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Judge William J. Haynes, Jr.
U.S. District Judge
649 U.S. Courthouse
Nashville, TN 37203

Dear Judge Haynes:

I am writing a letter of support of behalf of Bernie Ellis of Santa Fe, Tennessee. I am familiar with Mr. Ellis's work in public health through my position as communications director at Reclaiming Futures, a national initiative of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Reclaiming Futures, which is based at the Graduate School of Social Work at Portland State University, is a five-year effort to improve drug and alcohol treatment services for young people in the juvenile justice system. We currently fund pilot projects in 10 states, operate a national leadership program, and offer technical assistance to communities in the southeastern United States. For more information, see www.reclaimingfutures.org.

One of the challenges Reclaiming Futures faces is documenting the success of our work. We need to identify economical ways to evaluate our 10 projects that produce timely and useful information for the public, the media, and our managers. In tackling this problem, I have studied – and have been impressed by – the evaluations done by Mr. Ellis of alcohol and drug reduction projects in Native American communities in New Mexico and other states. The reports he produced used simple, cost effective methods that could easily be adapted by our grantees.

Last March I was fortunate enough to attend presentations by Mr. Ellis in Chicago sponsored by Join Together, another initiative of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. In these meetings, as well as in several conversations afterwards, Mr. Ellis shared with me ideas that I have taken back and incorporated into the evaluation of Reclaiming Futures now being conducted by the Urban Institute of Washington, DC.

Mr. Ellis is an important and recognized contributor in the fields of public health and program evaluation. I urge you to give his case every consideration.

Sincerely,

Mac Prichard