



*The National Voice of the Hispanic Legal Community.*

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**HNBA COMMENDS JUSTICE SOUTER FOR HIS SERVICE AND URGES PRESIDENT OBAMA TO  
NOMINATE A HISPANIC AMERICAN TO THE U.S. SUPREME COURT**

Washington, D.C. – As news of his retirement from the United States Supreme Court became public, Ramona E. Romero, the HNBA National President, commended Justice David H. Souter for his service to the American people and U.S. jurisprudence. “For the past 18 years, Justice Souter has served on the highest Court in the land with integrity and distinction, and has made many contributions to our nation,” lauded Ms. Romero.

In thinking about the future composition of the Court, the HNBA calls on President Obama to make history by nominating a talented, experienced and well-prepared Hispanic lawyer to fill the Supreme Court vacancy created by Justice Souter’s planned retirement. “There is an ample pool of qualified Latino lawyers, jurists and legal scholars of exemplary character and integrity who are well-equipped to serve on the High Court with distinction,” said Ms. Romero. Carlos Ortiz, the HNBA Supreme Court Committee Co-Chair added, “it can no longer be asserted in good faith that the pool of Hispanic American candidates is too small or inadequate.” The fact that no person of Latino origin has ever served on the U.S. Supreme Court has long troubled the HNBA because of its potential to undermine trust and confidence in the legitimacy of our legal system among a large and growing segment of the American population. The HNBA is ready to work closely with President Obama to facilitate the appointment and confirmation of the Nation’s first Hispanic Justice to the United States Supreme Court.

There are approximately 45 million Latinos in the United States or fifteen percent of the population. That percentage is expected to grow to about 30 percent by 2050. This significant portion of our nation’s population has been voiceless on our nation’s highest Court. To paraphrase an observation Justice William J. Brennan, Jr. made concerning Justice Thurgood Marshall, the presence of a Latino or Latina at the conference table will add a critically important “special voice” to the Supreme Court’s deliberations and decisions -- a voice that can speak about the law as it affects U.S. Hispanics with the authority that only first-hand knowledge can provide. We believe that greater diversity on the Supreme Court will broaden the perspective of its jurisprudence and also enhance the administration of justice for all Americans.

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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