

July 5, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley,

We are criminal defense attorneys practicing before the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico who have appeared before the Hon. Camille Vélez-Rivé, United States Magistrate Judge. We write in our personal capacities in support of Magistrate Judge Vélez-Rivé's confirmation as a United States District Judge.

During the past 18 years on the bench, Magistrate Judge Vélez-Rivé has unfailingly showed command of the law, poise while balancing competing fundamental interests between the government and its citizens, and respect for the dignity and worth of every person, irrespective of their titles, status or the allegations lodged against them. We have all witnessed Magistrate Judge Vélez-Rivé's treatment of our clients, affording them dignity and compassion. She has intently listened to our legal arguments and ruled upon them in a calm and methodical way.

Judge Vélez-Rivé possesses all the qualities sought in filling vacancies to the federal bench. Her commitment to the federal judiciary is evidenced by 18 years of dedication, seriousness, and studiousness in every case. Judge Vélez-Rivé is a hard-worker that improves the practice of law in our district, and a scholar that takes great pains to explain her thought-process and *ratio decidendi* in each decision.

Of significance to our practice, Judge Vélez-Rivé’s learning curve as a District Judge would be minimal, as her exposure to the criminal justice system and to civil trials during the past two decades on the bench would allow for the handling of a full docket in the jurisdiction with the highest volume of criminal cases in the First Circuit. Simply put, she will hit the ground running in a jurisdiction that desperately needs to move – with fairness as a north star – the criminal docket.

In sum, as a Puerto Rican woman, Judge Vélez-Rivé’s confirmation to the District Court would elevate to the bench historically under-represented minorities. In addition, Judge Vélez-Rivé is unbiased, compassionate, patient, sensitive, courteous and can be decisive without ever losing her temper or her fairness. Elevating her to the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico would bring diversity, knowledge, commitment, and experience to the federal judiciary.

We are available for any further information that this Committee may need.

Sincerely yours,

Laura Maldonado Rodríguez

Leonardo M. Aldridge

Lydia Lizarribar

Francisco Adams-Quesada

Juan Matos de Juan

Anita Hill

José Gaztambide

Antonio Bisbal-Bultrón

Melanie Carrillo

Olga Shepard

José Romo-Matienzo

Yassmin González

Irma Valldejuli

Marie L. Cortés-Cortés

Luz Ríos

Rosa Bonini-Laracuenta

Richard Dansoh

Miguel Oppenheimer

Jason González

Johnny Rivera

Giovanni Canino

Saúl Román

Thomas Trebilcock

Edgar Sánchez

Raúl Mariani-Franco

Joseph Boucher