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NEWS RELEASE

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Senate Confirms New Judge for U.S. District Court for Eastern Washington

SAN FRANCISCO – The United States Senate today confirmed President Obama’s nomination of Judge Salvador Mendoza, Jr., of the Washington Superior Court, to serve as a district judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington. Confirmation came by a vote of 92-4.

Judge Mendoza will fill a vacancy created on November 1, 2013, when District Judge Lonny R. Suko assumed senior status.

Judge Mendoza, 42, has served as a judge of the Washington Superior Court for Benton and Franklin counties since 2013. Prior to his appointment, he had practiced law as a solo practitioner and in various law partnerships since 1999. His practice focused on criminal defense.

A native of Pacoima, California, Judge Mendoza also previously served as a judge pro tempore in various district, municipal, and juvenile courts in Benton and Franklin counties. He was a deputy prosecuting attorney in the Franklin County Prosecutor’s Office, from 1998 to 1999, and an assistant attorney general in the Washington State Office of the Attorney General from 1997 to 1998.

Judge Mendoza served as a lawyer representative to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, from 2010 to 2013, and was chair of the lawyer representatives for the Eastern District of Washington from 2012 to 2013. He was a member of the Training Coordinating Committee of Tri-Cities Criminal Justice Act Attorneys from 2009 to 2013. Judge Mendoza served on the Magistrate Selection Committee for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington in Yakima in 2007.

Judge Mendoza received his B.A. from the University of Washington in 1994 and his J.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law in 1997.

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Judge Mendoza has been an active member of the community, including serving on the boards of directors of the Tri-City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce from 2011 to 2013; United Way of Benton and Franklin counties from 2009 to 2011; and the Benton and Franklin counties' Circle of Hope Foundation for Drug Courts from 2007 to 2013.

Judge Mendoza has been honored with the 2013 Tri-Cities Youth and Justice Forum Award from the Washington State Minority and Justice Commission, the 2013 Leadership Award from Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the 2011 Award for Outstanding Service from Benton Franklin Legal Aid Society, and the 2008 Community Leadership Award from La Voz Newspaper.

The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Washington had 1,236 new case filings in fiscal year 2013. With the addition of Judge Mendoza, the court will be operating with its full complement of four judges.

Appointed under Article III of the Constitution, federal district court judges are nominated by the president, confirmed by the Senate and serve lifetime appointments upon good behavior.

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