



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

April 14, 2009

Via e-mail to alan_salazar@markudall.senate.gov

Honorable Mark Udall
C/O Alan Salazar
United States Senator
8601 Turnpike Drive, #206
Westminster, CO 80031

Via e-mail to jonathan_tesky@bennet.senate.gov

Honorable Michael Bennet
C/O Jonathan Tesky
United States Senator
2300 15th Street, Suite 450
Denver, CO 80202

Re: Endorsement of David D. Powell, Jr. for the United States District Court for the District of Colorado

Dear Senators Udall and Bennet:

On behalf of the Colorado Hispanic Bar Association (“CHBA”), I am proud to submit our endorsement of David D. Powell, Jr. for one of the two existing vacancies on the United States District Court for the District of Colorado.

For years, the CHBA has maintained a Nominations and Endorsement Committee (“Committee”) that routinely reviews and endorses judicial candidates. The Committee conducts extensive due diligence that includes interviews of the candidate’s references and consultations with CHBA members who know the candidate and his or her work. Here, Mr. Powell generated excellent recommendations from his references and from those within the CHBA who know and have worked with Mr. Powell, and more importantly, from those whom Mr. Powell has mentored in their careers as diverse attorneys.

Mr. Powell is eminently qualified to become Colorado's next federal jurist for the District of Colorado. He attended UCLA Law School, where he was an active member of the Black American Law Students Association. He also served on the UCLA Law Review and was managing editor of Vol. 30 before graduating in 1983.

Following graduation, Mr. Powell served as a law clerk for the Honorable John L. Kane, Jr. He then joined the Denver District Attorney's Office in 1986. In 1990, Mr. Powell joined the law firm of Holland & Hart where he later became partner. At Holland & Hart, Mr. Powell developed his employment and civil rights litigation practice. In 2002, Mr. Powell left Holland and Hart to work at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck where he became an equity-shareholder one year later. Currently, he serves as chair of the firm's employment practice group.

Our due diligence revealed a unanimous, unqualified opinion among members of the legal community that Mr. Powell is an outstanding choice for the federal bench. He has earned a reputation as a skilled trial attorney with a superior intellect. Mr. Powell is routinely described as someone who has an ideal temperament, is very thoughtful, and knows how to be judicious. While Mr. Powell can be tough when necessary, he has a reputation of being fair and balanced in his approach to his work. His current and former clients speak highly of his trial preparation and ability to work through complex legal issues. One such client described Mr. Powell as "one of the best lawyers she has ever come across." She described Mr. Powell's intellect and ethics as "beyond compare." Mr. Powell has excelled in all aspects of his career. He has a rare combination of experience in both criminal and civil law and has established himself not only as a preeminent employment law attorney in state and federal courts, but also as partner at two prominent Colorado law firms.


The CHBA places great significance on a candidate's public service and advocacy on behalf of the Latino community in Colorado. In this respect, Mr. Powell has garnered a reputation of a person of great integrity and having a strong commitment to diversity and diverse communities. Mr. Powell has reached out to diverse attorneys of all walks of life to promote and increase diversity in the legal profession. As one of his partners explained "David knows how to promote diversity. He has a way of making you understand why diversity is important." Mr. Powell has served as a mentor, role model, and counselor to many young Latino lawyers in the CHBA. He has also worked closely with members of the CHBA on the Pledge to Diversity Committee, particularly with respect to the retention of minorities in the practice of law.

Mr. Powell also currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Alzheimer's Association of Colorado and the Board of Trustees for the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. In 1997, he was selected as the recipient of the Richard Marden Davis Award, given by the law firm of Davis Graham and Stubbs and the Denver Bar Foundation to a deserving attorney under the age of 40 who has balanced excellence in the practice of law with contributions to the community. In 2004, he was selected by the Board of Regents of the University of Colorado to serve as a member of the Independent Investigative Commission charged with investigating the recruiting practices of the CU football team. He also is a past member of the Board of Trustees for the Colorado School of Mines and served as the President of the Sam Cary Bar Association from 1996-1997.

Mr. Powell has published numerous articles in the American Bar Association's Labor and Employment Law newsletter. He has also lectured extensively throughout the United States on the applications of equal employment opportunity law. He is recognized nationally by his peers as one of the leading labor and employment law attorneys in the United States, and he was recently inducted into the International Society of Barristers, an international organization of attorneys and judges selected for their achievements as trial attorneys.

We are confident that Mr. Powell will make an outstanding United States District Court Judge. Based on our due diligence and our personal knowledge of Mr. Powell, we believe that he has the ideal judicial temperament and demeanor for the federal bench. We strongly support his application to serve on the United States District Court for the District of Colorado.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meshach Rhoades". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Meshach Rhoades
President, Colorado Hispanic Bar Association

cc: David Powell