



State of Connecticut
Latino and Puerto Rican
Affairs Commission

18-20 Trinity Street
Hartford, CT 06106
Tel. (860) 240-8330
Fax (860) 240-0315
E-Mail: lprac@cga.ct.gov
Web Site: www.cga.ct.gov/lprac

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July 2, 2010

The Honorable M. Jodi Rell
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Governor Rell:

On behalf of the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission (LPRAC), we are writing to you regarding the need to appoint more Latinos to the judicial bench and the Judicial Selection Commission.

In Connecticut, people reporting to be of Latino ethnicity now comprise the largest ethnic or racial minority group; the Latino population in CT, according to the latest statistics, is at 11.7% growing at a rate 12 times faster than the general population, yet only 5 out of 187 state judges or 2.7% is of Latino descent. Moreover, there is no Latino representation within the Judicial Selection Commission, which is in charge of evaluating and recommending qualified candidates for your consideration. These findings are startling to us considering that 1 in 36 Latino adults is behind bars, based on Justice Department figures released in 2008 by the *Pew Center on the States* report.

Currently, according to the Connecticut Hispanic Bar Association (CHBA), there is only one Latino candidate on a list of almost 140 pre-approved candidates ready for your consideration. We don't believe, even for a minute, that this number is so low because there aren't enough qualified candidates or that there isn't enough interest in our legal field. On the contrary, we know for certain that the CHBA is ready to provide you a list of Latino candidates who are very interested in becoming judges and to serve on the Judicial Selection Commission if given the opportunity. As you may be aware, there is currently one opening in the Judicial Selection Commission and one nomination to be made for the bench. We feel the time is right for you to start to address this long standing concern and send a powerful message to the Latino community that you are doing everything in your control to ensure the state's courts reflect the people they serve, including historically under-represented minorities.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to reach Werner Oyanadel, Acting Executive Director of the LPRAC at (860) 240-8330.

Sincerely,

Isaias Díaz
Isaias T. Díaz, Esq.,
LPRAC Chair

Carlos Candal
Carlos Candal, Esq.,
Chair of the Priorities & Legislation Committee