

MICHAEL M. HONDA

17TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

WASHINGTON OFFICE:

1713 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

PHONE: (202) 225-2631

FAX: (202) 225-2699

<http://www.honda.house.gov>

DISTRICT OFFICE:

2001 GATEWAY PLACE

SUITE 670W

SAN JOSE, CA 95110

PHONE: (408) 436-2720

(855) 680-3759

FAX: (408) 436-2721



Congress of the United States House of Representatives

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LGBT EQUALITY CAUCUS,
VICE CHAIR

February 14, 2014

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Grassley,

As the U.S. Representative for California's 17th congressional district, and Chair Emeritus of the Congressional Asian Pacific Caucus, I write to express my full support for the nomination of Leon Rodriguez to serve as the Director for U.S. Citizenship and Immigrations Services for the Department of Homeland Security. Mr. Rodriguez is a preeminent attorney with a wealth of leadership experience, equipping him with the managerial know-how, professionalism, and expertise needed to lead this agency.

Mr. Rodriguez's legal career reflects a lifelong commitment to public service and law enforcement. His first job out of law school was as an Assistant District Attorney in Brooklyn for six years. He was assigned to the Organized Crime Bureau and the Sex Crimes/Special Victims Bureau. Mr. Rodriguez later served as Assistant U.S. Attorney in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania assigned to the prosecution of health care fraud cases. As County Attorney for Montgomery County, he led a staff of 45 attorneys in providing legal advice and service to all county agencies. Moreover, during his tenure as County Attorney, his agency received the highest customer service rating of any internal county agency.

Mr. Rodriguez has also tirelessly worked to advance civil rights. While working as a trial attorney at the Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division at the U.S. Department of Justice, he helped shape critical U.S. efforts in combating human trafficking after winning *U.S. v.*

Miguel Flores, et al, a case involving the enslavement of Mexican and Guatemalan migrant agricultural workers in Florida and South Carolina. Mr. Rodriguez went on to serve as the Chief of Staff and Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. His leadership portfolio included discrimination based on national origin and immigration status, legislative affairs, and community outreach.

Currently, Mr. Rodriguez serves as the Director of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights. Under the leadership of Mr. Rodriguez, the HHS Office for Civil Rights has emerged as a proactive enforcement and compliance agency that emphasizes positive public impact and customer service. I have been particularly impressed with Mr. Rodriguez' work as Director in pioneering the Critical Access Hospital language access review, an affirmative model for ensuring that institutional health care providers are taking reasonable steps to ensure effective communication with patients who do not speak English well. His tenure has overseen the successful completion of compliance with civil rights laws that require such reasonable steps in order to ensure adequate communication with limited English proficient patients.

I believe that Mr. Rodriguez's breadth of experience with law enforcement and public service has prepared him to lead an agency. His record of leadership, and success, as well as his intellect, and integrity make him highly qualified to be the next Director for U.S. Citizenship and Immigrations Services for the Department of Homeland Security. I strongly support President Obama's nomination of Leon Rodriguez and encourage our colleagues in the Senate to confirm him for this position without delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael M. Honda". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" being the most prominent part.

Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress