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The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chair, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-1304

**Re: Support for confirmation of Judge Gina R. Méndez-Miró
as US District Court Judge for the District of Puerto Rico**

Dear Hon. Senator Durbin:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write to recommend the confirmation of Gina R. Méndez-Miró for a judgeship at the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico. Her legal career on and off the bench is a testament to her credentials and to her commitment to equal justice for all.

I met Judge Méndez-Miró while she was serving as Chief of Staff for the Puerto Rico Senate and I was Secretary of Treasury and Chief Public Finance Officer for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and later, when I went to serve as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Government Development Bank for Puerto Rico (GDB). Gina was an essential liaison between the Executive and the Legislative Branch amid the process of approval of neuralgic legislation necessary to address Puerto Rico's fiscal crisis, a process that ultimately finalized with the approval of the federal legislation known as PROMESA, that provided Puerto Rico with a bankruptcy regime that allowed the Island to restructure its debt, giving Puerto Rico a chance to grow its economy and provide opportunities for all Puerto Ricans. Gina was pivotal in all those contentious meetings and discussions. After witnessing her skills, I approached and asked her to become part of my team at the GDB, for I knew her legal mind and abilities could be an asset in the task of implementing important policies. One of the qualities I remember –and value-- the most from that experience was knowing where she stood, as she was always forthcoming and honest. She will never mislead you and you will know her reasoning for adopting a course of action, even if you disagree with the position she is conveying. I noted that Gina's presence was particularly valuable on contentious settings given her ability to listen and mediate. I imagine such strengths are equally

valued today as a member of a collegiate court and would be critical for future endeavors in other decision-making settings.

Based on my experience and first-hand knowledge of Gina's strengths and capabilities while she worked at the Senate, I know that she is remarkably qualified to occupy any position she desires. Yet, upon the opportunity to work at the firm where I serve —the largest in Puerto Rico— or anywhere in the private sector, she has consistently chosen to stay in public service. Having made those choices myself, and knowing the sacrifice and compromise it entails, I believe that she is guided by a true commitment to service and justice.

Furthermore, I can attest to the value she would add to the federal judiciary, both personally and from a legal standpoint. As Counsel at the Corporate Practice Group at McConnell Valdés, navigating corporate and tax law, as well as managing commercial financing mergers and acquisitions, among others, I consistently interact with members of the Bar. I know from discussions with a variety of lawyers that Judge Méndez-Miró has a reputation of fairness and treating lawyers and all parties with respect. More fundamental, that she bases her judicial decisions, unequivocally, on the law and the facts. The general assessment of her judicial work is that she is a hardworking, smart, and balanced judge. She is described as a relentless seeker of fact and due process, open to new arguments, but driven by precedents and the law. Notably, the percentage of Gina's cases upheld by the current Supreme Court is quite remarkable. This can only be done if the law is applied fairly and accurately.

Finally, after my professional experience with her and following her judicial career, I have gotten to know her as a person. Her empathy, backbone and integrity have no match. In addition, she can convey a sophisticated legal argument and speak eloquently to anyone at the highest level of government or an Ivy League scholar and, at the same time, write clearly and respectfully, so that an indigent inmate can understand her reasoning and decision, address a homeless person with empathy or come to the aid of an abandoned dog, which is a pervasive issue in Puerto Rico. In addition to showing her passion for the law and true justice, as a member of the Board of Directors of the Puerto Rico Museum of Art I have witnessed, through my many interactions with her, her love for art and literature, and how she seemingly integrates culture in her work and life.

In addition to her professional experience, her skills and firm but fair character, Gina will embody President Biden's mandate to strengthen the Federal workforce by promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Citing his Executive Order on Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce of June 25, 2021¹:

¹ [Executive Order on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce | The White House](#)

As the Nation's largest employer, the Federal Government must be a model for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, where all employees are treated with dignity and respect. Accordingly, the Federal Government must strengthen its ability to recruit, hire, develop, promote, and retain our Nation's talent and remove barriers to equal opportunity. It must also provide resources and opportunities to strengthen and advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility across the Federal Government. The Federal Government should have a workforce that reflects the diversity of the American people. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible workplaces yield higher-performing organizations.

Gina will make the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico a more diverse, equitable and accessible court, representing all members of our society.

I hope my respect for Gina in her professional and personal capacity comes across in this letter. I would be proud to see her appointment to the Puerto Rico District Court. She brings an experience level that few other candidates can rival as well as personal experiences to diversify that court. Judge Méndez-Miró is, in my opinion, uniquely qualified to serve on the federal judiciary. Her distinguished resume as a practitioner and judge establishes her diverse competency.

I submit to you that she would make an excellent District Court Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

Sincerely,



Melba Acosta Febo