



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
District of New Mexico

Santiago E. Campos Courthouse
106 South Federal Place, Second Floor
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

October 28, 2021

MARTHA VÁZQUEZ
District Judge

Office: (505) 988-6330
Fax: (505) 988-6332
E-mail: martha_vazquez@nmd.uscourts.gov

The Honorable Dick Durbin, Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley, Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C 20510

c/o Simon H. Boyce, Legislative Counsel
via email: Simon_Boyce@Heinrich.Senate.gov

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley:

I write in support of David Urías's nomination for Federal District Judge for the District of New Mexico.

Mr. Urías came to meet with me once he began the process of applying for the judgeship that will be vacant once I take senior status. After 28 years as an active federal judge, I am quite invested in this District, and it is crucial to me that my successor be someone who will bring to this position the temperament, experience, and scholarship that it warrants. I was extremely impressed with Mr. Urías and much enjoyed learning about his personal history and the career path that has led to his nomination. I feel quite confident passing the torch to him.

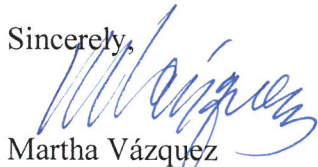
Based on my discussions with Mr. Urías, I have no doubt that his legal experience has well prepared him for handling the civil workload that makes up a significant portion of this District's docket. Of particular note, Mr. Urías has toiled in the field of civil rights, a specialized area of law that, on the one hand, requires intensive hours and a strongly developed expertise, but on the other hand, is not compensated on an hourly basis, as is the majority of corporate defense work. As a result, it is admirable, and rare, for lawyers to take on the risk and financial burden of protracted civil rights litigation against what are, typically, more well-funded entities. Historically, the most profound societal changes have come about as a result of such civil rights

litigation, where people of limited means are given a voice in federal court. For this reason, the importance of Mr. Urías's choice to work as a civil rights lawyer cannot be understated.

I was also quite impressed to learn that Mr. Urías worked at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund ("MALDEF"), a prestigious, non-profit civil rights organization. As an attorney at MALDEF, Mr. Urías not only gained tremendous litigation experience, which will prove invaluable to his role as a trial judge in this busy District, but also gained insight and perspective into the plight of individuals who often lack the economic, social, and educational resources to effectively advocate for themselves. Based on that experience, Mr. Urías will come to the Bench with compassion and understanding for the too-often impoverished and disadvantaged individuals who appear before us as defendants and victims in our criminal cases. Perhaps most importantly, I strongly believe that Mr. Urías will see the individuals in his courtroom as people aggrieved, not numbers to be processed.

In short, the President has nominated a most capable, competent, and caring lawyer. The people of our District will be well-served for many years to come.

Sincerely,



Martha Vázquez
United States District Judge