



PRESIDENT
RAKIM BROOKS

CHAIR
PAULETTE MEYER

September 20, 2022

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee

Dear Chairman Durbin:

On behalf of the Alliance for Justice (AFJ), a national association representing 151 public interest and civil rights organizations, I write to enthusiastically support the confirmation of Araceli Martínez-Olguín to the United States District Court for the Northern District of California.

After graduating from U.C. Berkley School of Law, Ms. Martínez-Olguín began her career clerking for the Honorable David Briones of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas. She was then able to bring the technical and analytical skills gained to the American Civil Liberties Union and Legal Aid at Work, where she litigated complex matters of constitutional rights and regulatory statutes, similar to the types of cases she is very likely to confront in the Northern District of California. She also represented low-income clients in employment, education, and civil rights cases.

In addition to working in non-profits, Ms. Martínez-Olguín brought her civil rights expertise to the federal government, joining the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. While in government, she investigated federally funded education institutions for civil rights violations. Currently, Martínez-Olguín is an attorney at the National Immigration Law Center where she focuses her practice on enforcing federal constitutional and statutory law to protect immigrants' civil and workplace rights.

Ms. Martínez-Olguín's extensive public interest career would bring much needed experiential diversity to the federal appellate court system. She has helped protect the rights of both classes of clients and individual plaintiffs who have faced wrongful discrimination. For example, she was lead counsel in a class action on behalf of Latino workers who brought civil rights claims as a result of a worksite immigration raid in [*Zelaya v. Hammer*](#). She represented a former Abercrombie & Fitch employee in [*U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Abercrombie & Fitch Stores*](#), who was wrongfully fired for refusing to remove her headscarf for religious reasons. Finally, in [*Simmonds v. New York City Department of Corrections*](#), she represented a survivor of gender-based violence who was awarded damages after her employer wrongfully suspended and disciplined her as a result of her assault.

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In recognition of her public service, Ms. Martínez-Olguín has received numerous awards including the U.C. Berkeley School of Law's Social Justice Prize in 2010 and the Minority Bar Coalition's Unity Award in 2017. She has gained expertise in enforcing federal constitution and statutory law for immigrant communities, gaining invaluable understanding of the complexities of the same legal issues she will likely confront if confirmed to this seat.

Given her exemplary legal talent and qualifications, the Senate should expeditiously confirm Araceli Martínez-Olguín to the United States District Court for the Northern District of California. Ms. Martínez-Olguín has spent much of her career ensuring that our laws are applied fairly to all, no matter their background. Her career defending the rights of marginalized communities reflects her fierce dedication to the rule of law and equal justice for all. Her exemplary public interest career, expertise in federal litigation, and lived experience as a Latina American will bring an invaluable perspective to the federal judiciary.

Sincerely,

Rakim H.D. Brooks

Rakim Brooks
President, Alliance for Justice