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December 20, 2018

Dear Forty Under 40 Nominating Committee:

I strongly support the selection of Kelsey Knowles for the 2019 Forty Under 40 class. She is one of those rare individuals who is a visionary and simultaneously is able to methodically do what needs to be done to implement the vision.

Within Kelsey's soul is a spirit of adventure to seek new opportunities. She went to undergraduate school at Arizona State in the southwest and Boston College in the east for her legal education. During law school, she excelled academically and was the Executive Editor of the Law Review. After graduation, she found Des Moines, Iowa and the Belin McCormick law firm to start a new life with her husband, Sean and their three month old daughter. During her eleven years of practice in her firm, she has become one of the best employment/litigation lawyers in our state. She has excelled in a very difficult and challenging area of the law.

Kelsey has served on our firm Management Committee and has served as our hiring attorney for several years. As our hiring attorney, Kelsey is primarily responsible for coordinating our recruiting efforts and has successfully hired several excellent candidates.

She is devoted to her family and profession but she also has a strong commitment to giving back. Most importantly, she wants to contribute in a way that has impact. Rather than serving on many community boards, Kelsey focuses her efforts on a few causes with the goal to make a difference in the area she selects.

Kelsey has been a member of the Greater Des Moines Partnership's Talent Development Board since 2012, member of the 2013 Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute Class and previously served as Lincoln High School's Mock Trial serving as their attorney and coach. She is generous not only of her time, but financial resources as a member the United Way Tocqueville Society.

Kelsey's primary community service has been to Living History Farms. She served as Secretary, Vice Chair and is now Chair of the Board of Directors. As you may know, Living History Farms was the vision of Professor Dr. William G. Murray, an economics professor at Iowa State University (now deceased). Living History Farms was started in 1970. During her tenure, there was a growing consensus amongst the longtime supporters of the farms and the Board that the vision for the farms needed to be rethought to capture a changing agriculture and the type of experience that Iowans and in particular youth would enjoy. Kelsey embraced the idea. During her tenure on the Board of Directors and while serving as Chair, Living History Farms created a

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master plan to determine how the farms might better serve Des Moines, Central Iowa and our state.

Funds were raised for the feasibility study and the farms are now conducting a feasibility study to ensure a successful campaign. Kelsey, other Board members and the Steering Committee members determined the programs that would be most impactful and would best serve Iowans. They are now in the process of starting a fund raising campaign to implement the programs and the capital improvements that are required to implement their plan. Kelsey Knowles is committed to finishing the fund raising effort to assure the vision for the farms is realized. As a result of her efforts and the efforts of Living History Farms, staff, and volunteers, there will be a transformation of the farms.

Kelsey is still very young and will have a huge impact on our community. If given the opportunity to interact with other young leaders, she will be a part of the next generation of leaders in the Greater Des Moines area who will impact and change the community for the better. Without question, she will make a huge contribution to her class but more importantly, the learning she receives from her classmates will help her transform her community for decades to come.

Sincerely yours,



Steven E. Zumbach

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