

December 1, 2021



**SUPPORT THE CONFIRMATION OF DAVID URIAS
TO THE U.S. DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO**

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of more than 230 national organizations committed to promoting and protecting the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States, we write to express our strong support for the confirmation of David Urias to the U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico.

Mr. Urias' impressive legal career and extensive civil rights background make him an excellent choice to serve as a federal judge. Since 2008, he has worked in private practice at Freedman Boyd Hollander Goldberg Urias & Ward, P.A., where he currently is firm president. Prior to this, he worked at the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) as a civil rights fellow and a staff attorney. A graduate of the University of New Mexico and the University of New Mexico School of Law, he clerked for Judge Vanessa Ruiz on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. Mr. Urias' vast experience and commitment to civil rights will serve the federal bench well.

Mr. Urias has dedicated much of his career to the pursuit of equal justice, particularly for immigrants and immigrant communities. For example, while at MALDEF, he brought suits challenging policies by police departments that discriminatorily targeted people based on immigration status,¹ which ultimately resulted in changes to the departments' standard operating procedures. Throughout his time in private practice, Mr. Urias has protected the rights of immigrants against discriminatory policies, including barriers to accessing drivers licenses and identification cards and the inhumane separation of families.² Mr. Urias' demonstrated commitment to civil rights and his experience make him an excellent choice to serve on the federal judiciary.

In addition to his impressive career, Mr. Urias' lived experience brings meaningful perspectives to the federal bench. New Mexico is home to a million Latino or Hispanic individuals, nearly 48 percent of the state's population.³ Having judges who reflect the community is important, and the public's trust in the judiciary is strengthened when it better reflects the community it serves.⁴ Diversity on the bench also

¹ See e.g., *Daniel T. v. Bd. of Cnty. Comm. for the Cnty. of Otero, N.M.*, (D.N.M. 2008) (CV 07-1044); *Gonzales v. City of Albuquerque*, No. CV-05-580 (D.N.M. 2008).

² See e.g., *Garcia v. Padilla*, No. CV-2011-02630 (1st Jud. Dist. Ct. of N.M.); *Coss v. Monforte*, No. CV-00-209 (D.N.M. 2018); *S.E.B.M v. United States*, No. 21-cv-00095-JHR-LF (D.N.M.).

³ *Quick Facts*, United States Census Bureau (April 1, 2020).

⁴ Berry, Kate, *Building a Diverse Bench: Selecting Federal Magistrate and Bankruptcy Judges*, Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law and American Bar Association Judicial Division (2017).



makes for better judicial decision-making.⁵ The judiciary needs to reflect both demographic diversity and the experiential diversity of the legal profession, including more judges experienced in ensuring that the civil rights of all people are protected and defended. Mr. Urias would bring this important experience to the federal bench.

Mr. Urias is an excellent choice to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico and we strongly urge the Senate to confirm his nomination. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Lena Zwarenstejn, Senior Director of the Fair Courts Program, at (202) 466-3311. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Wade Henderson
Interim President & CEO

Jesselyn McCurdy
Executive Vice President of Government Affairs

⁵ Sen. Maya, [*Diversity, Qualifications, and Ideology: How Female and Minority Judges Have Changed, or Not Changed, Over Time*](#), 2017 Wis. L. Rev. 367 (2017).