



# HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

P.O. Box 1011 | Washington, D.C. 20013-1011  
[www.hbadc.org](http://www.hbadc.org)

June 3, 2016

*Via Email and Hand-Delivery*

Katherine L. Garrett  
Executive Director  
DC Judicial Nomination Commission  
515 5th Street NW, Suite 235  
Washington, DC 20001

**Re: Highest Endorsement of the Honorable Hiram Puig-Lugo for the position of Chief Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia**

Dear Ms. Garrett:

The Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia (“HBA-DC”) is pleased to provide its highest endorsement to the Honorable Hiram E. Puig-Lugo to serve as Chief Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Based on Judge Puig-Lugo’s judicial experience, leadership skills, and unparalleled commitment to public service, we believe that he would be a strong, decisive and inclusive Chief Judge who will serve the Superior Court with honor and distinction.

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 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, appropriate judicial temperament, a demonstrated commitment to the Latino community, to the advancement of other minority communities, and to the DC community at large.

Based on our review of Judge Puig-Lugo’s qualifications and fitness during his judicial career, we believe he is the most qualified to hold the position of Chief Judge. Serving in his seventeenth (17<sup>th</sup>) year on the Superior Court, Judge Puig-Lugo has gained solid judicial and leadership experience. Since January 2014, he has served as Presiding Judge of the Family Court. Family Court is not only one of the most difficult divisions to manage, but it also has the largest combined number of full-time Associate and Magistrate Judges. Before assuming the position of Presiding Judge of the Family Court, he served for three years as its Deputy Presiding Judge. He has also spent three years in the Criminal Division and two years in the Domestic Violence Unit. Judge Puig-Lugo’s legal scholarship, dedication, and demeanor are exceptional and have consistently reflected well on the District of Columbia’s judicial system.



# HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

P.O. Box 1011 | Washington, D.C. 20013-1011  
www.hbadc.org

Judge Puig-Lugo's comprehensive judicial career includes extensive experience in family and criminal law. His service on the Family Court encompasses child abuse and neglect, juvenile delinquency, Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS), and domestic relations. In 2015, as recognition of his management skills, Judge Puig-Lugo received an award from the DC Bar Family Law Section for his leadership to the Court and his service to the residents of the District of Columbia

During his service in the Criminal Division, he presided over the Accelerated Felony Trial Calendar, handling high-profile cases and serious criminal felony matters, including jury trials. 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, his experience as an administrator, and the exemplary efforts he has made in the improvement of the Court's activities, he would be a strong and effective Chief Judge.

Apart from the regular court calendar work, Judge Puig-Lugo has excelled by serving on numerous committees and taken on leadership roles to address a host of critical matters, including: (1) starting a Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender (LBGT) Working Group within the Family Court after seeing how the child welfare and juvenile justice systems lacked the resources and the capacity necessary to properly serve LGBT youth; (2) starting a Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Working Group to promote collaboration and improve communication between agencies serving sex trafficking victims in the city; (3) working to update Family Court rules that were outdated and developing rules for Family Court subject matter areas that did not have rules; (4) selecting the initial group of attorneys to serve on the Family Court Panels; and (5) working with juvenile justice stakeholders to improve operations in JM-15, the courtroom where juvenile respondents enter the court system.

Beyond his impeccable judicial qualifications, Judge Puig-Lugo has demonstrated devotion to public service over many years. His public service includes: (1) board member of the Capital City Public Charter School; (2) co-chair of the Juvenile Justice Committee of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; (3) board member of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (where he also chairs its Diversity Committee); (4) Superior Court representative to the DC Access to Justice Commission; (5) member of the DC Bar Pro Bono Center's Strategic Assessment Task Force; and (6) member of the DC Bar Pro Bono Center Pro Bono Committee.

Of particular importance to HBA-DC, Judge Puig-Lugo served as founding Chairperson of the HBA-DC Judicial Council from 2011 to 2015. Over the years, he has mentored countless 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*. In 2014, he received the Judicial Leadership



## HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

P.O. Box 1011 | Washington, D.C. 20013-1011  
[www.hbadc.org](http://www.hbadc.org)

Award from the Hispanic National Bar Foundation. Judge Puig-Lugo's longstanding demonstrated public service displays the proper commitment to community that a Chief Judge ought to possess.

Judge Puig-Lugo's efforts on behalf of legal education provide an additional basis for his appointment as Chief Judge. Judge Puig-Lugo is a regular contributor to educational efforts in Washington, DC. He has made presentations at the Neglect and Delinquency Practice Institute and the Criminal Practice Institute. He has taught courses in trial advocacy and judging. Judge Puig-Lugo 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 U.S. State Department's Office of Children's Issues as one of four United States representatives to the Hague Judicial Network working to implement the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

In sum, Judge Puig-Lugo's admirable record of judicial excellence, leadership skills, and commitment to public service builds precisely the kind of profile that HBA-DC wishes to hold up to the legal profession as an example of the ideal Chief Judge. For these reasons, the HBA-DC is proud and honored to give its highest endorsement to Judge Puig-Lugo to serve as the next Chief Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,

Edgar Class  
President  
Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia

cc:

Honorable Emmet G. Sullivan, Chair  
U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia  
United States Courthouse  
333 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Chambers 4935-Annex  
Washington, DC 20001  
Email: [jnc@dcd.uscourts.gov](mailto:jnc@dcd.uscourts.gov)

Rev. Morris L. Shearin, Sr.  
Israel Baptist Church  
1251 Saratoga Avenue, NE  
Washington, DC 20018  
Email: [Revshearin1jnc@yahoo.com](mailto:Revshearin1jnc@yahoo.com)



# HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

P.O. Box 1011 | Washington, D.C. 20013-1011

[www.hbadc.org](http://www.hbadc.org)

Ronald S. Flagg, Esq.  
Legal Services Corporation  
3333 K Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20007  
Email: [rflagg@lsc.gov](mailto:rflagg@lsc.gov)

Mr. William Lucy  
Vice President, AFL-CIO  
1831 Sudbury Lane, NW  
Washington, DC 20012  
Email: [Williamlucy1@comcast.net](mailto:Williamlucy1@comcast.net)

John J. McAvoy, Esq.  
3110 Brandywine Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
Email: [mcavoylaw@aol.com](mailto:mcavoylaw@aol.com)

María Mendoza  
Co-Chair, Endorsements Committee  
Hispanic Bar Association of the District of  
Columbia  
Email: [g.maria.mendoza@gmail.com](mailto:g.maria.mendoza@gmail.com)

Woody N. Peterson, Esq.  
ZELLE LLP  
1775 Pennsylvania Avenue, Suite 375  
Washington, DC 20006  
Email: [WPeterson@zelle.com](mailto:WPeterson@zelle.com)

Natalie O. Ludaway, Esq.  
Office of the Attorney General  
441 4th Street, NW, Suite 1100 S  
Washington, DC 20001  
Email: [ludawayn@gmail.com](mailto:ludawayn@gmail.com)

Pedro J. Rivera  
Co-Chair, Endorsements Committee  
Hispanic Bar Association of the  
District of Columbia  
Email: [pjrivera66@gmail.com](mailto:pjrivera66@gmail.com)