

**IN THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI**

**A RESOLUTION** honoring Jean Peters Baker for nearly 30 years of dedicated service in the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office, including almost 14 years as the top Prosecutor.

**RESOLUTION NO. 21833**, December 16, 2024

**INTRODUCED BY** Jeanie Lauer, Megan L. Marshall, Jalen Anderson, Donna Peyton, Manuel Abarca IV, Venessa Huskey, Charlie Franklin, DaRon McGee, and Sean E. Smith, County Legislators

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker started her legal career in the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office nearly 30 years ago, she started as an intern in the Family Support Unit before being hired as an assistant prosecutor, as an assistant prosecutor, she distinguished herself in various roles including as a member of Drug Enforcement Unit, Civil Forfeiture Unit, DART Unit, Warrant Desk Unit, Grand Jury Unit, Domestic Violence Unit, and the Sex Crimes and Child Abuse Unit. Because of her work, she earned leadership positions including Trial Team Leader and Chief Warrant Officer; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker was appointed as the top Prosecutor in 2011 making her the second woman to serve in that role; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker was elected in 2012 then re-elected in 2016 and 2020 making her the longest serving Jackson County Prosecutor in a century; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker has cemented a reputation during her tenure as Jackson County's elected prosecutor as a fearless and compassionate advocate for the victims of crime,

especially the young and most vulnerable, and a champion of working with police and community leaders to confront the complex problem of violence; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker has been instrumental in ensuring that the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office, the largest Prosecutor's office in the State of Missouri, remains a model for other local, state and national prosecutor offices; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker has worked tirelessly to modernize the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office by ensuring transparency through the development of public facing dashboards and ensuring that this Office's policies are based on data; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker has demonstrated a history of successful innovation including the creation and stewardship of the No Violence Alliance (NOVA), a violence reduction strategy founded on collaboration between community, local government entities, local law enforcement, and federal agencies, this program, centered around communication and data, reduced homicides in Jackson County to a historic low in 2014, she has also overseen the creation of new diversion programs addressing first-time offenders and those with mental health issues. In addition, her development of a model for evaluating, charging, and prosecuting homicides has not only resulted in a high conviction rate and sentences that exceed the Missouri state average, but it has also been nationally recognized and become a model that is studied by other prosecutor offices around the state and nationally; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker displayed courage and fortitude in being one of the first prosecutors to criminally charge and convict a high-ranking member of the Catholic Church, her overseeing the successful prosecution of police misconduct cases, and her litigating the reversal of a wrongful conviction; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker has shown faithful commitment to community through relationships and the development of programming which culminated in the creation of a community advisory board made up of community members from all walks of life and professions, including law enforcement and justice involved individuals. This group was instrumental in providing advice and assisting in the shaping of the Office's policies; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker demonstrated an enduring devotion to equality and equity and a commitment to equal justice and equal access to justice as shown through her partnerships and work with multiple civil rights organizations and her innovative trainings for her office on bias, race, and inequities in the criminal justice system and the world; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker is appreciative of the stellar group of assistant prosecutors, legal assistants, investigators, victim advocates, technicians, analysts and executive staff members who she has worked with through the years and those who currently work with her, these dedicated public servants are routinely recognized as leaders in Prosecution. Under Jean Peters Baker, the Jackson County Prosecutor's office has seen multiple members leave to become Associate and Circuit Court Judges, two members were appointed to serve as U.S. Attorneys, and countless others have gone on to take senior level positions in other governmental offices

and private law firms, Jean Peters Baker is proud to have continued the legacy and tradition of developing talented leaders within the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker's talent and innovation have resulted in local and national recognition. She is a sought after leader as evident by her service on the Board of Directors for the Missouri Association Prosecuting Attorneys, a body that includes 115 elected prosecuting and circuit court attorneys from our State, on the Board of Directors for Karpel Solutions, a nationally used criminal case management software company for prosecutor offices, and on the Board of the Directors for the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, a leader in the field of nationwide training and technical assistance to prosecutor offices; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker is thankful for the love and support of her family, including her husband Doug Baker and her children, Christian, Bri, and Grant; and,

WHEREAS, Jean Peters Baker's decision to not seek re-election will bring her term as Prosecutor to an end on January 3, 2025, her judgment, compassion, tenacity, and fierce moral vision of a more just world will forever stand as an enduring symbol of leadership; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the County Legislature of Jackson County, Missouri, that the Legislature hereby recognizes Jean Peters Baker for her nearly 30 years of dedicated service to the citizens of Jackson County and extends to her best wishes for her future endeavors.

Effective Date: This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage by a majority of the Legislature.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Bryan Covinsky  
Bryan Covinsky (Dec 12, 2024 10:56 CST)  
County Counselor

Certificate of Passage

I hereby certify that the attached resolution, Resolution No. 21833 of December 19, 2024, was duly passed on December 16, 2024 by the Jackson County Legislature. The votes thereon were as follows:

Yeas 9

Nays 0

Abstaining 0

Absent 0

12.17.2024  
Date

Mary Jo Spino  
Mary Jo Spino, Clerk of Legislature