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VIA EMAIL AND 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 Salvador Mendoza, Jr.

Dear Senators Durbin and Grassley:

I write in my personal capacity in support of the Honorable Sal Mendoza for a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. I am a retired attorney having practiced actively for 36 years in Spokane, WA. I retired in late 2016 in the position of First Assistant United States Attorney for the U. S. Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of Washington, the District where Judge Mendoza currently serves as a District Judge.

Although I had heard of Judge Mendoza prior to his appointment to the federal bench, my first opportunity to meet him came at a continuing legal education program I attended sponsored by the local bar association in Spokane. It may have been within a year of his confirmation as a District Judge. I remember this event because I was captivated by his presentation. It covered jury pools and jury selection. Unlike previous speakers I had heard over the years on this subject, Judge Mendoza examined the


issue with a genuineness and seriousness that I had not witnessed before. I don't recall whether he was a particularly elegant speaker. It wasn't how he spoke, it was what he said. It was obvious he cared deeply about the subject and he had spent significant time in his preparation. He spoke about the importance of a jury "looking like" the community where the trial is held. I distinctly recall thinking "now here is a judge that has just shown me that he truly cares about equal justice and wants to work to accomplish that goal". I had instant respect and admiration for him.

Judge Mendoza took the bench just over two before I retired in late 2016 and I did not have the opportunity to practice before him. However, in my role as Civil Chief and then later, FAUSA, I had opportunities to discuss judges, their decisions, their courtroom demeanor, etc., with a number of my office colleagues. I recall words and phrases such as respectful, good temperament, calm and methodical. He was seen as a hard worker and eager to become proficient in those areas of law that were new to him. He listened carefully and let the litigants in his courtroom know that he understood their case was important.

For my entire career, and now in retirement, I have been involved in Washington state's Equal Justice Coalition. The coalition and its supporters educate policymakers and the public about the vital importance of civil legal aid. It also advocates for sufficient federal, state and local funding for a network of civil justice organizations serving low-income people. But the phrase "equal justice" goes beyond funding for civil legal aid for poor. It also means a fair legal system for all.

I care deeply about equal justice. I am convinced that Judge Salvador Mendoza, Jr. does as well. He will bring this belief and his determination to provide equal justice to all litigants to the bench of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Sincerely yours,



Pamela J. DeRusha