



June 4, 2001

School of Law

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
 433 Russell Senate Office Building  
 United States Senate  
 Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Nominations of John G. Roberts and Miguel A. Estrada

Dear Senator Leahy:

I support the nominations of John Roberts and Miguel Estrada to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. I am a lifelong Democrat and have liberal views on most issues. Nonetheless, from working with these gentlemen in the Department of Justice, I am convinced that they would be superb and objective federal judges.

From 1990-1996, I was an Assistant to Solicitors General Kenneth Starr, Drew Days, and (briefly) Acting Solicitor General Walter Dellinger. As a result, I worked in the Solicitor General's Office during most of Messrs. Roberts' and Estrada's tenure there. Indeed, I worked directly under John Roberts on many cases in the office, and I came to know Mr. Estrada well, too. I believe that I am in an excellent position to assess their talents and temperament.

I am sure that you will get plenty of evidence of these men's legal talent, and so I will focus on their temperament. I do so, by the way, as someone who strongly supports women's constitutional right to choose to have an abortion; favors stringent separation of church and state; and recognizes the existence of, and need for, abundant federal power to enforce civil rights. Mr. Roberts and Mr. Estrada will judge each case on its merits. They will approach each case without preconceptions. They will respect the doctrine of stare decisis. They will appreciate the need for the law to be interpreted and applied with compassion and an understanding of the U.S. Constitution as a living document. They will strive with their fellow judges to maintain the integrity of the federal bench. In a word, they will be impeccably judicious.

If I sat down with these men in a room, I suspect that we could find many *political* issues about which they and I disagreed. Still, I will consider it a disgrace if these nominees fail to be confirmed.

Thank you for considering my views

Sincerely,

Richard H. Seamon, Assistant Professor of Law