



HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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January 13, 2021

Via Electronic Mail to dc.jnc@dc.gov

Attention: JNC Executive Director
515 5th Street NW, Suite 235
Washington, DC 20001

**Re: Highest Endorsement of the Honorable Kenia Seoane López for
Associate Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia**

Dear D.C. Judicial Nomination Commission:

The Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia (HBA-DC) is pleased to extend its highest endorsement to the Honorable Magistrate Judge Kenia Seoane López for an Associate Judge position on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia (“Superior Court”). We are confident that based on Judge Seoane Lopez’s distinguished service on the bench, unwavering commitment to the disenfranchised communities and the residents of the District of Columbia, and her professional qualifications honed as a Magistrate Judge on the Superior Court, she would make an outstanding Associate Judge.

The HBA-DC undertakes a careful review of individuals who seek its endorsement in order to make certain that individuals with impeccable credentials, as well as proper temperament and character, are supported for the trusted positions they seek. We ensure that endorsed candidates meet the letter and spirit of our Endorsement Policy, which includes such criteria as established professional qualifications, a demonstrated commitment to the District of Columbia community in general, as well as the rights and advancements of minority communities.

Throughout her service as a Magistrate Judge on the D.C. Superior Court Magistrate Judge Seoane López has exemplified the skills, leadership, integrity, and temperament necessary for a successful transition into a position as an Associate Judge. She has continued her public service activities and commitment to diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and the courts. As a sign of her reputation among her colleagues on the bench, Magistrate Judge Seoane López was appointed to help redraft portions of the Family Court Bench Book.

Magistrate Seoane López’s service to the Superior Court began as a Bilingual Attorney Negotiator in the Domestic Violence Unit of the Court. In that capacity, she developed a

reputation as a fair and neutral arbitrator in administering justice and was appointed to a number of leadership roles within the Superior Court, including selection to the Family Court Rules Advisory Committee. In addition, Judge Seoane López served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Legal Services Section of the Child Support Division in the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia. In this role, she represented the District in child support cases for four years. During that time, she also served as a member of the Superior Court Domestic Violence Task Force. As her record reflects, for over eighteen years, Magistrate Judge Seoane López has been a trailblazing presence in the local legal community.

In particular, HBA-DC saw fit to extend its highest endorsement to Magistrate Judge Seoane López because she is a passionate and tireless advocate for the Washington, D.C. Hispanic community and her commitment to diversity and her impact on the Latino legal community is unparalleled. Currently, she is a Board member of the Spanish Education and Development Center, whose mission is to integrate Spanish speaking and other immigrants into the mainstream of District life, and a Board member of Latinas Leading Tomorrow, a nonprofit organization that promotes positive Latina identity and empowerment through leadership skills to Latinas 11 to 18 years of age.

Indeed, Judge Seoane López was a visionary leader of the HBA-DC for many years, including as a past president of HBA-DC and the current Chair of HBA-DC's Judicial Council. As HBA-DC President, she transformed HBA-DC and started a number of initiatives that now define the organization. A significant change was the creation of the HBA-DC Judicial Council, which has served as a support network and a forum for matters important to Latino members of the Judiciary. She also founded the Judicial Council's Summer Judicial Internship Program. The Program has placed dozens of Latino law students in courtrooms throughout the District of Columbia, including the Superior Court, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, the United States District Court, and the Federal Circuit Court.

Over the years, Magistrate Judge Seoane López has planned many panels on such topics as how to become an associate or magistrate judge and how to apply for the Family Court Panels. She also organized a community forum to inform the public about the new housing conditions calendar in the Superior Court. Judge Seoane López was also involved with the planning committee of the Robert Wone Clerkship Conference, an annual conference that brings judges and judicial clerks from Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, to meet with law students to discuss judicial internships and clerkships. She has also worked in organizing the Superior Court and D.C. Bar Annual Youth Law Fair. These activities and her continuing role as a mentor to countless students and young attorneys reflect her exemplary commitment to both the District of Columbia and to the advancement of minority communities, in part by helping to ensure that judicial diversity in the District reflects the diversity of the community, which in turn leads to greater legitimacy for the role of courts in resolving disputes.

In sum, the HBA-DC is proud and honored to once again extend its highest endorsement in support of Judge Seoane López's application for Associate Judge. She is a judicial officer of the highest caliber with the requisite professional experience and personal qualities to be a successful Associate Judge. If we can be of further assistance in the nomination process, please let us know..

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R.F. Reyna', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ruben F. Reyna
President
Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia