



City Council Office

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February 1, 2017

Dear Ms. Swanson:

As the legislative body of the City of Missoula, we are writing to voice our strong opposition to Neil Gorsuch as the next justice on the United States Supreme Court. His nomination threatens Missoula's fundamental values, basic civil and voting rights, and science-based public policy. We expect Sen. Jon Tester to join us in standing firm against President Trump's nominee.

This lifetime appointment must not be taken lightly. Americans deserve a judge who will prioritize the Constitution over extreme ideology, especially in our current political climate. As a judge, Gorsuch has consistently ruled in favor of big corporations, including in favor of overturning a Department of Labor fine against a company whose failure to train a worker caused his death. He has tried to restrict or eliminate one of the most effective legal tools against corporate securities fraud, class actions against corporations. While some on the right think he'll be the next Justice Scalia, he's gone even further than the late justice in arguing for the elimination of the so-called Chevron doctrine. That would end the ability of courts to defer to administrative agency interpretations of ambiguous statutes--hugely important when it comes to the environment and job safety.

Gorsuch has also sided with Hobby Lobby when it comes to women's reproductive rights under the Affordable Care Act, joining opinions that both for-profit companies and non-profits can refuse to provide birth control to women. In a dissent, he argued that the Governor of Utah should be able to defund Planned Parenthood based on demonstrably false videos purporting to show Planned Parenthood affiliates attempting to sell fetal tissue. We're also concerned he would support so-called religious freedom laws that legalize discrimination against LGBTQ citizens.

Given these issues and many more, we expect Sen. Tester to be a strong voice against this confirmation. Missoulians--and all Montanans--deserve better.

Sincerely,

Annulus Heibel Wards 5 *Ruth Awokey Ward 2*
John Wood 3 *Jon Weidman*

Missoula City Council Members

Michelle Green Ward 6 *Manlye Mark Ward 6*
Adelheid West Ward 1