

THE
LGBTQ+
BAR

July 6, 2022

VIA E-MAIL: (phillip_brest@judiciary-dem.senate.gov);
(brendan_chestnut@judiciary-rep.senate.gov)

Senator Dick Durbin

Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee

711 Hart Senate Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Chuck Grassley

Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee

135 Hart Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Durbin and Senator Grassley:

In my role as Executive Director of the National LGBTQ+ Bar Association (“LGBTQ+ Bar”), I am writing to express the National LGBTQ+ Bar’s unequivocally strong support of the Honorable Gina R. Méndez-Miró for confirmation to the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico.

The National LGBTQ+ Bar, an official affiliate of the American Bar Association, is the largest professional association for LGBTQ+ attorneys, judges, law students, and legal professionals in the United States and is actively involved in promoting justice in and through the legal profession for the LGBTQ+ community in all its diversity. We are proud to represent tens of thousands of LGBTQ+ and ally attorneys throughout the United States.

Judge Méndez-Miró is a long-serving and widely-respected judge in the Puerto Rico Court of Appeals, where she has joined or authored 1,500 judicial opinions. Importantly, she frequently uses her voice to persuade her colleagues, but is not afraid to be the sole dissenter in cases that could have an unjust impact on vulnerable communities.

Judge Méndez-Miró is a graduate of Princeton University and obtained her juris doctor degree from the University of Puerto Rico School of Law. Prior to becoming a judge, Judge Méndez-Miró had extensive experience as a trial attorney in private practice, as well as a distinguished career in the public sector where she served as Senate chief of staff. In that role, she pushed for changes to include same-sex couples under domestic violence laws, and to prohibit gender identity discrimination.

Judge Méndez-Miró is a tireless advocate for underrepresented and marginalized groups. She is a champion for gender justice, the LGBTQ+ community, and self-represented litigants, including

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inmates and indigent persons in Puerto Rico. As a result of this work, she sees the bias and disparities that exist in society and views the “law as an equalizer to address injustice.” Her knowledge of the law, including the development of a strong record; respect for the process and the proper role of an appellate judge; deference to precedent and the judgment of higher courts; and access to justice for parties in all walks of life make her perfectly suited for a position on the Federal bench.

Judge Méndez-Miró lives in San Juan, Puerto Rico with her wife, Puerto Rico Supreme Court Chief Justice Maite Oronoz-Roriguez, and their twins, Mar and Borja. Judge Méndez-Miró's appointment as the first LGBTQ+ judge of the U.S. District Court of Puerto Rico would bring a critical perspective to the bench. Her appointment would not only improve the quality of justice, it would advance the President's goal of adding diversity to the bench and help to remedy the problem of the underrepresentation of LGBTQ+ people in the judiciary.

I understand the rigorous review process for these types of nominations, and I strongly believe that Judge Méndez-Miró is a top-notch judicial candidate with a depth of legal experience who would be invaluable as a federal district court judge.

Consequently, it is my pleasure to wholeheartedly and without reservation, on behalf of the National LGBTQ+ Bar Association, recommend Judge Méndez-Miró for consideration for confirmation to the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico. We know she would be an outstanding addition to the bench. If you have any questions or if the LGBTQ+ Bar can provide additional information, please contact the Co-Chair of our Judiciary Committee, Eric Lesh, directly at (347) 989-6926 or ericdlesh@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



D'Arcy Kemnitz, Esq.
Executive Director
National LGBTQ+ Bar Association