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LEIGH ANNE GRANT MANLOVE
District Attorney
First Judicial District of Wyoming

July 21, 2021

CHEYENNE, Wyo. – District Attorney Leigh Anne Grant Manlove issued the following statement regarding her formal response to the Office of Bar Counsel, which can be found on her website, www.LA4DA.com.

I am glad for the opportunity to now be able to share information with my constituents to shed light on the criticism I have received as the District Attorney from our Laramie County judges and the Office of Bar Counsel. In a season of unprecedented variables, it is important that the citizens of Laramie County know the carefully weighed steps I took, and why.

The roles of Bar Counsel and the Board Professional Responsibility are important. It is necessary for lawyers to have oversight for our work, and I have great respect for the institution as a whole. My formal and comprehensive response should be evaluated by those who elected me, because I am confident there is no material or legal basis for this attempted administrative removal from my elected position as the Laramie County District Attorney.

I am passionate about my work, and I stand by the personnel change decisions I made at the beginning of my term under the authority of Wyoming law to rebuild my team. The work of a prosecutor is inextricably linked to suffering or loss, and that can drain people; and I support those who left our office to pursue other opportunities. Some of the folks who chose to leave did so because of the dynamics related to our huge caseload: COVID-19 challenges, a State budget decrease, required furloughs, elimination of staff positions, and the stress that comes with these jobs.

On the heels of a historic energy downturn, COVID-19 affected the State's income in a staggering way. Our office was required to implement budget cuts consistent with Governor Gordon's directives. A State hiring freeze was implemented, with a warning of deeper budget cuts to come. Next came the elimination of a position, and required furloughs of workers. I had to make some priority decisions about what cases our office could prosecute given the reduction of resources and the obligations of our caseload, and I knew I would receive some criticism. That comes with the territory. My constituents know I will not shy away from making the difficult decisions that come with the privilege of serving in this position.

As with every organization, there are challenges. Our team is human, and in an office with thousands of filings per year, there will be occasional errors. When mistakes happen, it can impact justice for victims, which I take seriously. Our office will steadfastly continue to serve this community.

Neither Bar Counsel nor our honorable District and Circuit Court judges have been able to demonstrate that I have breached my duties, something I have confidently known throughout this process. Although this is a difficult time period, I am proud of our work, my management of the District Attorney's office, and the prosecutorial discretion exercised by the executive branch of government. I will continue to work diligently in my service to the people of Laramie County and the State of Wyoming.

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