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Clínica de Asistencia Legal

July 6, 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

RE: Endorsement of Judge Gina R. Méndez-Miró to the U.S. District Court

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

For the past four decades, I have been a professor of Ethics and Professional Responsibility at the University of Puerto Rico School of Law. I write to support the confirmation of Judge Gina R. Méndez-Miró to the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico. I am convinced that she possesses the character, intellect, and professional experience to excel at the federal bench.

I have known Judge Méndez-Miró personally and professionally for nearly twenty years. We met while I was Professor of Ethics at the University of Puerto Rico School of Law, and she was my distinguished student and one of the very best. From her earliest days, she stood out among her peers for her analytical skills, wisdom and eloquence during her keen class interventions. I came to know her as an intelligent, honest person with strength of character and remarkable empathy. I never thought of her becoming a big law firm attorney, but I know first-hand that she began her legal career at one of Puerto Rico's most prominent law firms where she excelled at the Labor and Employment Department and was highly regarded by her fellow attorneys.

I am aware that an attorney with her professional qualifications could seek a myriad of prestigious, lucrative legal positions. However, she chose to devote her talents to public

service, serving in all three branches of our local government: the Department of Justice, the Senate, and the Office of Courts Administration of the Puerto Rico Judicial Branch. The importance of this professional choice cannot be overstated.

Later in her professional life, I came across her work as General Counsel and Director of the Legal Affairs Office of the Office of Courts Administration, where she supervised and directly handled disciplinary proceedings filed against judges. While I advocated for my clients on the opposite end, I often disagreed with Judge Méndez-Miró but always found a respectful, honest, judicious, and receptive adversary.

These experiences, along with her distinguished nearly six year-long tenure as a judge at the Puerto Rico Court of Appeals, evidences her belief in a legal system that facilitates the rule of law through a judiciary that is built on the foundation of public faith. From my perspective as a law professor and practitioner, I can attest that Judge Méndez-Miró's reputation on the bench is impeccable. She has shown to be an impartial and independent adjudicator who deeply understands her role as intermediate level judge showing deference to the trial court when applicable and always respecting precedent. Her record of over seven hundred fifty decisions displays her exceptional grasp of both the substantive and procedural issues brought before her as well as an ability to write clearly and succinctly. Moreover, she has rarely been reversed in her decisions by the Supreme Court, a testament to the legal rigor of a decision-making process characterized by the adherence to the record, and fidelity to the Rule of Law and the Constitution.

For the past four decades I have been educating the next generation of lawyers, many of them who have gone on to serve in our courts, our legislature and in other roles in our justice system. I can attest that Judge Méndez-Miró is the same humble, intelligent, and empathetic person I met years ago as an eager and able student. After all those years, she has grown to become a remarkable jurist and first-rate judge, who still holds the passion for the law that I saw over twenty years ago when she was my very excellent student. This really makes me feel very proud of her and do not have the slightest doubt that she will become an excellent federal judge.

I respectfully urge the United States Senate to confirm her, as she will bring to the District Court the same intelligence, fairness, decency, generosity, humility, and hard work she has demonstrated as a sitting judge at the Puerto Rico Court of Appeals.

Cordially,



Guillermo Figueroa-Prieto
Professor of Law