



April 16, 2010

The Honorable Bill Ritter, Jr.  
Governor  
136 State Capitol Building  
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792

***Re: Endorsement of Tijani R. Cole for the Second Judicial District Court***

Dear Governor Ritter:

With the full support of the Colorado Hispanic Bar Association (“CHBA”), I write to endorse Magistrate Tijani R. Cole for the Denver District Court. Magistrate Cole’s background, impeccable reputation, and proven judicial temperament make him well suited for the Denver District Court.

The CHBA dedicates 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. Before endorsing a candidate for the bench, the CHBA’s Nominations and Endorsements Committee conducts due diligence. This typically involves a review of the candidate’s judicial application; interviewing references identified therein; identifying, contacting, and interviewing CHBA members who know the work of the judicial candidate; and, often, conducting a personal interview of the candidate.

The Honorable Tijani R. Cole has established a solid reputation as a fair, efficient, and intelligent magistrate. Magistrate Cole is the type of well-rounded professional that would serve the Denver judiciary well.

The attorneys who practice before and with him universally applaud his command of the courtroom, caseload management, creativity in resolving cases on their individual merits, and balancing competing interests. As the juvenile court magistrate in the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, Magistrate Cole has effectively leveraged his experience as both a public defender and a police officer to handle cases in an unbiased and reasoned manner. Defendants in his court come from a variety of backgrounds, and Magistrate Cole has been observed to treat them all with respect.

Magistrate Cole has a reputation for taking all of his cases seriously. As for his courtroom demeanor, the clear consensus was that “he really cares.” Lacking a court reporter, he is known to take copious notes and has an impressive ability to focus on case details. He is alternately tough and compassionate. For example, he has been known make court uncomfortable for juvenile defendants, where appropriate, to prevent recidivism. He always treats counsel with respect, though he expects counsel to be prepared and is understandably harsh with them when they are not.

Attorneys appearing before him observed that Magistrate Cole's verbal rulings were consistently logical and coherent. He displays an impressive intellect, as evidenced in his prolific publications. He is also known for his ability to keep his very heavy docket efficiently moving, discouraging unnecessary continuances and distant trial dates. Interviewees felt Magistrate Cole would adapt well to a civil docket, noting his extensive and broad education, his dedication to details, and his current civil docket of dependency and neglect cases and truancy matters.

The CHBA highly values community involvement, especially in the Latino community. Magistrate Cole hails from North Denver and graduated from heavily-Hispanic North High School. He dedicates enormous amounts of time working with minority youths. Letters sent to the CHBA extol his ability to distinguish among the interests and needs of differentiated Latino populations. In his role as the principal of Justice High School—which is dedicated to providing college prep education to at-risk students—he has been described as being influential in positively changing the course of students' lives.

One individual who worked with Magistrate Cole for many years said he was the best magistrate ever, and several attorneys lament his potential departure, noting he would be “sorely missed.” For all these reasons, 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 District Court are extremely well-qualified and deserve appointment.<sup>1</sup> For the reasons given in a separate letter, the CHBA also endorses Michael Vallejos for this position. Both Mr. Vallejos and Magistrate Cole have demonstrated professional excellence and a strong commitment to serving the Hispanic community as well as the community at large. The Denver District 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) 892-7411. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Damian J. Arguello  
President, Colorado Hispanic Bar Association

cc: Magistrate Tijani R. Cole

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<sup>1</sup> We note that the third candidate did not request the CHBA's endorsement.