court system today. It requires a certain level of court participant accountability and judicial compassion that few lawyers and judges possess. Judge Ness has mastered both and understands the need to address mental health challenges for our communities and for our court participants and their families.

Because of her experience with mental health and her stellar reputation as a Judge Pro Tem, I invited Judge Ness to serve as a Judge Pro Tem at Bothell Municipal Court. The feedback received was that she was always courteous and patiently listened to all parties. She rendered fair, well based and legally sound decisions and sentences. She treated the staff respectfully and they consistently looked forward to her service on the bench.

Judge Ness is also a member of the Bothell Youth Court Advisory Committee which I created. The program empowers young people to determine appropriate sanctions for young drivers using restorative justice principles. Judge Ness is an asset to the program, providing feedback and supporting young people in the program. She is a role model to them, particularly young women, encouraging them to enter the legal field.

As Presiding Judge of her own court in Monroe for the past three years, Judge Ness also oversees all personnel, daily operations, the budget, and represents the court in all matters involving the City's executive and legislative branches of government. This expertise will not only immediately benefit the Snohomish County District Court, her experience navigating engagement and collaboration with elected Snohomish County government officials will benefit your entire County. I am often called upon by my fellow judges to work with King County elected officials and have quickly established good working relationships with the King County Councilmembers because of the skills I acquired as a Municipal Court Judge. I am certain Judge Ness will bring the same level of collaborative skill, hard work, humility, and passion while working with all of you.

You have before you an opportunity to appoint a judge to the Snohomish County District Court bench who possesses extensive judicial experience, a specific track record with mental health challenges in the justice system, and who has demonstrated her ability to successfully manage and lead a court. There is no other candidate like Judge Ness. I believe she will surpass your expectations of a judicial officer and you will thoroughly enjoy working with her.

I urge you to appoint Judge Ness to the Snohomish County District Court's South Division.

Best Regards,



Michelle Gehlsen  
Judge, King County District Court

Hon. Mara J. Rozzano

14751 N. Kelsey St, #105-534  
Monroe, WA 98272  
425-478-2132  
mrozz45@gmail.com

April 2, 2023

To Whom it May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I am writing to recommend the Hon. Jessica Ness to the position of Snohomish County District Court Judge, South Division. I have had the pleasure of working with Judge Ness from the time she started as a deputy prosecuting attorney with Snohomish County to her current position as the Monroe Municipal Court Judge. Judge Ness is a bright, energetic, and enthusiastic addition to the municipal court bench and would be an amazing addition to the Snohomish County District Court bench.

One of Judge Ness' distinguishing is her demeanor. She has that wonderful combination of respect and kindness towards everyone she encounters with a boldness and strength that allows her to do what is right, even when it is difficult.

Recently, I have had the pleasure of working with Judge Ness in two very distinct areas. First, as a fellow municipal court judge. She is very well-respected member of the group of municipal court judges who meet weekly to discuss current issues. She is always current on the law and willing to share her knowledge. This isn't really unusual amongst a group of judges. What is unusual is how she respects others. I have seen her use this combination of her own intelligence and the advice of others to successful create the Monroe Community Court to amazing results.

Second, as a member of the citizens' advisory board (CAB) for the Bothell Youth Court As the Bothell Municipal Court Judge, I am always looking for members of the community who are willing to invest in our youth. When I approached Judge Ness, she enthusiastically agreed. She brings a fresh, willingness to serve to the CAB and I look forward to seeing what our Youth Court will be able to achieve with her on the board.

Based on my years of knowing her, it is very easy for me to recommend Judge Ness for the position of Snohomish County District Court Judge, South Division.

Sincerely,

Hon. Mara J. Rozzano

Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller Ave  
Everett, Wa 98201

April 13, 2023

Council members ,

It is without reservation and with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for Judge Jessica Ness. Judge Ness would be an incredible addition to the Snohomish County District Court bench. She is a respected legal scholar, has an impeccable judicial temperament, is an active community volunteer and has been a leader in the development of therapeutic court programs that promote restorative justice and increase community safety.

As a member of the SCDC bench, a judge must be able to handle several types of cases. Traffic infractions, impound hearings, criminal arraignments, pretrial, motions, bench trials, jury trials and protection orders are all heard in district court. Each involves the need to be familiar with court rules and prevailing case law. There is seldom an opportunity to research issues in the midst of a voluminous calendar. Good judges are expected to know the law. Judge Ness knows the law. She is a frequent speaker at judicial meetings and conferences and often called upon by others on the bench seeking help with complex legal issues.

Judge Ness is known to have an impeccable judicial temperament. A single calendar can bring a judge face to face with people in active addiction, people struggling with mental illness, individuals who are homeless and lack access to basic needs and victims of domestic violence. A single calendar can represent a variety of cultures and several languages. A judge will interact with individuals from every walk of life. For this interaction to be impactful, a judge must be articulate, respectful, compassionate, firm, inspiring, consistent, fair, approachable and so much more. Judge Ness is all of these things.

A good judge should be active in her local community. Judge Ness has gone above and beyond when it comes to giving back to her local community. She is an active volunteer in her church, at her kids' schools, in nonprofit legal programs and in programs that serve the residents of Snohomish County. She has a selfless heart of service and each person she serves walks away feeling loved and worthy. That is a true gift.

Finally, Judge Ness has been a leader in the development of therapeutic court programs. It is no secret that a new approach to dealing with low level crime was needed. The revolving jail door was not making the slightest dent. As mental illness becomes more prevalent, opioid use increases, fentanyl use spreads and the ability to get help decreases, the Court has become center stage for the behavioral health crisis in our communities. The challenge to create a therapeutic court that balances the need for help with the need for accountability was a challenge Judge Ness enthusiastically accepted. In record time, she developed and implemented Monroe Community Court. MCC has become a model court for other jurisdictions that are attempting to create their own programs.

I am proud to be Judge Ness's judicial colleague. She will be an incredible asset to the SCDC bench. I encourage you to appoint her to fill the vacancy left by Judge Fair.

Sincerely,

*Kara Murphy Richards*  
Judge Kara Murphy Richards  
Presiding Judge  
Renton Municipal Court  
Renton Municipal Community Court  
Kmurphy@rentonwa.gov  
206-947-3852

April 2, 2023

The Honorable Debbie Eco

Snohomish County Council Clerk

3000 Rockefeller Avenue, M/S 609

Everett, Washington 98201

RE: Endorsement of Judge Jessica Ness as a Snohomish County District Court Judge

Dear Honorable Council Members:

I am honored to endorse Judge Jessica Ness for appointment to the Snohomish County District Court. She is highly qualified and has exceptional service to serve in this position.

Judge Ness served as a Pro Tem Judge for over 11 years in Snohomish County, including serving as a Pro Tem Judge in all four divisions of the Snohomish County District Court. She was sought out to serve as a Pro Tem Judge due to her excellent performance, judicial demeanor and sound decision making.

Judge Ness is well respected in the legal community and known for her keen legal acumen. As the City of Monroe Presiding Judge for the past three years, Judge Jessica Ness has made important and significant contributions to improving our court system.

As a member of the Washington State Bar Association for over forty years I have had the honor to appear before and work with numerous outstanding judges. Judge Jessica Ness is one of those outstanding judges.

Your selection of Judge Ness will make both you and the citizens of Snohomish County proud.

Feel free to contact me regarding my endorsement of Judge Jessica Ness at any time.

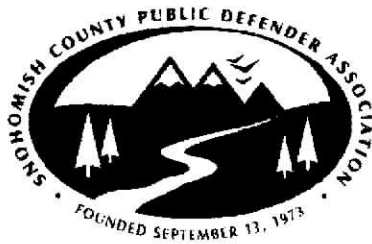
Sincerely,



Judge Kevin Peck

King County District Court

206 612-7812, peckfam4@comcast.net



**Snohomish County Public Defender Association**  
2722 Colby Avenue, Suite 200 • Everett, WA 98201-3527  
Phone: 425-339-6300 • Fax: 425-339-6363 • [www.snocopda.org](http://www.snocopda.org)

April 10, 2023

Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller Ave, M/S 609  
Everett, WA 98201

Re: Letter of Endorsement for Judge Jessica Ness for Snohomish County District Court  
Judge, South Division

Dear Councilmembers Nehring, Dunn, Peterson, Mead, and Low:

As both a lifetime resident of Snohomish County and as a District Court Supervisor for the Snohomish County Public Defender Association, I am writing to endorse Judge Jessica Ness for our next South Division Snohomish County District Court Judge. I write this letter in my individual capacity as SCPDA does not endorse candidates as an organization.

I have been a misdemeanor attorney supervisor at the Snohomish County Public Defender Association for the past three years and I am aware you have many good candidates applying for this position. I however believe Judge Ness's experience, knowledge, ability to relate to people, and her passion for being a Judge is what sets her apart and that is why I have decided to endorse her over the other candidates.

Before becoming a Judge in Monroe Municipal Court, Judge Ness was a pro tem in Snohomish County District Court, and I appeared in front of her regularly. No matter the hearing, or what was happening, Judge Ness was respectful to everyone in the courtroom. You could trust her to make good decisions because she was always well prepared for hearings and her decisions were grounded in the law and supported by the facts. While typically a good trial lawyer would have concerns over a pro tem presiding over a jury trial, I never had to worry about such concerns with Judge Ness. She was able to make rulings on the evidence quickly and correctly, and for this reason, Judge Ness was well liked by both the prosecution and the defense in the District Court.

Judge Ness's work in Monroe Municipal Court is also honestly quite remarkable. I know she worked very hard to get a successful community court up and running in Monroe Municipal Court and she has done just that. The Monroe Municipal Community Court not only connects people to services who otherwise wouldn't have knowledge of such services, but it also gives participants a sense of self-worth and self-value that in return gives them a desire to do better for themselves. What I love the most about Judge Ness is she knows every community court participant's name, their story, and she spends time talking to each participant as their case is called getting to know each individual even better. She asks how they are doing, how their kids are, whether they like their new job, how their new treatment program is going, etc., and while



she holds people accountable, she also celebrates their successes in a way that makes every participant want to be successful.

As the Snohomish County District Court considers transitioning our mental health court to a community court, it would be a detriment and such a loss to our county's citizens not to have Judge Ness involved.

For most people who walk into Snohomish County District Court, it is their first time interacting with the legal system. It is important that each courtroom be an accessible and welcoming place for everyone. The decisions the District Court Judges are making have a significant impact on people's lives, especially those who are already struggling. We need judges who will make decisions carefully with thought, understanding, and intention. Judge Ness not only can promise such decisions, but has a long career of demonstrating such decisions.

Even though I have not agreed with Judge Ness's ultimate decisions in certain cases, I have never felt Judge Ness has treated a client of mine unfairly. My clients have been heard, respected, and understood in front of her. I think she truly understands the importance of meeting people where they are at, but also holding individuals accountable as needed and the importance of such. Her vast knowledge of resources in our community will also be invaluable to individuals and our probation departments.

Last, but not certainly least, I think Judge Ness is someone who will create a safe environment where attorneys can learn. District Court is where most prosecutors and public defenders learn how to be attorneys. What new attorneys learn in district court is important because these same attorneys move on to Superior Court where they prosecute and defend our county's most serious crimes. The way the bench addresses and handles the mistakes new attorneys make not only impacts how the attorney will practice in the future, but also what the attorney learns. For this reason, we need judges in district court who will hold attorneys accountable and to high standards, but that will also be understanding. Judge Ness is patient, and she is kind. She is also tough when she needs to be. Attorneys respect her for this. I have no doubt both public defenders and prosecutors will learn a great deal from her.

For all these reasons, I strongly believe Judge Ness is the best choice for our next Snohomish County District Court Judge in the South Division.

If you have any additional questions, feel free to reach me on my personal cell phone at (425) 583-8286.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine M. Olson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Christine Olson

**PAUL G. HANSON, ATTORNEY, INC., PS**  
ATTORNEY AT LAW

ALDERWOOD BUSINESS CENTER  
3400 188th St. S.W., Suite 580  
Lynnwood, WA 98037  
Phone: (425) 778-7339  
Fax: (425) 672-2738  
E-mail: attypaulhanson@aol.com

April 4, 2023

Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller, MS 609  
Everett, WA 98201

RE: Snohomish County District Court (South Division)  
Letter of Recommendation for Judge Jessica Ness

Dear Council Members:

I am writing to strongly recommend Monroe Municipal Court Judge Jessica Ness for the open Snohomish County District Court (South Division) judge position.

I'm a Lynnwood criminal defense attorney who has been practicing in all Snohomish County and north King County district and municipal courts for over 40 years. I appear most frequently in the Snohomish County District Court (South Division) in Lynnwood.

During the last 3 years, I've appeared before Judge Ness numerous times in the Monroe Municipal Court. In the 8 years before that, I appeared in front of Judge Ness many times when she served as a pro tem judge in other local courts. My cases ranged from simple traffic tickets to complicated DUI case motion hearings. In each case, win or lose, I was always impressed with her judicial demeanor, fairness, legal knowledge, decision making, and ability to carefully articulate the basis for her decisions. And I've been particularly impressed by her ability to manage the large caseloads at the busy Monroe Municipal Court.

