

March 14, 2024

Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the millions of members of our undersigned unions, we write to express our enthusiastic support for Nancy Maldonado's nomination to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.

From her time in law school through her work today as a judge, Maldonado has been fair-minded and committed to equal justice. Before her bipartisan confirmation in 2022 to be a U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois, Maldonado was a leading civil rights and employment lawyer. Her depth of litigation experience would be an asset to the Seventh Circuit.

Maldonado graduated cum laude from Harvard in 1997 where she was on the Dean's List all four years. After completing her undergraduate degree, Maldonado worked as a paralegal at Miner, Barnhill & Galland where she returned after law school and served as a partner. She earned her law degree from Columbia Law School in 2001 and while there was a Harlan Fiske Stone scholar and served on the editorial board of the *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*. After graduating, Maldonado completed a clerkship with Judge Rubén Castillo on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois after which she returned to Miner, Barnhill & Galland in 2003. Prior to being confirmed as a District Court Judge, her work focused on representing plaintiffs in employment, civil rights and consumer fraud cases.

The driving force behind Maldonado's prior practice of employment law was a deep concern for the rights of workers; whether combatting unsafe working conditions or wage theft, she put the needs of working people at the forefront. She was an impactful litigator in class actions as well as individual suits. In *Abreu v. City of Chicago*, Ms. Maldonado represented Dilan Abreu, a Puerto Rican bricklayer who sued Chicago's Department of Water Management alleging racial discrimination and retaliation. In *Ortega v. Leslie Farms*, she represented migrant farmworkers who claimed that their employers violated state labor law by failing to pay overtime wages and failing to provide mandatory breaks. In *Hernandez v. Kovacevich*, Maldonado represented seasonal farmworkers who claimed that their employers violated state and federal law by requiring them to perform unpaid, off-the-clock work before the start of their shifts. After the case received class certification, the parties settled, and class members received significant compensation.

In addition to her experience as a litigator, Maldonado would add much needed diversity to the federal bench. When confirmed, Maldonado will be the first Hispanic judge to ever serve on the Seventh Circuit. She is also committed to Chicago's legal community having mentored new attorneys for many years. As a member of the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois she received its "Mentor of the Year" award in 2007 for counseling law students. Maldonado also served on the Board of Directors of La Casa Norte, a social service agency providing housing and comprehensive services to youth and their families, including as its Secretary from 2004 through 2005.

To ensure equal justice, protect and advance civil rights and workers' rights, we need fair-minded judges who will bolster the rights of everyone, not just the wealthy and powerful. Maldonado's nomination is another step in that direction. Maldonado has dedicated her whole career to making sure workers get a fair shake and she is well-respected with a proven record of protecting the civil rights of everyone, no matter their race or background.

Nancy Maldonado is incredibly qualified and has shown herself to be an impartial jurist who will continue to be fair-minded and committed to equal justice. We encourage the Senate to move quickly to confirm her to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.

Sincerely,

American Federation of State, County
& Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

American Federation of Teachers
(AFT)

National Education Association (NEA)

Service Employees International
Union (SEIU)

American Federation of Labor & Congress
of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

Communications Workers of
America (CWA)