

May 6, 2022

Chair Dick Durbin
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Ranking Member Chuck Grassley
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley,

It is with joy and pride that I support the nomination of Judge Salvador Mendoza, Jr. for the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. I am currently an Associate Vice President for College Access at the University of Washington-Seattle. I write in my personal capacity as a long-time friend and former colleague of Judge Mendoza.

Although my parents and Judge Mendoza's parents knew each other when they were farm workers/laborers in the lower Yakima Valley, I re-connected as an adult with Judge Mendoza when he was an undergraduate student, and I was a second-year law student at the University of Washington in the early 1990's. After I graduated law school, I stayed connected with Judge Mendoza and was delighted to learn he would attend law school at UCLA. I recruited Judge Mendoza to intern with the Regional Office of the Washington Attorney General in Yakima. I served as an Assistant Attorney General in Yakima when Judge Mendoza interned the summer of 1996. After a successful internship, I encouraged Judge Mendoza to start his legal career with the Attorney General's office after he graduated law school.

While our careers took us on different paths, Judge Mendoza and I stayed connected. We often connected about community service and education. Judge Mendoza has been a longtime volunteer and supporter of the Tri-Cities Law & Justice Forum. Judge Mendoza, then lawyer in private practice, helped garner support for the forum among lawyers, school districts and community partners. I often referred youth to Judge Mendoza (when he was in private practice) for a consultation if they needed legal counsel. I always received positive feedback about Judge Mendoza's professional demeanor and helpful assistance with their matter. Over the years I have called on Judge Mendoza to speak to groups of students about growing up in Prosser, Washington, and his dream of becoming a lawyer. I have invited the Judge to speak to first generation and low-income students and their parents from the Tri-Cities who are considering attending the University of Washington in Seattle. It is wonderful to see the students' eyes light up and smile hearing Judge Mendoza speak to them and their parents.

Judge Mendoza exemplifies that the American Dream is alive today. Judge Mendoza came from humble beginnings. His parents were farm laborers picking cherries and apples in the Yakima Valley and they did not speak English as their first language. However, Judge Mendoza's parents instilled in their children a

strong work ethic and deep faith and hope for a better tomorrow. Judge Mendoza's parents, even though they had a limited education in Mexico, ensured their children attended public schools. Judge Mendoza worked hard, pursued big dreams, and dedicated his career to public service. He is an example of what is still possible in the United States of America.

Over the 30 years I have known Judge Mendoza, I know him to have integrity and deep love and commitment for his family, the greater community, and the law. I am deeply proud of Judge Mendoza and strongly urge your support of his nomination.

Sincerely,

Patricia Loera

Patricia Loera
Associate Vice President, College Access
University of Washington Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity