

July 1st, 2022

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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: LETTER IN SUPPORT OF JUDICIAL APPOINTMENT FOR CAMILLE VELEZ RIVE, UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE, AS DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO

Esteemed Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I am President of the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA), Region XIX, which covers Puerto Rico, immediate past president of the Federal Bar Association's Puerto Rico Chapter, and a Fellow of the Foundation of the Federal Bar Association. All nonprofit, nonpartisan, and leading advocacy organizations on matters involving the legal profession.

I decisively support the honorable United States Magistrate Judge Camille Velez Rivé to fill one of the three existing judicial vacancies in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico. Judge Velez-Rivé has the credentials, reputation, integrity, experience, and natural temperament to become a successful U.S. District Court Judge.

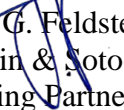
I have known Judge Velez-Rivé for twelve years, from my federal litigation practice and multiple roles in numerous legal organizations. Judge Velez-Rivé is the embodiment of a faithful public servant. I have litigated before her many times, and I was always in awe of how she manages her courtroom. She is brilliant and shows a natural civil and criminal law dominance. Aside from her keen legal acumen, Judge Velez-Rivé is a skillful mediator. I distinctly remember a case¹ I worked on in which the parties consented to have Judge Velez-Rivé preside over it. After months of a highly contested and litigated discovery process that resulted in a granting of Summary Judgment, the parties, guided by Judge Velez-Rivé, reached a settlement agreement. I've had the pleasure of litigating before Judge Velez-Rivé in six other civil cases, and my respect for her grew exponentially with each one.

¹ Crespo-Muniz et al v. Rodriguez-Lopez et al (Puerto Rico District Case No. 13-1870 (PAD-CVR))

I would later reunite with the Hon. Judge Velez-Rivé during my years as Supervisory Attorney-Adviser for the Federal Bureau of Prison's Metropolitan Detention Center in Puerto Rico. This time, I got to see another side of her. Her handling of criminal procedures comes second nature, and her experience as an Assistant U.S. Attorney has never been a cause of bias in her management of cases. On the contrary, I saw a genuinely just woman who, in imparting justice, could easily separate the person from the crime. But perhaps what speaks to the character of Judge Velez-Rivé is the support I got from her when the enormous task of maintaining the steady judicial operation of the Federal Criminal System in Puerto Rico was bestowed upon me. For over 13 months, I carried that responsibility, and I sometimes felt like it was too much. Judge Velez-Rivé helped me ease the burden by coordinating logistics with the rest of the Magistrate Judges. She would also check up on me to see how I was doing. But hey, what could you expect from a hard-working, single mother that managed to shatter many ceilings while helping her child overcome a severe illness. Judge Velez-Rivé is the perfect example of a hard-working, proud, progressive, Puerto Rican woman. She is also a role model and measure of what hard work and dedication will get you.

You see, Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley, that is the type of person that Judge Velez-Rivé is. A hard-working, seasoned Magistrate Judge. She could assume her role as an Article III Judge as soon as she gets appointed. She does not need a learning curve. She is wildly respected among her peers in the District Court and the Puerto Rico State and Federal Bar. She is clearly what our District needs. She has paid her dues as a civil servant with hard work and dedication to Federal Justice. It is her time, and Judge Velez-Rivé is the right woman for the job.

Respectfully submitted,



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Immediate Past President, Federal Bar Association Puerto Rico Chapter
Fellow, Foundation of the Federal Bar