

**The Supreme Court of Montana**  
Office of the Court Administrator

**Beth McLaughlin**  
Court Administrator



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May 6, 2022

Mr. Jake Eaton  
P. O. Box 81274  
Billings, MT 59108

Dear Mr. Eaton,

I have reviewed your information request of April 20, 2022 and can provide you with the following information.

The engagement letter, invoices, records of payments, and e-mails between the Boone Karlberg Law Firm and the Court Administrator's Office are covered by attorney-client privilege and will not be shared. However, I can tell you generally the firm represented the OCA in multiple legal issues arising from a subpoena issued by the Montana Legislature in April 2021. The subpoena gave rise to several court challenges including a writ filed before the U.S. Supreme Court.

The OCA does not have an attorney on staff. With any legal issue, I take the following steps:

1. Determine whether the action is a tort and should be covered by counsel from the Tort Claims division – this matter was not; or
2. Contact the Department of Justice's Agency Legal Services bureau for representation – the DOJ was already representing the Legislature in this matter and thus, a conflict existed.

These routine options for legal representation were not available so the OCA had to hire outside counsel at a rate of \$225 per hour, which is within the rate paid by state government for private counsel. Paralegal time was billed at \$150 and \$50 per hour. The total paid for services was \$99,946. In addition, Boone Karlberg paid \$6,684 to Becker Gallagher Legal Publisher, a firm which provides the appropriate formatting and service necessary to respond to the U.S. Supreme Court writ filed by the Legislature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Beth McLaughlin".

Beth McLaughlin  
Supreme Court Administrator