



# HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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Via Email ([dc.cjdt@dc.gov](mailto:dc.cjdt@dc.gov))

Hon. Gladys Kessler

Chairperson

District of Columbia Commission on Judicial Disabilities and Tenure

Building A, Room 246

515 Fifth Street, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20001

**Re: Reappointment of Judge Hiram E. Puig-Lugo**

Dear Judge Kessler:

On behalf of the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia (“HBA-DC”), we express our strong and enthusiastic support for the reappointment of the Honorable Hiram E. Puig-Lugo. Judge Puig-Lugo has been declared a candidate for reappointment as Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia upon the expiration of his term on June 6, 2014.

In determining whether to endorse or support a judicial candidate, HBA-DC undertakes a careful review of the candidate’s professional qualifications, personal traits, and demonstrated commitment to the District of Columbia community and minority communities. Based on our review of Judge Puig-Lugo’s qualifications and fitness during his judicial career, we believe that he is well qualified for reappointment. Judge Puig-Lugo’s legal scholarship, dedication, and demeanor are exceptional and have consistently reflected well on the District of Columbia’s judicial system. His reappointment would ensure his ongoing, significant contributions to the Superior Court.

Serving in his fifteenth year on the Superior Court, Judge Puig-Lugo has gained solid judicial experience. He spent ten years in Family Court, three years in the Criminal Division, and two years in the Domestic Violence Unit.

Judge Puig-Lugo’s comprehensive judicial career contains extensive experience in family law. His service on the Family Court encompasses child abuse and neglect, juvenile delinquency, Persons In Need of Supervision, and domestic relations. Apart from the regular court calendar work involved, Judge Puig-Lugo has excelled by serving on numerous committees to address a host of critical matters, including: (1) Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth in the delinquency and neglect systems; (2) the commercial sexual exploitation of children; (3) implementing the Family Court; (4) selecting the initial group of attorneys to serve on the Family Court Panels; and (5) judicial education and rules. Judge Puig-Lugo also has assumed the role of Presiding Judge of Family Court as of January 2014.

Furthermore, Judge Puig-Lugo's well-rounded judicial experience extends beyond family law matters to include criminal law. During his service in the Criminal Division, he presided over the Accelerated Felony Trial Calendar, handling high-profile cases and serious criminal felony matters, and learning to work with juries. Judge Puig-Lugo also oversaw the calendars in the Domestic Violence Unit, including both criminal and civil matters. Given the variety of matters Judge Puig-Lugo has handled and the exemplary efforts he has made in the improvement of the court's activities, he is well placed for reappointment to another term on the Superior Court.

Beyond his impeccable judicial qualifications, reappointment is appropriate where a candidate has demonstrated devotion to public service. Here, Judge Puig-Lugo excels, having unstintingly dedicated time to public service. His public service includes: (1) Capital City Public Charter School Board of Directors; (2) Office on Violence Against Women Curriculum Advisory Committee; (3) American University Washington College of Law Dean's Diversity Council; and (4) Access to Justice Commission (as a Superior Court representative).

Of particular importance to us, Judge Puig-Lugo has served as Chairperson of the HBA-DC Judicial Council since 2011. Over the years, he has mentored many Latino law students through the HBA-DC mentorship program. In 2011, HBA-DC recognized his contributions to the Latino community and to the legal profession with the Honorable Ricardo M. Urbina Lifetime Achievement Award. Judge Puig-Lugo's longstanding demonstrated public service displays the proper commitment to community that deserves reappointment.

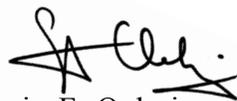
Last but certainly not least, Judge Puig-Lugo not only possesses the requisite judicial qualifications and community service but his efforts on behalf of legal education also provide an additional basis for reappointment. Judge Puig-Lugo is a regular contributor to educational efforts in Washington, D.C. He has made presentations at the Neglect and Delinquency Practice Institute and the Criminal Practice Institute. And he has taught courses in trial advocacy and judging. Judge Puig-Lugo also has provided technical assistance to judges and law enforcement officials in numerous countries, including Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia, Spain, and Micronesia, and has contributed to the State Department's Office of Children's Issues in matters related to the implementation of the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

Based on our review of Judge Puig-Lugo's qualifications as explained above, HBA-DC is pleased to highly recommend the Honorable Hiram E. Puig-Lugo for reappointment as Associate Judge on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,



Fernando Rivero,  
President



Sergio F. Oehninger  
Chair, Endorsements Committee