

January 23, 2026

To: Vermont Senate Judiciary Committee

**From: Laura Wilson, Esq.
of: Young & Wilson, PC
Lyndonville, VT.**

Re: Written Testimony Opposed to the Confirmation of Michael Drescher to the VT Supreme Court

Over the course of the Committee's confirmation hearings this month, I have watched/listened carefully to all the proceedings and considered Mr. Drescher's statements and answers to questions, as well as the testimony of witnesses and their answers to the Committee's questions. Despite my skepticism of Mr. Drescher's nomination, I have done my best to keep an open mind as I listened, and frankly, I hoped that Mr. Drescher or witnesses on his behalf might persuade me.

I have been a part of Vermont's legal community since 2011, when I was admitted to practice law. Since then, I have been a defense attorney, practicing on the criminal and juvenile dockets here in the Northeast Kingdom and more recently, as a defense attorney in the northern NH counties of Coos and Grafton, and also as a CJA Panel Attorney in Vermont and NH federal courts.

I've known Mike Drescher since 2010, when I was a law clerk to David Williams, one of Vermont's veteran and accomplished criminal defense attorneys. More recently, I have dealt with Mr. Drescher on a small handful of my own criminal cases handled by the US Attorney's Office of Vermont.

It's impossible to dislike Mike Drescher. He's nice, respectful, reasonable, professional, and hard-working. I don't think any of us who know and have worked with him, including many with a much longer working history with him, would dispute those traits.

But I nevertheless oppose his confirmation and I urge you to vote against confirmation.

Knowing Mr. Drescher, even on the limited basis I do, I was deeply disappointed in the spring of 2025 to learn of the positions that he had taken in the cases of the ICE-detained immigrant students. Despite his current attempts to justify, Mr. Drescher took positions as a prosecutor that could at best be described as dubious legal arguments in favor of their continued detention. It saddened me to see Mr. Drescher enable and blindly follow the Trump DOJ's misguided positions.

As the Committee knows, prosecutors have unique duties among lawyers. They are obligated to seek justice, not just to blindly pursue the government's desirable outcomes for specific cases.

And like all lawyers, they are required to base positions on evidence, law, and facts—not blind adherence to a policy.

I am not persuaded by Mr. Drescher’s rationalization for his actions. He has repeatedly stated that he was simply doing a job that had to be done, later refining that argument to suggest first that he was acting in a heroic manner by doing it himself rather than delegating to others, and then later suggesting that he was doing a brave, albeit unpopular thing. I disagree profoundly. His decision to follow the Trump DOJ policy had no reasonable basis in law, fact, or evidence. It was not “unpopular,” it was simply wrong, by any measure. Ultimately, he even argued that if he had resigned in the face of such an edict from his DOJ bosses, “someone else would have done it.” We have heard these kinds of rationalizations before in the face of dark times, and they are empty. I hope the Committee recognizes them as such now.

I also listened with particular interest yesterday to the testimony of former Supreme Court Justice Amestoy. We can all likely agree with him that vetting and confirmation of judges shouldn’t be driven by partisanship. In Vermont, we tend to do better than other states at avoiding that trap.

However, I respectfully disagree with Justice Amestoy about how we must avoid making decisions based on “the shadow of Donald Trump.” At this juncture, I do not believe that shadow can be overlooked, ignored, or dismissed: it must be faced head on and confronted. The escalation of the Trump administration’s attack on and erosion of the rule of law and other benchmarks of our democracy has reached critical mass. This is not just about simple partisanship or disagreement. Now, it is about the courage to make choices, particularly for those in positions of public service, leadership, and power.

Finally, as was discussed at the hearing, Mr. Drescher has negligible experience in state court. By his own admission, he has done only 3 jury trials in state court. I do not know whose names were sent to Governor Scott for consideration, but it is probably fair to surmise that among that group were many experienced, veteran trial court judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys, who have lived and breathed Vermont law for their entire careers. It is troubling to me that the Governor bypassed them in favor of Mr. Drescher, who has so little of that experience, and who when the chips were down, made the decisions he did in 2025.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote against confirmation, and thank you for your careful attention to our letters and to the probing questions you asked during the hearings.

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