

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
FOR BENTON AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES**

7122 W. Okanogan Place, Building A, Kennewick, WA 99336

SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE
Norma Rodriguez

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May 4, 2022

VIA E-MAIL & U.S. MAIL

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
Senate Judiciary Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for Federal Judicial Nominee 9th Circuit.

Re: Judge Salvador Mendoza Jr.

It is with great honor and pleasure that I support the nomination of Judge Salvador Mendoza Jr. to the 9th Circuit Court. I currently sit as a Superior Court Judge in Benton and Franklin Counties. I started practicing in Eastern Washington in 1993. I ran a very successful law firm in which we had an emphasis in criminal law, personal injury and medical malpractice. I litigated many high-profile cases, including homicides and civil rights actions. It was in my practice as an attorney that I had the pleasure of working directly with Judge Mendoza as co-counsel.

I first met Judge Mendoza when he was a deputy prosecuting attorney for Franklin County. I personally did not have cases with Judge Mendoza in that capacity. Once he left the prosecutor's office to become a defense attorney I became more acquainted with him personally and professionally. We were able to work a few homicides together in which I witnessed his professionalism. Judge Mendoza possessed top notch advocacy skills. I found him to be thorough, well prepared, organized, articulate and very well versed in the law. His analytical skills have served him well in interpreting and applying the law to the issue at hand. He had a contract with the public defender office which gained him notoriety among the community as one of the top attorneys in our area. Judge Mendoza also handled civil matters while in private practice where he continued to demonstrate his ability to be very knowledgeable in various aspects of law.

Aside from the legal practice Judge Mendoza was involved on the Board of Benton Franklin Legal Aid for several years receiving recognition for his extraordinary service and willingness to take on many pro bono matters. He participated and coordinated the local YMCA Youth and Justice Forum, a program geared towards middle schoolers and high schoolers interested in careers in the legal field. Judge Mendoza also assisted in free legal aid clinics put on by the Latino Bar Association. He was also one of the founding members of our local Juvenile Drug Court Program. Early in his career he was recognized as a Young Super Lawyer.

Judge Mendoza has always found time to be a family man despite his heavy work schedule. He is always at his children's activities and events supporting their endeavors. He is held in the highest regard for his reputation in both the legal and public community.

For all the forementioned reasons, he was appointed as a Superior Court Judge by the Governor. He served in that capacity enough time to earn the reputation as a just, fair and reasonable judge among his former colleagues. He carefully listened to the arguments of counsel and always treated all parties with the utmost respect. He was compassionate while on the bench, yet stern when he needed to be. All parties could leave his courtroom knowing that they had been treated fairly and equally.

I did not have the opportunity to be before Judge Mendoza in Federal court due to our personal relationship, as he is my daughter's Godfather. I feel comfortable in sharing that the commentary from my former colleagues has always been positive. Judge Mendoza possesses the demeanor, temperament and the highest ethical standards necessary for this position. He is loyal and dedicated to the United States of America and the laws of this nation. Our community has been very well served and very fortunate to have had Judge Mendoza preside as both a Superior Court Judge and a U.S. District Court Judge. There is no question that Judge Mendoza is exceptionally well qualified for this nomination.

I am writing this letter in the interest of promoting the fair and effective administration of justice and not for the purpose of lending the prestige of my office to the advancement of anyone's personal interests. This letter reflects only my personal views and is not intended to represent the views of any other members of the court.

Kind regards,



Norma Rodriguez

Judge