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May 5, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

Re: Salvador Mendoza, Jr. – Judicial Nominee, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

Dear Senators Durbin and Grassley:

President Biden pledged to nominate federal judges with diverse legal experiences who uphold the rule of law, understand civil liberties, and respect precedent. Judge Salvador Mendoza's nomination to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit helps fulfill that pledge. As the Federal Defender for the Eastern District of Washington and Idaho, I have known Judge Mendoza for over a decade—beginning when he was defending the rights of the most vulnerable among us as a Criminal Justice Act attorney, and continuing as he faithfully follows the law as an Article III judge for the Eastern District of Washington. I support his nomination to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit for several reasons:

First, Judge Mendoza is a thoughtful jurist. Most federal criminal cases result in guilty pleas, which means he presides over many sentencings. To prepare for those sentencings, he reads every filing and listens to every witness—without exception. At these sentencings, he asks

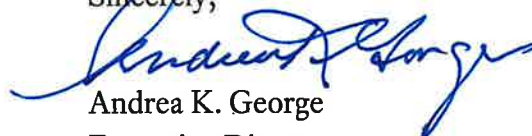
thoughtful questions, makes complicated guideline determinations with ease, and ensures his decisions are based on all the information before him. Although there are times I disagree with his decisions, I respect—and understand—how he reaches them. Judge Mendoza also ensures every party feels heard, making a point to engage with the parties, not simply talk at them.

Second, Judge Mendoza is an even-tempered jurist. There are many times emotions run high in criminal cases, but Judge Mendoza always treats jurors, lawyers, witnesses, and the accused with respect and dignity—without exception. I watched him preside over two emotionally-charged trials laden with complex issues: *United States v. Hendrikson*, 2:14-cr-00124-SMJ (a multi-defendant, murder-for-hire); and *United States v. Cloud*, 1:19-cr-02032-SMJ (a quintuple homicide, carjacking and kidnapping). Throughout both cases, Judge Mendoza remained a pillar of professionalism, never allowing the emotion from these cases to seep through and impact the jury.

Third, Judge Mendoza brings diversity to the bench. It is well known he would be the first Latino from Washington to serve on the Ninth Circuit, and that he grew up in a family of migrant farmworkers. This background carries great meaning to a district with a large Spanish-speaking community, especially to those appearing before him. His lived experiences perfectly capture the diverse cloth this country is made from.

Rest assured, Judge Mendoza will be a remarkable addition to the Ninth Circuit for years to come.

Sincerely,



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