Judge Ness is a very experienced judge. She served as a Judge Pro Tem in all four divisions of the SCDC for over eleven years. Judge Ness as served as the Monroe Municipal Court Judge for over three years. She created the Monroe Municipal Community Court which uses a collaborative approach to provide social services to individuals faced with low level, quality of life offenses.

She was most impressive during the chaotic first few months of the covid pandemic in the spring of 2020. During that time, Judge Ness and Washington judges faced more technology changes and court management challenges than most judges will face in an entire career. She mastered all of them very well.

Judge Ness has also long impressed me with her public spiritedness and willingness to give back to her community. For many years, I've assisted the Snohomish County District Court (South Division) judges in organizing their annual Law Day event for hundreds of local fifth graders,

teachers, parents and the public. For 14 years, Jessica has been one of my most stalwart lawyer volunteers for the Law Day mock trials. Every year, she is one of the first to volunteer to help me. She continues to do so. The SCDC South Division judges and I greatly appreciate her volunteer service.

During these annual SCDC (South Division) Law Day mock trials, my volunteer lawyers inform the fifth graders about their personal backgrounds and legal work. Jessica always inspires the students by describing how she overcame a difficult childhood raised by a single mother with no money for college. How she had to work full time to pay for college and still managed to graduate with honors. It's a very inspiring story.

I strongly believe that Judge Ness is exactly the sort of judge Snohomish County needs at the SCDC (South Division).

Please feel free to contact me for more reasons why I strongly recommend Judge Ness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Hanson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL HANSON

April 2, 2023

Dear Snohomish County Council,

I am writing to highly recommend the Honorable Jessica Ness for the open judicial position available with Snohomish County District Court – South Division. I had the privilege and pleasure of working as a prosecutor before Judge Ness from the time she was sworn in at Monroe Municipal Court in January of 2020 until I left my previous position in July of 2020. I can attest to Judge Ness' exceptional qualities as a judge, and I am confident that she will be an asset at South District Court to her colleagues and the community as a whole.

Judge Ness thrives in a fast-paced environment, and she led us all with grace as she took the bench a matter of weeks before the COVID pandemic changed everything, leading to a period of significant turmoil and instability for all of us. Judge Ness rose to the challenge, and she navigated us through an unprecedented situation ensuring our defendants in custody were seen as soon as possible while ensuring out of custody defendants were able to check in while not physically coming into court in order to remain engaged while prioritizing their health and well-being.

During the seven months I practiced in front of Judge Ness, I handled weekly court calendars including arraignment hearings, pretrial hearings, plea hearings, and in custody hearings. Judge Ness takes the bench with energy and integrity, and she leads the courtroom with humility and efficiency. Judge Ness does a fantastic job of mentoring from the bench. I have received constructive and helpful feedback from her about my practice that has both challenged me and motivated me to be a better attorney with a more well-rounded approach and a continued thirst for knowledge. As a young female in the legal field, Judge Ness inspires me to continue doing my best while lifting and supporting the inspiring females around me.

Judge Ness is empathetic and compassionate, but she is confident in the difficult decisions she has to make. Judge Ness holds defendants accountable for the consequences of their actions with respect and dignity. She makes a solid record and thoroughly explains the reasoning behind her decision. A large portion of the criminal defendants in Monroe Municipal Court are unsheltered and/or have co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. Judge Ness embodies compassion and accountability, which I believe are two of the most important qualities for a judge to have. She takes the time to build a personal relationship with each defendant, so she can understand their individual circumstances, strengths, and struggles. Judge Ness has genuine compassion for the well-being of the victims in a case as well as the criminally accused. When Judge Ness makes a ruling she is thinking not only about the particular case before her, but about the impact her ruling will have on the community at large.

Judge Ness is an exceptional judge, and I have no doubt that she will excel at South District Court and better the lives of all who come before her. I highly recommend Judge Ness for the position and believe that she will make a valuable addition to your team. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions for me.

Sincerely,

  
Katrina E. Thornton



## GRIFFEN LAW OFFICE

3306 Wetmore Avenue  
Everett, WA 98201  
Phone: (425) 405 0016  
Fax: (425) 740 0276  
[www.everettdefense.com](http://www.everettdefense.com)



March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter of recommendation for Judge Jessica Ness, who has served as the Judge in Monroe Municipal Court for the last three years. As a conflict public defense attorney in that court, I have had the opportunity to observe Judge Ness' work in the courtroom, and have been consistently impressed with her dedication, fairness, and ability to listen to all parties involved.

Judge Ness has a reputation for being a thoughtful and careful listener, always taking the time to consider the input of all parties involved before making a decision. She is known for her impartiality, and for treating everyone who appears before her with the respect and dignity they deserve.

As someone who has worked with Judge Ness regularly for the last three years, I can attest to her deep commitment to justice and fairness. She is always willing to go above and beyond to ensure that all voices are heard and that all parties are given the opportunity to present their case.

Perhaps most importantly, Judge Ness has demonstrated a deep understanding of the needs and concerns of her constituents. She is always approachable and responsive and takes the time to engage with members of the community in a thoughtful and meaningful way.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly recommend Judge Ness for a seat on the District Court bench. She is a consummate professional, a dedicated public servant, and an asset to any court and community that she would serve. I am confident that she will continue to serve with distinction and that her commitment to justice and fairness will continue to inspire those around her.

Sincerely,



CHRIS L. GRIFFEN WSBA # 41488

## GUADAGNO LAW, PLLC

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April 13, 2023

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL  
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/609  
Everett, WA 98201

**RE: District Court Judge Candidate  
Judge Jessica Ness**

This is just very honest and sincere appraisal of Judge Ness's legal ability and my experience with her as a prosecutorial colleague, Defense attorney appearing before her in court while she performs her duties as a Pro Tem Judge, Monroe Municipal Court Judge, and longtime colleague. I am in awe of her legal career and contributions to the practice of law in the state of Washington.

My name is Alberto Guadagno, partner, and owner of Guadagno Law, PLLC in Seattle, Washington. I have known Judge Jessica Ness since meeting her as a new Deputy Prosecuting Attorney in Snohomish County. At that time, she was doing a traffic infraction calendar. When I first met her, I knew her to be dedicated in her duties as a prosecutor, yet I could see that her dedication and skill in that capacity was ill utilizing her ability as a new attorney. I specifically recall discussing her career interests at that time and assuring her that there were much better career prospects in store for her. My advice at that time was to do the job she was doing and do it extremely well. That dedication and diligence would eventually be recognized, and she would move swiftly on to other career opportunities. I had had a prior career, so coming to the practice of law was after much serious consideration and with the maturity of a man who had and has lived a lifetime. Both in the literal sense and world experience in real life situations.

By the time I had met Judge Ness, I had travelled extensively. I had been to over forty-four countries, and the last remaining continent I must experience is the Ant Arctic. By the time I had become a practicing prosecuting attorney, I had firsthand knowledge of, life, diversity, political strife of all types around the world.

As a new lawyer however, I was just starting to experience yet another area of life. I am the child of immigrants, and a first-generation Italian American myself. Until I went to law school, I had never even seen the inside of a lawyer's office much less a courtroom. When I met Jessica Ness, as a former prosecutor myself and new Private Criminal Defense attorney I knew she was destined to be an excellent attorney. I couldn't know it at the time, but she would always be a mentor to me. Even when she didn't know she was providing me an example to always strive for and a level of skill that could only resemble hers. She made an instant and long-lasting impression on me that remains to this day. She was, in one

word, brilliant. Her breath of knowledge and understanding of the law was like being hit with a brick wall. I thought at the time, “woe the opposing counsel that must come up against DPA Jessica Ness”. She was funny, caring, considerate, charming, and willing to immediately assist other members of our profession, because that is what we are meant to do when new members graduate and enter the practice of law. Judge Jessica Ness as she is now known, immediately impressed me the first time I appeared in her court. She is knowledgeable about the law, she is kind as a Jurist, even when having to do the unpleasant, but sometimes the only course of action, and sentence another human being to time in custody. When she does so, she does it with dignity to the defendant, knowledge of her duties and above all, while giving hope to the defendant for the future. I believe in the type of Judge she is now and the impact she is making in the community of Monroe, where she now serves. I am confident that as a Snohomish County District Court Judge, she would bring the same diligence, knowledge, and kindness to the justice system. Sometimes simply seeing her in the same courtroom conducting her work as I did mine, gave me confidence. I knew that if I ever had the need for assistance, she would give it willingly.

The most enduring story, one that humbles me to this day eighteen years later, is a time when we were both in the same courtroom. I a new criminal defense attorney and she a new DPA in her capacity, that we both could agree on our opposing positions, and still respect one another. Jessica Ness is a credit to our profession. That is the highest compliment ever paid to me by opposing counsel. I have never forgotten that. I would credit her efforts in the exact same manner as a member of the Washington State Bar Association.

I have been before Judge Jessica Ness on multiple occasions. It is only recently, after years of private practice that I finally feel like a “real” attorney. She has always treated defendants and other attorneys with fairness, firmness, kindness, all while demonstrating a clear understanding of the law. She remains fair, unbiased and professional with many attorneys who know her very well from the years she practiced among them.

Her addition to the Snohomish County Bench, the one where I continue to practice, could not have a better example of the sort of Judge I would be proud and happy to appear before. I cannot think of a more well-suited attorney, male or female for the role. Being one of the busiest courtrooms in Snohomish or King Counties, requires the exact skill, legal prowess, and discipline that only few could muster. Judge Jessica Ness is by far first in that class of candidates.

My endorsement of her and her abilities couldn't be any stronger. Again, I end this letter restating all the qualities that make her perfectly suited for the position. However, it is her brilliance and understanding of the law, that would deliver the Snohomish County community an unparalleled Jurist.

Very Sincerely,

*Alberto Guadagno*

Albert Guadagno  
GUADAGNO LAW, PLLC  
Attorney at Law



April 10, 2023

Snohomish County Council  
Robert J. Drewel Building  
Eighth Floor  
3000 Rockefeller Ave M/S 609  
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Snohomish County Council members:

I am an attorney currently serving as conflict counsel for the Monroe Municipal Court. I have been practicing in Washington State for 15 years and currently hold contracts for 3 municipal conflict panels. I also hold a contract through the Office of Public Defense for parents representation in dependency proceedings in King County.

I wholeheartedly endorse Judge Jessica Ness for a position in Snohomish County District Court, South Division. I practice on a regular basis in front of Judge Ness. She maintains a professional, calm, courteous demeanor while also extending a personal compassion to all those in her courtroom. Judge Ness takes the time to speak honestly with each defendant and truly hear what they have to say. She is fair and rational and wants to see people succeed. Judge Ness sets clear expectations up front for those in her courtroom and holds everyone accountable for their actions. Judge Ness is always up to date on the most recent changes in caselaw and often cites to them in her decisions.

As an attorney I feel that I am always treated with the utmost respect and courtesy in Judge Ness' courtroom. I can say the same for my clients. Very candidly, my only reservation in writing this letter is that I will miss practicing in front of Judge Ness should she move to a different court.

Meredith Hutchison, Attorney at Law





# Ted C. Barr & associates

April 9, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf and in support of Jessica Ness's application for appointment as Judge to the Snohomish County District Court replacing Judge Fair who it is my understanding is retiring soon.

In terms of my background, I have been an attorney for over 45 years during the last 35 years practicing almost exclusively in the Municipal and District Courts of King, Snohomish and Pierce counties, that is representing defendants charged at the misdemeanor level. My practice is litigation oriented and thus I have argued hundreds and hundreds of motions and trials before a multitude of Judges. In addition, in the 1980's and 1990's I actively served as a Pro Tem Judge in these courts averaging around one to two appearances per week.

Also, for many years I have served on the Seattle Municipal Court's Public Defender Oversight/Conflict Committee and am the longest serving member (nearly 20 years) on the King County Trial Calendar Coordinating Committee which is made up of a number of judges, court administrators, the executive director of the King County Bar Association, and two attorneys one representing the civil attorneys and the other (me) representing the criminal bar. I am the past president of the East King County Bar Association as well as past president of the Eastside Legal Assistance Program.

Finally, I do not have a personal relationship with Ms. Ness. We have not practiced law together. Our families do not know each other. I have not socialized with her. In short, my only exposure to Jessica is from observing her in the courtroom or appearing before her, although I can also say that since I interact with many, many attorneys and prosecutors both in the courtroom and elsewhere, I have never heard any of them make a negative comment about her professionally or personally.

My reason for giving you this background information is so that you will know that over these four decades I have appeared before (as a litigant) and served with (as a pro tem judge or committee member) hundreds of judges, pro tem judges and many court administrators in a variety of situations. I believe that breadth of knowledge and experience is important when writing a letter or recommendation or complaint about someone.

