

Austin Knudsen

Montana's Attorney General



Dear Friend,

I'll get straight to the point: the Montana Supreme Court is a mess, and it's having disastrous consequences for our state. For decades, the Court has been controlled by the liberal trial lawyers and their Democrat allies, but now we have a chance to change that.

First, let's look at some the recent conduct of the Montana Supreme Court:

- **Lobbying Against Accountability** - Leaked emails showed that members of the Supreme Court and other judges routinely took positions on bills during the 2021 legislative session. Coordinating with outside special interest groups behind the scenes, the Court and its taxpayer-funded employees involved themselves in dozens of bills being considered by the legislature. In some cases, members of the Court and their employees were actively lobbying against legislation, because it increased oversight and their accountability to the public.
- **Unethical Behavior & Conflict of Interest** - The Court blocked a legislative subpoena that sought to reveal documents relating to their involvement in lobbying and legislative matters. Despite the fact that the case was brought by the Court's own hand-picked employee and the dispute involved the emails of members of the Supreme Court, 6 of the 7 Justices ignored their duty to recuse themselves from the case in which they had a direct personal interest. And, wouldn't you know it, the Court ruled in its own favor to keep their emails from reaching the legislature or the public.
- **Overturing Settled Law to Benefit Criminals** - Justices have taken an activist bent and legislating from the bench in ways that help criminals and showing a general disregard for the Legislature. First, they overturned a law that had been on the books for 24 years that required a mandatory 35% fine for possession or storage of dangerous drugs. Then, they went against legislative intent regarding restitution, making it harder for crime victims to be made whole by those who preyed on them.
- **Letting Criminals back on the Street** - The Court upended decades of precedent regarding "time served" for criminals who are awaiting trial, throwing chaos into the already over-taxed system. Their decision allows convicted criminals to *double* or even *triple* count time served against their final sentences, undermining the legislature's authority to determine punishment for crimes - and setting criminals loose before they've served their time.