



January 7, 2009

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman
Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
433 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Arlen Specter
Ranking Member
Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: *Endorsement of Eric Holder for Attorney General of the United States of America*

Dear Senators Specter and Leahy:

On behalf of the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA), I write to urge the expeditious confirmation of Eric Holder as the Attorney General of the United States. The HNBA is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that represents the interest of the more than 100,000 Hispanic attorneys, judges, law professors, law students and paralegals in the United States and Puerto Rico. Because its *raison d'être* is promoting the fair administration of justice for all, the HNBA is particularly interested in ensuring that the next Attorney General possesses the stature, integrity, judgment, experience and commitment to public service required to command the respect and support of both the citizenry and the career staff of the Department of Justice ("DOJ"). Mr. Holder is such a person. He possesses both the broad professional experience and the personal qualities required to lead DOJ in a manner that honors its finest traditions and its mission of "ensur[ing] fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans."¹

As required by its *Policies and Procedures Governing Executive Endorsements*, the HNBA has conducted appropriate due diligence in considering Mr. Holder's background and qualifications. Based on our review of Mr. Holder's academic and professional credentials and his record of public service, it is clear that he has both the experience and the temperament required to distinguish himself as the next Attorney General.

¹ Department of Justice Mission Statement.

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy

The Honorable Arlen Specter

January 7, 2009

Throughout his career, Mr. Holder has gained the respect of his colleagues who describe him as a thoughtful attorney and a gifted leader. In conducting our due diligence, we spoke with individuals who interacted extensively with him during his years as a trial attorney at DOJ, as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, as the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, and as the Deputy Attorney General during the Clinton Administration. Uniformly, those we spoke with recommended Mr. Holder highly and characterized him as fair, committed to the Constitution and the rule of law, unparalleled in his work ethic, and as an active proponent of diversity in the legal profession.

Logic suggests that public trust in the impartiality and integrity of DOJ has been undermined by reports concerning the role political considerations have played in setting prosecutorial and personnel priorities at the Department in recent years. The next Attorney General must persuade the public that enforcement decisions will be driven by the public interest and legal analysis, and that laws will be enforced fairly and with due respect to individual rights. Mr. Holder's long history as a public servant evidences autonomy, integrity, and the ability to remain unaffected by political pressure. Because I was a leader of the Hispanic Bar of the District of Columbia during his tenure as U.S. Attorney there, I can attest from personal experience that Mr. Holder demonstrated an interest in and aptitude for community outreach that will serve him well as Attorney General.

Lastly, Mr. Holder's demonstrated commitment to civil rights is another important reason why he is the right person for the job. The steady increase of hate crimes against Latinos is an area of particular concern for the HNBA and Hispanics generally. Our community will look to the next Attorney General to make enforcement of hate crimes a priority. Given his experience as a prosecutor, we are confident that he will treat all aggressions against the rule of law with the appropriate attention.

We urge the Senate to confirm Mr. Holder's nomination expeditiously to allow him to begin the important work ahead. Thank you for your attention to our recommendation. We stand ready to assist in your deliberations should there be any questions. Please feel free to contact me through our national office at (202) 223-4777 or directly at [REDACTED].

Sincerely Yours,



Ramona E. Romero, Esq.
National President
Hispanic National Bar Association

CC: The Honorable Harry Reid, U.S. Senate Majority Leader

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, U.S. Senate Minority Leader