



**COLORADO HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION**  
**1550 Larimer Street, #636**  
**Denver, CO 80202**

November 14, 2008

**Via Hand Delivery**

Mayor John W. Hickenlooper  
City and County Building  
1437 Bannock Street, Room 350  
Denver, CO 80202

***Re: Endorsement of Michael Vallejos for the Denver County Court***

Dear Mayor Hickenlooper:

It is with the full support of the Colorado Hispanic Bar Association (“CHBA”) that I write to endorse Michael Vallejos for the Denver County Court. The CHBA has dedicated itself to serving the public interest by promoting legal reform, facilitating the administration of justice, and advancing the interests of the more than 500 Hispanic attorneys in Colorado. Our due diligence process before endorsing a candidate for the bench involves review of the candidate’s judicial application by members of the CHBA’s Nominations and Endorsements Committee; contacting and interviewing the references identified in the candidate’s judicial application; identifying, and contacting and interviewing CHBA members who know the work of the judicial candidate.

Michael Vallejos would bring important experience to the Denver County Court. As a long-time member of the State Public Defender’s Office, he has devoted most of his career to assisting indigent Denver residents accused of crimes. Our investigation revealed that those who know his work well are universally impressed by his talents. His fellow public defenders extol his level-headed nature, his mastery of trial work, and his commitment to mentoring others. His adversaries in the courtroom, the deputy district attorneys, also give him high praise. The deputy district attorneys whom we interviewed were unequivocal in endorsing Mr. Vallejos for the bench because they consider him to be fair, trustworthy, and extremely skilled. Moreover, these prosecutors have no doubt that, despite his defense background, he will be impartial on the bench and will give equal treatment to all sides of a criminal case.

The Denver district court judges whom we interviewed could not have been more complimentary of Mr. Vallejos. These judges found him to be an excellent trial lawyer, as well as someone who takes seriously his professional obligations as an officer of the court. These judges also believed that he could smoothly transition to adjudicating civil matters. Finally, the judges noted that, as Head of the Denver Office of the Public Defender's System, Mr. Vallejos possesses the administrative experience necessary to run a docket and a courtroom efficiently. In short, those people with whom, against whom, and before whom he practices law support his candidacy for the Denver County court with enthusiasm and without reservation.

The CHBA is impressed by the sterling reputation that Mr. Vallejos has built in the legal community. Furthermore, the CHBA finds it significant that his colleagues view his temperament as ideal for the bench. He possesses a calm, sensible demeanor, and he has demonstrated a commitment to treating all parties respectfully and without improper bias. Especially considering the significant number of Hispanics and other minorities in Denver, the CHBA believe that these qualities are absolutely essential among Denver judges.

Mr. Vallejos's experience, sterling reputation, and his temperament make him well suited for the Denver County Court. The CHBA wholeheartedly endorses his candidacy.

I add a final note about our endorsement process. It is our general policy to endorse only one candidate, at most, for a judicial position. In this case, however, we have made an exception because we believe that two candidates for the Denver County Court are extremely well-qualified and deserve appointment. For the reasons given in a separate letter, the CHBA also endorses Mr. Kerry Hada. The Denver County Court, and indeed Denver itself, are fortunate to have two worthy candidates for this position.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at 303-295-8000. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jose A Ramirez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

José A. Ramirez

President, Colorado Hispanic Bar Association

cc: Kelly Brough  
Michael Vallejos