



HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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June 16, 2014

Via Electronic Mail

Ms. Kim M. Whatley
Executive Director
Judicial Nomination Commission
515 5th Street, NW, Suite 235
Washington, DC 20001
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kim.whatley@dc.gov

Re: Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia – Endorsement of Philip
Christopher Andonian for Associate Judge

Dear Ms. Whatley:

The Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia (HBA-DC) is pleased to support Philip Christopher Andonian for the Associate Judge vacancy in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Based on our research and deliberations, including an interview with Mr. Andonian, we believe that his service as an Associate Judge would be a significant contribution to the Superior Court.

The HBA-DC undertakes a careful review of candidates who seek its endorsement to make certain that individuals with impeccable credentials, as well as proper temperament and character, are promoted to these trusted positions. We ensure that candidates for endorsement meet the letter and spirit of our endorsement policy, which includes such criteria as established professional qualifications, a demonstrated commitment to the Latino and District of Columbia community in general, or to the advancement of other minority communities.

Mr. Andonian has been a litigator for over a decade. He began his career at Nolan, Armstrong & Barton, LLP where he defended several high profile criminal cases. Since 2005, Mr. Andonian served in the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS) as a staff attorney in the Trial (2005-2011) and Appellate (2008-2009) divisions. He tried cases, both bench and jury trials, ranging from misdemeanors to narcotics trafficking to violent felonies. He has extensive experience in contested hearings involving a variety of legal issues. Mr. Andonian also argued two cases before the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, one of which involved a novel issue of first impression. These experiences provide Mr. Andonian with the professional qualifications and competency that can help to effectively oversee the litigation process in a courtroom.

Mr. Andonian serves as an Adjunct Professor in the Trial Advocacy Program at American University's Washington College of Law. He teaches Criminal Trial Advocacy, Evidentiary Foundations and Objections, and Evidence, and has conducted workshops and lectures covering all aspects of litigation. He also has coached several mock trial teams in national competitions. His academic pursuits enhance Mr. Andonian's professional qualifications with the kind of scholarly achievements that are well suited for a trial judge.

Mr. Andonian has also demonstrated a commitment to the District of Columbia and to the rights and advancement of the Hispanic and other historically disadvantaged communities in the Nation's Capital. While at the PDS, he represented juveniles and adults charged with a vast array of crimes, most of whom were persons of color living in poverty. Since 2012, Mr. Andonian has been a board member of Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop, a nonprofit organization that uses books and creative writing to help youth charged and incarcerated as adults. Free Minds follows these young people throughout their movement through the justice system – in jail, in federal prison, and when they return home to their communities in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Andonian now works as counsel at a labor law firm representing employee unions. Mr. Andonian believes that litigating for equality in the workplace is an important way to contribute to unions' historical commitment to advancing the rights of some of our country's most underrepresented residents. By working to support historically disadvantaged communities in the District, Mr. Andonian reflects the temperament and character that will aid a trial judge in treating all diverse litigants fairly and with sensitivity.

For the reasons stated, the HBA-DC endorses Mr. Andonian for the Associate Judge position in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Please let us know if you require further information.

Sincerely,



Fernando Rivero
President
Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia