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**November 2, 2009
FOR PLANNING PURPOSES**

INTERIM JUDGE RENE RAMIREZ TO BE ADMINISTERED OATH OF OFFICE

What: Rene Ramirez to be qualified and sworn in as Interim Hidalgo County Judge

Where: Hidalgo County Commissioners' Court, 100 E. Cano, 1st Floor, Edinburg, TX 78539

When: 9 a.m.

Rene Ramirez, 40, former Chief of Staff for State Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa and former Edinburg City Councilman, takes over the County Judgeship of the 6th largest county in the state on November 3, 2009.

Known for his easy demeanor and a leadership style that focuses on consensus building, Ramirez has a reputation for working with all types of leaders to get the job done. The job at hand, as he sees it, is to continue the aggressive economic development programs of Hidalgo County Judge J.D. Salinas III, fight for limited transportation and drainage infrastructure dollars, and help the county's residents succeed in increasing overall educational attainment, increasing access to affordable health care and helping to create job growth in the region. Ramirez plans also include working with the Hidalgo County Commissioners and Chief Executive Officer to ensure Hidalgo County maintains a healthy fiscal profile.

A graduate of the University of Texas Pan American with a BA in Economics, Ramirez has long been a behind-the-scenes player in Hidalgo County economic development. As an Edinburg City Councilmember, he helped build public support for tourism, business travel, and eco-tourism projects, including a professional baseball stadium, the Los Lagos Golf Course, and the establishment of a World Birding Center. Ramirez has also served as a Board Member for the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce, the McAllen Medical Board of Governors, the Hidalgo County Housing Authority Board, and the Red Sands Ground Water Conservation District.

As Chief of Staff for State Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa, Rene Ramirez had to put his management skills into overdrive since Hinojosa was named Vice Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Ramirez oversaw the research and staff support that helped the Senator secure critical funding needed to reopen the McAllen Women's Cancer Clinic, and helped increase the budgets for the University of Texas Pan American by \$6.3 million and the Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) by \$6.5 million. Giving new meaning to the term "shovel ready," Hinojosa, with the support of a staff of 10 led by Ramirez, secured over \$170

million in transportation and infrastructure projects throughout Senate District 20 that are key to fueling international trade and a growing Valley economy.

In addition, his work in helping pass HJR 7, an important step in paving the way for a veterans hospital in the Valley, is a reflection of his deep knowledge of the process and what it takes to ensure Hidalgo County receives its fair share of state and federal resources.

Ramirez has a deep concern for the less fortunate in our community. Ramirez helped oversee a legislative agenda that addressed the safety of seniors who were at risk of losing their utilities during the hottest months of the summer, brought attention to the rising cost of college tuition, helped expand children's health insurance, and addressed the disparities in access to health care for border communities.

He and his wife Laura Guerra have two daughters, Gabriela and Mia Carmen, and are active in raising funds for local scholarships.

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