

# NEWS RELEASE



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## **Chief Judge Ricardo H. Hinojosa Selected to Receive 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Devitt Award**

**Des Moines, Iowa** – Chief Judge Ricardo H. Hinojosa of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas has been selected as the recipient of the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Edward J. Devitt Distinguished Service to Justice Award.

In announcing the panel's selection, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who chaired the panel stated: "For over twenty-seven years, Chief Judge Ricardo H. Hinojosa has served with highly noteworthy distinction as a dedicated federal jurist and committed public servant. In addition to serving as a member of an impressive list of Judicial Conference committees and advisory groups during his extensive judicial service, Judge Hinojosa was a member and then Chair of the United States Sentencing Commission from 2003 until 2009. He is credited with having stabilized the work of the Commission during the aftermath of the Supreme Court's decision in *United States v. Booker* that declared the Sentencing Guidelines advisory. Judge Hinojosa also shepherded the Commission's work in recommending and implementing measures to reduce the sentencing disparities between crack cocaine and cocaine powder offenses, an issue that had been under consideration by the Commission for many years. Judge Hinojosa has also handled one of the busiest criminal dockets in the nation and devoted himself to a wide variety of community activities."

Judges who have worked with Judge Hinojosa describe him as "tireless, modest, effective, intelligent, patriotic, compassionate, seasoned, [and] knowledgeable," with "common sense, good judgment, the ability to chart a successful path to a long-term goal, and complete dedication to the judiciary as an institution." According to his former colleagues on the Commission, his "chairmanship exemplified the best in government stewardship," earning him "great credibility and trust." In all he has done and does, Judge Hinojosa reflects the values of distinguished service that the recipients of the Devitt Award embody.

President Reagan appointed Judge Hinojosa to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas in 1983, where he has served as Chief Judge since 2009. Judge Hinojosa was born in Rio Grande City, Texas. Before joining the bench, he practiced in his now-hometown of McAllen, Texas. He continues his service to the U.S. Judicial Conference.

Chief Judge Hinojosa was chosen by a three-member panel chaired by Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor of the U.S. Supreme Court. Other members of the panel were Judge Robert A. Katzmann of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and Senior Judge Marvin E. Aspen of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

The Devitt Distinguished Service to Justice Award is named for the late Edward J. Devitt, longtime chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota. The award honors Article III judges whose careers have been exemplary, measured by their significant contributions to the administration of justice, the advancement of the rule of law, and the improvement of society as a whole. It is administered by the American Judicature Society with funding provided by the Dwight D. Opperman Foundation. The award will be presented at a ceremony later this year.

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