

## Senate should ratify Miguel Estrada nomination

### *Democrats stalling appointment of first Hispanic to DC Circuit Court*

Miguel Estrada was nearly an adult when he first came to the United States from Honduras. But despite his late start, Mr. Estrada quickly proved he was a man with a destiny that could not be denied.

He went on to earn a J.D. degree *magna cum laude* in 1986 from Harvard Law School, where he was editor of the Harvard Law Review. He clerked for the U.S. Supreme Court and served as U.S. solicitor general and deputy chief of the appellate division for the Manhattan U.S. Attorney's Office. He practiced

constitutional law and argued 15 cases before the Supreme Court.

Now with a nomination from President Bush for a seat on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, Mr. Estrada is being considered by the Senate for the second-highest court in the land. If approved, he would be the country's highest ranking Hispanic jurist and joins a short list of people who would be considered for the U.S. Supreme Court.

His impressive credentials prove he is ready and able to assume a federal judgeship. Yet, Senate Democrats, who should be cheering his accomplishments, have vowed to oppose his appointment.

For Mr. Estrada's sake - and for the aspirations of

immigrants throughout this country who believe the American dream is within their grasp - his opponents cannot be allowed to succeed in blocking this appointment.

His Democratic detractors claim he lacks the necessary experience for the judgeship. But Democrats are placing an unprecedented standard on Mr. Estrada, because five of the eight judges currently serving on the district court had no previous judicial experience. Mr. Estrada has proven that he is a brilliant lawyer, receiving a unanimous "well qualified" rating from the American Bar Association.

Latino organizations including the League of United Latin American Citizens, U.S. Hispanic Cham-

ber of Commerce, National Hispanic Bar Association, Hispanic Business Roundtable, Latino Coalition, and Republican National Hispanic Assembly have spoken out on behalf of Mr. Estrada.

"To deny Latinos, the nation's largest minority, the opportunity to have one of our own serve on this court in our nation's capital is unforgivable," said Robert Deposada, president of The Latino Coalition.

The people of this country - and especially those in the Central Valley, where there are so many success stories like Mr. Estrada's - need to rally to his side and tell Senate Democrats to ratify his appointment.

- By Rep. Devin Nunes

## Accomplishments— continued from page five

Services for People with Disabilities, among others.

### Environment

#### Endangered Species Act

Rep. Nunes, with other members of the California delegation, sent a letter to Secretary of the Interior, Gale Norton expressing their concern with the proposed long-term listing of a supposed distinct population segment of the California Tiger Salamander (CTS) in Sonoma County as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Mr. Nunes said that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's proposed rule is based on inaccurate and incomplete information

regarding the distribution and range of the Sonoma CTS. Mr. Nunes requested that the Fish and Wildlife Service refrain from listing the Sonoma CTS or, at a minimum, allow sufficient time -- at least until June 1, 2003 -- to obtain more accurate, up-to-date and reliable data concerning its true status as required by the ESA.

#### Clean Air Act

Mr. Nunes cosponsored legislation that would amend the Clean Air Act to exempt California from the federal requirement to use oxygenates (ethanol or MTBE) in gasoline. H.R. 244, sponsored by Rep.

Darrell Issa (R-CA)

#### Methamphetamine

Mr. Nunes cosponsored the **CLEAN-UP Meth Act**, which will help clean up farms, parks and forests devastated by toxic waste from meth labs, and help both local governments and private citizens with the costs of this clean-up; Provide assistance to schools and health care clinics that are often our first line of defense in keeping children off meth, and helping those trying to escape its deadly pull.

### Taxes

Mr. Nunes, along with

his colleagues, sent a letter to Speaker Dennis Hastert, concerning the Interagency Committee on Smoking and Health recommendation to raise taxes on cigarettes by \$2 a pack. The percentage of adults who consume tobacco products in the United States is already in decline, and it is questionable whether a draconian tax increase would accelerate that trend.

#### Death Tax

Rep. Nunes cosponsored H.R. 57, **Death Tax Permanency Act of 2003**. This bill permanently repeals the death tax.