



*The National Voice of the Hispanic Legal Community.*

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**NEWS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**HNBA AND TWENTY-FIVE PREEMINENT NATIONAL HISPANIC ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS DECRY  
SENATOR SESSIONS' MISCHARACTERIZATION OF LATINOJUSTICE PRLDEF**

**Washington, D.C.** – On Monday, July 6, 2009, the Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) and twenty-five of the preeminent national Hispanic advocacy organizations wrote to Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) expressing their dismay at his mischaracterization of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LatinoJustice PRLDEF), as an extremist organization. Judge Sonia Sotomayor, President Barack H. Obama's nominee to serve as Associate Justice in the Supreme Court of the United States, served as a board member of LatinoJustice PRLDEF from 1980 to 1992. In preparation for Judge Sotomayor's pending confirmation before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, set to begin on Monday, July 13, 2009, Senator Sessions, the ranking member of the Committee, said last week that LatinoJustice PRLDEF has taken "extreme positions" and his office branded the civil rights organization as "activist[s]."

The letter to Senator Sessions, signed by HNBA National President Ramona E. Romero on behalf of the twenty-six leading Hispanic groups, noted that "LatinoJustice PRLDEF is a mainstream and respected civil rights organization that serves not only the Latino community, but the nation as a whole because it advances the basic American principles of equal opportunity and equal access to justice for all in our society."

"The United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce fully supports the confirmation of Judge Sotomayor and we urge the Senate to not delay this confirmation. Her independent outlook, record of excellence, and strong integrity are what our nation needs in a Supreme Court Justice," stated Augustine Martinez, President, USHCC. "She is a role model of strength, focus, and discipline and exemplifies the American ethos, proving that anyone in this nation can fulfill their dreams, matching their potential with opportunity."

LatinoJustice PRLDEF has received support and recognition over the years from distinguished leaders such as Senator Jacob Javits, former U.S. Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, former New York Attorney General Robert Adams, New York County District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, and New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg. In addition, past directors include former New York Governor Hugh Carey, the Honorable Jose Cabranes of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and Herman Badillo, Manhattan Institute Senior Fellow and former Congressman.

**To read the full letter, visit the HNBA website at [www.hnba.com](http://www.hnba.com).**

The Hispanic National Bar Association (HNBA) is an incorporated, not-for-profit, national membership organization that represents the interests of the more than 100,000 attorneys, judges, law professors, legal assistants, and law students of Hispanic descent in the United States, its territories and Puerto Rico. For more information about the HNBA, please visit [www.hnba.com](http://www.hnba.com).

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