Attorneys at Law

4055 LAKE WASHINGTON BLVD NE STE 240 KIRKLAND, WA 98033

Tel 425-890-3570 Fax 425-451-9268 Email [ted@tedcbarr.com](mailto:ted@tedcbarr.com) [www.tedcbarr.com](http://www.tedcbarr.com)



April 10, 2023  
Page 2

This being said, of all the part-time Municipal Court Judges and Pro Tem Judges that I have appeared before there is none finer than Jessica Ness. She is even handed, showing no favoritism to the defense or prosecution in her demeanor or rulings. I have never seen her show any prejudice (for or against) anyone in the court. In short, she has excellent courtroom demeanor. In my experience Judge Ness always takes the bench on time, even if called to serve at the last minute as a Judge Pro Tem in a District Court. She handles her calendars efficiently, even when they are large or populated with a number of pro se defendants or inexperienced attorneys who take more time than others. While handling her calendars efficiently (especially the large calendars), Judge Ness never makes anyone feel like they are being rushed out of the courtroom or like they did not get their day in court. She treats all attorneys equally, whether private counsel or public defender as well as their respective clients.

Perhaps most importantly, Judge Ness, whether serving as a part-time Judge in the Monroe Municipal Court as a Judge Pro Tem pro tem in the District Courts, Judge Ness is always prepared and does an exceptional job of explaining her rulings. In terms of feedback from my own clients or my observations of other attorneys and their clients in court, I have never heard anyone say that they did not understand what just happened, that they did not feel like they were heard by this judge, or that they did not get a fair shake, even when Judge Ness has had to rule against them.

Based on all of this and her service as a Municipal Court and District Court Pro Tem Judge, I believe that if appointed to a full-time position on the Snohomish County District Court she will hit the ground running and work exceptionally well with the other Snohomish County District Court Judges. Therefore, I am more than willing to recommend Judge Jessica Ness for the upcoming appointment. I would be quite happy to appear before her on any of my cases, and in fact would prefer to appear before her rather than several seated Judges in different District Courts.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about my recommendation or would like any additional input. In that event, the best way to reach me would be via my cell phone (425-890-3570) or via e-mail (ted@tedcbarr.com) as I am court or involved with the Department of Licensing most days.

*Thank you for your consideration-*

*Ted C. Barr*

Ted C. Barr, WSBA No. 13039

April 11, 2023

Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller Ave. M/S 609  
Everett, WA 98201

Dear County Council,

My name is Crystal Fry, and I am a prosecuting attorney for the City of Marysville. I have been an attorney for 15 years, and I have been practicing almost exclusively in Snohomish County district and municipal courts for the entire tenure of my career. I'm writing this letter as an endorsement of Jessica Ness for appointment to the Snohomish County District Court open judicial position in South District Court. I find Jessica to be exceptionally well qualified for this position, and I believe she also has the temperament and experience that makes her the most well qualified candidate for this position.

What sets Jessica apart from the other candidates is her extensive experience as a judge, her dedication to the profession, her professional temperament, and her drive to be a compassionate, yet fair minded jurist who helps the community that she serves.

I have known Jessica Ness since 2007. She has consistently been a poised, balanced, and gracious advisor, colleague and friend. We know each other professionally and personally, having met in law school. We then worked together at the Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office.

Before she was appointed as the Judge for the City of Monroe in 2020, Jessica spent approximately eight years serving as a full time pro tem judge for a variety of jurisdictions throughout Snohomish County. Pro tem work is the work that any attorney who wants to become a full time judge does to build their experience on the bench. Most attorneys who pro tem maintain other full time jobs while they occasionally served as a pro tem judge. Jessica did not go this route. Instead, she dedicated herself and made pro tem work her full time job for nearly a decade. She served as a pro tem for each and every district court in Snohomish County, as well as a pro tem for the district court Commissioner. It would have been easier for Jessica to have a permanent job that would have been more predictable, but Jessica was incredibly determined in her pursuits to become the best jurist she could be. She wanted to do the work she was doing, and not settle into something more comfortable. She wanted to learn the job of being a judge, so she did the work of being a judge. She did the work, and she did it well. I find it hard for any other candidate to indeed have this variety, consistency, or length of service as a judge, nor do I know anyone who has been nearly as dedicated and diligent in their focus on their work as a judge Jessica has been.

Jessica's next trait that makes her the best qualified person for this position is her professional temperament and calm demeanor. If you've ever met Jessica in person, you know exactly what I'm writing about. She's able to preside over a court room with a calming authority. Someone who knows the law, and can manage a court room of people in a respectful manner, is crucial in the position of a judge, particularly in such a diverse and vast jurisdiction as South District Court.

Finally, I recommend Jessica because of her approach to serve as a fair minded jurist. Not every attorney is meant to be a judge, because not everyone has the temperament for the job. Others don't have the life experience to be able to consider all sides of an issue, and some are lacking in the appropriate level of empathy required for such a job. Jessica, on the other hand, has all of these qualities, and she has them in spades. She has an appropriate judicial temperament, the life experience to understand that not all issues are black and white, and she has genuine empathy. An example of these traits is apparent in her work, specifically the community court she created in Monroe. Community court is an alternative form of accountability, which offers services to accused people who have been charged with low level quality of life offenses. The dedication, empathy, and vision she had to create such a court in Monroe is a clear example that she's a fair minded person whose goal is to help members of the community she serves who are struggling with quality of life issues.

I encourage you to consider Jessica's breadth of experience, her willingness to serve, and her impressive actions she has taken in Monroe Municipal Court when you consider all of your applicants to the open position in South District Court. I believe Jessica Ness is by far the best candidate for the position as South District Court Judge. Should you have any questions, or wish to speak with me further, please do not hesitate to call or email me with follow up questions.

Thank You,

Crystal L. Fry  
[cfry@marysvillewa.gov](mailto:cfry@marysvillewa.gov)  
425-530-6918



To The Esteemed Members of the Snohomish County Council--

My name is Jason Schwisow and I am attorney licensed to practice in the State of Washington since 2004. During my career I have focused primarily on criminal law, working as either a prosecutor or a criminal defense attorney, handling both public defense and private cases in courts all around the state.

I have been the public defender for the City of Monroe since its inception and have had the pleasure of appearing in front of Judge Jessica Ness since she took the bench a few years ago.

Having appeared in front of more judges in this state than I could ever hope to remember or keep track of, there are several things I look for in a judge: Does the judge listen to me as defense counsel before making their decision? Is the judge interested in actual justice and serving the community? Is the judge appropriately plugged into the state of the law and changes as they occur?

With respect to Judge Ness, the answer to those questions has always been "yes." She has been instrumental in adapting the Monroe Municipal Court to the current needs of the community. Her drive and determination lead to the development of our community court program which—while still in relative infancy—has done great work to connect people to resources and change how we approach certain defendants to actively work on breaking the wheel of recidivism and accomplish actual justice.

She commends respect from the bench not because she demands it of people, but because it is earned through her words and actions. Bringing her on board would be a tremendous gain for you.

