

**FORMER AND CURRENT LAW CLERKS
HON. GINA R. MÉNDEZ-MIRÓ**

June 29, 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

Confirmation of Judge Gina R. Méndez-Miró to the U.S. District Court

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

The undersigned have been honored to serve as law clerks to Judge Gina R. Méndez-Miró at the Puerto Rico Court of Appeals. Although our backgrounds and future professional interests may vary, we come together to express our strong and unwavering support for her confirmation to the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico and, therefore, urge the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate to confirm her without delay.

Judge Méndez-Miró is a first-rate judge, a wonderful human being, a generous mentor, and an ideal candidate for the federal judiciary. True to her style—and in line with how Judge Méndez-Miró expects us to approach the cases under her consideration—we briefly outline some of the reasons why you should favorably consider her nomination.

First and foremost, she is truly passionate about the law and fully cognizant of the great responsibility she carries as a judge, a duty she does not take lightly and to which she is wholly committed. Through the study and analysis of each case, she consistently reminded us to be aware of the real people behind the facts whose lives would be impacted by our decisions; she made certain that we understood the necessity of being open minded and non-judgmental in our evaluations, and, most importantly, empathetic in our resolutions. Leading by example, she instilled in us a sense of compassion but also the conviction to do what the law requires, even if sometimes unpopular. Moreover, she taught us that the law, while sometimes imperfect, can be a great equalizer amongst the different components of our society.

When discussing a case, she is organized in her approach, rigorous in her preparation, and meticulous in her research. Judge Méndez-Miró always knows the facts better than any other judge or clerk. She reads the entire case file as well as all the relevant briefs, arguments and information from the record below, and then applies the law sensibly to the facts of the case. Her judicial approach consists of looking at cases impartially, regardless of personal views. She respects precedents and defers to the trial court's criteria when applicable. She encourages thorough and complex discussions of every case,

which will usually include questions such as: What is the standard of review? What is the applicable legal framework? What are the possible outcomes? What is the more equitable approach? Is the outcome legally sound? Her encouragement of comprehensive analysis guarantees truly enlightening and constructive discussions.

Judge Méndez-Miró is highly respected by her peers and by the Court's personnel. She is one of the most productive judges and is known for fervently procuring that every party, no matter their circumstances, is guaranteed due process and the opportunity to be heard. Her rich experience in and out of the court gives her a complete understanding of the real-world impact of her decisions. She is especially protective of those who are self-represented and disadvantaged, including inmates who, in her view, must have ample access to the courts to ensure that, as per the Puerto Rico Constitution, their right to rehabilitation is achieved.

She has strong convictions and strives to consistently convince her fellow judges that a fairer outcome is possible under the applicable law. When that is not achievable, she distinguishes herself for writing legally sound and strong dissenting opinions that are often referenced by scholars and legislators. Aside from garnering respect because of her legal analysis and expertise, her integrity, diligence, and sense of responsibility shine through in these opinions. However, while steadfast in her core beliefs, she welcomes and encourages differing opinions and is always open to dialogue of any kind.

Finally, we must highlight who Judge Méndez-Miró is as a person and the influence she has had in our lives. Working for her was and remains a continually inspiring experience. Beyond her role as a judge, we have witnessed a loving and dedicated mother and wife, as well as a lively and honest citizen. Judge Méndez-Miró is a supportive mentor and looks after us well beyond our tenures with her. In chambers, she taught us to see past what we learned in textbooks and opened our eyes to the realities of imparting justice in practice. She demands excellence from herself and every member of her staff, but is also patient, considerate and believes fiercely in giving people the tools to grow alongside her. We received feedback every step of the way and witnessed a dedication that helped shape us as attorneys and as human beings. We have learned from her and with her, and as she often recognizes, she has learned and grown as a judge and as a human being through us and with us as well.

Judge Méndez-Miró is an extraordinary judge and a remarkable woman. We respectfully urge you to consider her confirmation, as she will undoubtedly make an outstanding addition to the District Court and to the federal judiciary.

Respectfully,

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