



HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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December 16, 2011

Via First Class Mail

The Honorable Vincent Gray
Government of the District of Columbia
The John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 316
Washington, D.C. 20004

Re: Mayoral Order 2011-174

Dear Mayor Gray:

On behalf of the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia (“HBA-DC”), we write to commend you for issuing the recent Mayoral Order 2011-174, setting forth policies and procedures to govern the disclosure of the immigration status of individuals.

As you well know, the District of Columbia was one of the first jurisdictions in the country to question the Secure Communities program, the latest effort by the federal government to enlist states and local jurisdictions in immigration enforcement. Despite immigration being a responsibility of the federal government, Secure Communities went on to embroil participating states in a number of problems related to its implementation, including heightened risks of racially motivated arrests and threats to local community policing models as immigrants began to refrain from reporting certain crimes. Indeed, the program amounts to an unfunded mandate, as states were expected to use their resources for this essentially federal task.

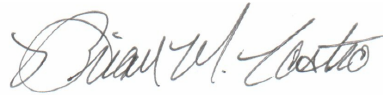
Mayoral Order 2011-174 addresses these issues by ensuring that any government agency concerned with detaining individuals handle immigration-related information only when there is a true criminal nexus. We appreciate the Order’s clear delineation of federal and local responsibilities by specifying that federal administrative warrants shall not be the sole reason for deploying our limited local law enforcement resources.

The HBA-DC exists in part to promote equal justice and opportunity for all Hispanics. We are a non-profit organization established in the District of Columbia in 1977 and our membership includes several hundred lawyers practicing in Washington, D.C., Maryland and

Virginia, Latino students attending local law schools, and other non-lawyers who join as associate members.

We thank you for your leadership and commitment to justice and fairness in promulgating this Mayoral Order.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian M. Castro".

Brian Castro, Chairperson
Legislative & Policy Issues Committee

cc: Roxana Olivas, Director, Office on Latino Affairs