Sincerely,

Jason Schwisow

WSBA #35349

E-MAIL: [jschwisow@monroelaw.org](mailto:jschwisow@monroelaw.org)

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## Winston Choe

Prosecuting Attorney

7002 18<sup>th</sup> PL SE  
Lake Stevens, WA 98258  
Tel. 847-630-1945

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April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Subject:** Recommendation Letter for Judge Jessica Ness for Snohomish County District Court (South Division)

To Snohomish County Council:

It is my pleasure to recommend Judge Jessica Ness for the judicial appointment for Snohomish County District Court's South Division. As a Prosecutor, I have practiced before Judge Ness in the City of Monroe.

Judge Ness would be a great Judge for the South Division. She is intelligent, wise, patient, has a keen legal mind, and exhibits excellent judicial temperament. In particular, after receiving grant funding, Judge Ness led the City's first Monroe Municipal Community Court, which utilizes a collaborative approach to provide social services to underprivileged individuals within the community. Based on her efforts, the Court staff and community members, along with Monroe's Mayor Geoffrey Thomas, recently congratulated one of the graduates of the program.

During my time in Monroe, Judge Ness has proven to be capable, dependable, hardworking, and industrious. She has the credentials, experience, and wisdom to be a fine Judge and I recommend her without reservation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments.

Best Regards,  
/s/ Winston Choe  
Winston Choe

Taila AyAy, *Partner*  
Adam Ballout, *Partner*  
Neil Weiss, *Partner*  
Melinda Drawing, *Esq.*



Dana Halbert, Esq.  
Channing Reeves, Esq.  
Atharshna Singaraja, Esq.  
Connor O'Neil, Esq.

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March 17, 2023

Snohomish County Council

3000 Rockefeller Ave.

8th Floor, Jackson Board Room

Robert J. Drewel Building

Everett, WA 98201

To the Honorable Members of the Snohomish County Council,

My name is Adam Ballout, I am an attorney in Snohomish County and a partner at ABC Law Group. I am honored to write this letter of recommendation for Jessica Ness, who is applying for the position of Judge for the Snohomish County District Court. I have had the pleasure of knowing and practicing with Jessica Ness for almost 20 years and have witnessed her unwavering commitment to the law, fairness, and justice.

For the past three years, Jessica has served as the Monroe Municipal Court Presiding Judge, where she has gained invaluable experience in leading the management and administration of the Court's business, as well as supervising its daily operations. During this time, Jessica has shown remarkable dedication to her work, ensuring that justice is served fairly and efficiently.

One of Jessica's greatest accomplishments during her tenure as Monroe Municipal Court Presiding Judge was the creation of the Monroe Municipal Community Court, which provides social services to individuals facing low-level, quality of life offenses. Under her guidance, this court has had a significant positive impact on the lives of participants and our community as a whole.

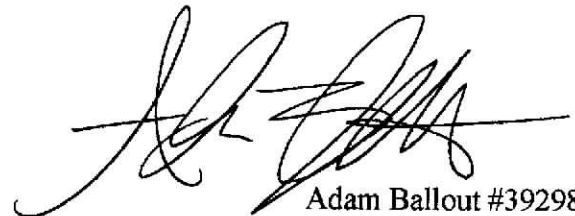
March 17, 2023

Jessica has served the Snohomish County District Court as a Judge Pro Tem for over **eleven** years. In this capacity, she has demonstrated exceptional knowledge of the law, a deep understanding of court procedures, and an unwavering commitment to justice. She has also served as a Judge Pro Tem in every Municipal Court in Snohomish County, which has provided her with a broad range of experience and expertise.

Prior to taking the bench Jessica worked as both a prosecutor and defense counsel, giving her a unique perspective on the law and the criminal justice system. This diverse range of experience has undoubtedly prepared her well for a position as a judge. I've watched Jessica handle litigants in open court who were struggling with mental health issues, may have been under the influence, who were angry and agitated all with grace and tact keeping in mind her role and the role and appearance of the Court. I have a great deal of respect of Jessica's personal ethics and her character. When Jessica began doing pro-tem work more full time many years ago, she stopped taking on private matters by her own initiative and choosing due to even the appearance of unfairness on her active cases.

In summary, I have no doubt that Jessica Ness would make an exceptional addition to the Snohomish County District Court bench. Her extensive experience, knowledge of the law, and unwavering commitment to justice make her an outstanding candidate. I highly recommend her without reservation.

Sincerely,



Adam Ballout #39298  
ABC Law Group LLP  
6303 Wetmore Ave Everett, WA 98203



May 1, 2023

Snohomish County Council and Other Interested Parties

**RE: Recommendation to Appoint Judge Jessica Ness to District Court Judge**

Judge Jessica Ness has served as the City of Monroe's judge since January 2020. Judge Ness has done extremely well in service to our community. While it would be very difficult to find someone to continue Judge Ness's work, *I recommend Judge Ness's appointment as District Court Judge within Snohomish County's District Court without reservation.*

Judge Ness has done well advocating for the City's municipal court to ensure adequate staffing and provide alternatives for better outcomes for people before the court. While being an advocate for the municipal court, Judge Ness has worked well with me, the staff, and the Council. Judge Ness has worked to understand the City's goals and resource limitations (*e.g. funding and office space limitations*). Judge Ness has provided objective information to me, the staff, and the Council to help the City of Monroe deliver judicial services to the community.

In addition to providing information and alternatives, Judge Ness has been proactive in seeking out information and funding. This includes visiting other courts to learn about community and therapeutic courts and applying for grant opportunities to supplement funding for judicial services. Judge Ness has been successful in developing effective judicial service programs, including a community/therapeutic court.

Judge Jessica Ness has been a strong and positive member of our City team. I strongly urge that Judge Ness be appointed to the Snohomish County District Court as District Court Judge.

Respectfully,

Mayor Geoffrey Thomas



Compassion in Action

## St. Vincent de Paul - North Sound Council

Snohomish County Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
P.O. Box 2269, Everett WA 98213 [www.svdpnsc.com](http://www.svdpnsc.com)

03/28/2023

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Dawnelle Carroll, I am the Director of St Vincent de Paul of Snohomish County's Community Resource Center located at 17150 W Main St Suite B, Monroe WA.

Our Resource Center & 14 Conferences within Snohomish County help communities with financial assistance and food for the less fortunate, and homeless. We do provide a place for community hours to be worked at our Thrift Store and our Resource Center. We are also partnered with Monroe Respite Program that offers a 90-day program for homeless women and children to get into permanent housing. Our facility offers a place for other agencies to come and have office space of their own to provide their services at no charge for the space. This provides multiple services on the same day in one place.

Our community was in grave need for a change for the individuals involved in the Court system.

Judge Ness brought that difference with her ability to communicate with the people in her Community Court. By including the virtual resource center, this gave ample opportunity for these individuals to receive the help they needed in a timely manner.

The success rate of the individuals she has been able to assist with has led to graduation from the court, with total completion of obligations. I found that Judge Ness, and the individuals involved in Community Court are willing to communicate with their attorney & the court. This has made the individuals know they are going to get help and move forward to a better way of living.

Having the ability to work with Judge Ness directly in the court has impacted many. Giving the ability of moving forward with positive impact. Having a feeling of help they have not received before when coming to court in the past has now impacted many and they receive positive encouragement in moving forward. They come knowing they will be heard and helped with guidance to do so. With the Virtual Resource program & Judge Ness's words of encouragement that is offered motivates people to see their barriers. Spending the time with the Judge & Virtual Resources helps them work through those barriers. The impact the Judge is making in our Community has been a blessing.

Meeting Judge Ness and seeing her passion for Monroe Community Court, knowing this was her idea that is what started and succeeding gave me inspiration and a drive to help by her side. It is a pleasure to be a part of the start-up of the Monroe Community Court and Virtual Resource Center, but even more of a pleasure watching the Judge impact our Town and the town citizens with positive reinforcement of the law.

Having Judge Ness as part of any court system is a blessing to have. Her Strength and the knowledge with her experience with Community Court would be an asset to District Court.

Thank you for your time,

Dawnelle-Director SVDP CRC  
360-294-8480  
St Vincent de Paul Community Resource Center  
of Snohomish County  
17150m W Main St Suite B  
Monroe, WA 98272

Christopher P. Damitio  
18911 80<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Kenmore, WA 98028  
(425) 419-6186 cpdamitio@gmail.com

Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller Ave M/S 609  
Everett, WA 98201

Snohomish County Council Members,

My name is Christopher Damitio, and I am a second-year law associate in patent law litigation. I am writing to encourage you to appoint Judge Ness to Snohomish County District Court, and to fully explain the positive impact she has had on my life and the lives of hundreds of other high school students. I can honestly say that I would not be where I am today if it had not been for Judge Ness' influence in my life when I was a young student at Archbishop Murphy High School. I am sure that many of my peers would say the same thing, but I'd like to tell you in this letter the story of how Judge Ness changed my life.

I first met Judge Ness when I was a sophomore at Archbishop Murphy High School. I had no mock trial experience, and no experience of any kind in the legal field. Our mock trial team was fortunate to be supported by several experienced attorneys as volunteer coaches but it quickly became apparent to me that Judge Ness was the go-to coach for advice relating to all aspects of a mock trial competition, from oral argument presentation to the finer points of the rules of evidence. She can explain complex legal concepts and instructions in such a way that anyone could understand, particularly younger students without any previous legal experience. My teammates and I often received our most valuable advice from Judge Ness, delivered in a way that was easy to incorporate into our presentation.

Some of the other coaches would become stressed and overwhelmed during competitions as our team competed at the highest levels of the state-wide tournaments. These events were genuinely stressful, but Judge Ness never lost her cool or showed any sign of impatience with any of us students. She was always there with an encouraging word and the right strategy to overcome unforeseen obstacles. Many of the greatest lessons I took from mock trial I learned by simply watching how Judge Ness conducted herself during practices and competitions. She taught me how to remain calm in the face of adversity, and how to project confidence into every argument that I made.

Judge Ness' unwavering support for me as an individual continued after I graduated high school. When I mentioned that I was interested in a career in law, Judge Ness believed in me. She reached out to a local law firm to introduce me as an intern candidate. She helped me build my professional resume. She personally vouched for me with the law firm where I interned. She called me several times after hours to ensure that everything was perfect. She checked up on me during my undergraduate program, and she was often the first person I would reach out to when I had a question about the legal field. When I made the decision to apply to UCLA School of Law, Judge Ness was the first person who volunteered to write me a letter of recommendation. She was also the Judge I chose to swear me into the Washington State Bar Association after I successfully passed the bar exam.

I wholeheartedly recommend that you appoint Judge Ness to the Snohomish County District Court bench. I am confident that she will use her position to continue making a difference in people's lives.

Sincerely,  
*Christopher P. Damitio*

March 18, 2023



Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller Ave M/S609  
Everett, WA 98201

Northsound Association for Catholic Education  
Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy High School

Dear Snohomish County Council Members,

I am pleased to write a letter of recommendation for Judge Jessica Ness to be appointed to the South Division of Snohomish County District Court. I knew Jessica for seven years as an assistant coach for the Archbishop Murphy High School mock trial team between 2012-2018. She should receive the strongest consideration.

Jessica is one of the most pleasant, committed, and responsible adults I have ever worked with in my 19-year coaching career. She has a warm personality and is dedicated to serving young people. One example is that she enjoyed working with our younger students who were learning mock trial for the first time. She excelled in that role because of her grace and dignified manner.

Above all, Jessica knows the law. I could always look to her as an accurate voice of legal reasoning when it came to questions about evidence and case theory. We require our assistant coaches to critique the students on legal content and substance. Jessica was always up to the task, and critiqued the students with appropriate but firm suggestions about how they could improve their legal skills. She was also an expert at analyzing the pre-trial evidentiary motions in our cases, which reflects well on her ability to understand and apply legal analysis as a judge would.

Jessica's judgment can also be trusted. I particularly valued her input when it came to selecting students to be on the Varsity, JV, and C-teams. Jessica had a good feel for talent and which student would perform throughout the year. When it came to picking students, I tended to rely on her instincts more than other assistant coaches. When it came to a close call on a student, I found that Jessica's instincts for understanding people were confirmed by the end of the season.

Jessica Ness is committed to serving young people, and she is a good judge of character and ability. She would make an excellent choice for appointment to the South Division of Snohomish County District Court.

Very Truly Yours,

Roger Brodniak

March 18, 2023

Dear Snohomish County Council Members,

My name is Sallie Brown. I am writing to recommend Judge Jessica Ness for the Snohomish County District Court judicial position. I retired after 32 years in education, most recently as one of the kindergarten teachers at Bothell's Heritage Christian Academy. HCA serves hundreds of families in this region, the Ness family being one of those families. I'd like to tell you about the experience I had with Ms. Ness during the school year that I taught her son.

Ms. Ness volunteered each Friday in my class to support our reading rotations. She was able to direct and support individual students at all different levels of mastery, from the beginning readers to the most advanced. It was evident to me that Ms. Ness felt the importance of being involved with the learning experience of every one of my students. Through her volunteer work, she built caring relationships with the children via her excellent communication and exceptional listening skills. She was always very friendly and imminently approachable. I could consistently depend on her to take charge of a reading station and operate it smoothly and efficiently without my direction or oversight. Even though kindergarten focuses primarily on foundational skills, Ms. Ness was passionate with each objective being explored or taught. It was evident that Ms. Ness valued the success of each student and expected each kindergartner to experience a personal accomplishment each day.

Ms. Ness has demonstrated her commitment to invest in the future of children and her desire to see the youngest learners achieve a positive and fruitful educational experience is a good indication of her heart for families. I can say without a doubt that she would be excellent for the judicial position, and I highly encourage you to select her to fill the opening at the Snohomish County District Court.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sallie Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sallie Brown  
Kindergarten Teacher  
Heritage Christian Academy  
19527 104<sup>th</sup> Ave NE  
Bothell, WA 98011



City of Bothell™

April 13, 2023

Snohomish County City Council  
Robert J. Drewel Building, Eighth floor  
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609  
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Snohomish County Council Members,

I am writing to provide a reference for the Honorable Jessica Ness, who has offered her candidacy for the judicial appointment for the vacant Snohomish County District Court position.

Judge Ness served as valued member of Bothell Municipal Court's team as judge pro tempore for many years before her appointment to the bench for the Monroe Municipal Court. I was lucky to work with her for several years and continue to enjoy a close working relationship with her today.

Judge Ness nurtures a culture in the courthouse that promotes safe and equal access to justice. She has demonstrated incredible poise in the face of challenging situations and her ability to maintain order in the courtroom during these difficult moments is commendable.

Judge Ness is fair and impartial on the bench and patient and respectful of all individuals who appear before her. She is enthusiastic and inclusive with staff and stakeholders. This has been especially demonstrated in her effective leadership expanding the restorative justice efforts in Monroe, including implementing community court and expanding probation services.

I have been proud and honored to have Judge Ness on the bench in Bothell and have modeled many of Bothell's approaches to restorative justice on her excellent work and progress in Monroe.

Judge Ness would bring a collaborative, confident, and compassionate judicial style to the District Court bench in Snohomish County and I am so pleased to offer my highest recommendation.

Please contact me with any further questions.

Most respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CW' followed by a flourish.

Courtney White  
Court Administrator  
Bothell Municipal Court



Greetings Snohomish County Council,

April 17, 2023

My name is Stacy Kaufman. I am a social worker for Everett Law Association. I have been employed with Everett Law since January 2021.

I have had the honor of working with Judge Jessica Ness every Wednesday for the last year and a half. In my experience she has always been prompt and courteous when on the bench.

In addition, I appreciate the way she takes her time talking to the defendants. She is always respectful, helping them to understand the orders of the court.

I believe Judge Ness would be an asset to any court she works in, and I would highly recommend her.

Sincerely,

Stacy Kaufman BAS  
3232 Oakes Ave  
Everett, WA 98201  
425-998-8046  
[Skaufman@everettlaw.org](mailto:Skaufman@everettlaw.org)

March 17, 2023

Snohomish County Council

3000 Rockefeller Ave.

8th Floor, Jackson Board Room

Robert J. Drewel Building

Everett, WA 98201

To the Honorable Members of the Snohomish County Council,

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For the past three years, Jessica has served as the Monroe Municipal Court Presiding Judge, where she has gained invaluable experience in leading the management and administration of the Court's business, as well as supervising its daily operations. During this time, Jessica has shown remarkable dedication to her work, ensuring that justice is served fairly and efficiently.

One of Jessica's greatest accomplishments during her tenure as Monroe Municipal Court Presiding Judge was the creation of the Monroe Municipal Community Court, which provides social services to individuals facing low-level, quality of life offenses. Under her guidance, this court has had a significant positive impact on the lives of participants and our community as a whole.



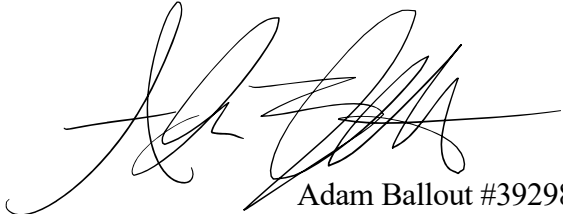
March 17, 2023

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In summary, I have no doubt that Jessica Ness would make an exceptional addition to the Snohomish County District Court bench. Her extensive experience, knowledge of the law, and unwavering commitment to justice make her an outstanding candidate. I highly recommend her without reservation.

Sincerely,



Adam Ballout #39298  
ABC Law Group LLP  
6303 Wetmore Ave Everett, WA 98203

March 17, 2023

Snohomish County Council

3000 Rockefeller Ave.

8th Floor, Jackson Board Room

Robert J. Drewel Building

Everett, WA 98201

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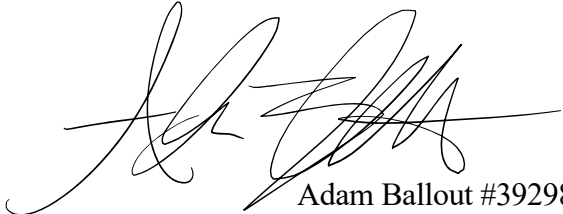
March 17, 2023

Jessica has served the Snohomish County District Court as a Judge Pro Tem for over **eleven** years. In this capacity, she has demonstrated exceptional knowledge of the law, a deep understanding of court procedures, and an unwavering commitment to justice. She has also served as a Judge Pro Tem in every Municipal Court in Snohomish County, which has provided her with a broad range of experience and expertise.

Prior to taking the bench Jessica worked as both a prosecutor and defense counsel, giving her a unique perspective on the law and the criminal justice system. This diverse range of experience has undoubtedly prepared her well for a position as a judge. I've watched Jessica handle litigants in open court who were struggling with mental health issues, may have been under the influence, who were angry and agitated all with grace and tact keeping in mind her role and the role and appearance of the Court. I have a great deal of respect of Jessica's personal ethics and her character. When Jessica began doing pro-tem work more full time many years ago, she stopped taking on private matters by her own initiative and choosing due to even the appearance of unfairness on her active cases.

In summary, I have no doubt that Jessica Ness would make an exceptional addition to the Snohomish County District Court bench. Her extensive experience, knowledge of the law, and unwavering commitment to justice make her an outstanding candidate. I highly recommend her without reservation.

Sincerely,



Adam Ballout #39298  
ABC Law Group LLP  
6303 Wetmore Ave Everett, WA 98203

The application for appointment for Jessica Ness has been withheld from the online materials.

Pursuant to RCW 42.56 a copy of this document may be requested through a [public records request](#).