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## **LATINO CAUCUS APPLAUDS SUPREME COURT DECISION TO ADMIT SERGIO GARCIA TO THE STATE BAR**

**SACRAMENTO, CA-** The California Latino Legislative Caucus applauds the State Supreme Court for its unanimous decision today to allow for the admission of Sergio Garcia, an undocumented immigrant who passed the bar exam, to the State Bar of California.

“Today’s unanimous court decision is not only a victory for Sergio Garcia but all individuals pursuing their academic and professional dreams in California,” stated Senator Ricardo Lara (D-Huntington Park/ Long Beach), Chair of the Latino Caucus. “I am thrilled that the court has removed the uncertainty that Mr. Garcia and other DREAMers faced with respect to practicing law in our great state.”

In its opinion, the Court specifically cited the Legislature’s passage of Assembly Bill 1024 by Assembly Member Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego) and co-authored by the Latino Caucus. The bill, which took effect on January 1, 2014, authorized the State Supreme Court to admit as an attorney any applicant who has fulfilled all requirements for a law license notwithstanding their undocumented status. The court stated “The new statute also reflects that the Legislature and the Governor have concluded that the admission of an undocumented immigrant who has met all the qualifications for admission to the State Bar is fully consistent with the state’s public policy, and as this opinion explains, we find no basis to disagree with that conclusion.”

“DREAMers across California who work hard, study hard and pass the Bar exam will now have every right to make a living for themselves as an attorney,” stated Assembly Member Gonzalez. “DREAMers have Sergio Garcia to thank for taking this important matter all the way up to the State Supreme Court.”

Last year the Court heard testimony in the case ***In Re Sergio C. Garcia on Admission*** (S202512), which concerned Mr. Garcia’s petition to obtain a law license in California. Having passed the State Bar examination and fulfilled all other requirements, Mr. Garcia was routinely sworn into the legal profession in 2011. Two weeks later his license was rescinded on the basis that the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act passed by Congress in 1996 prohibits undocumented immigrants

from receiving professional licenses with the use of public funds, unless state law explicitly overrides it. AB 1024 explicitly allowed the State Supreme Court to admit as an attorney any applicant who has fulfilled all requirements for a law license notwithstanding their undocumented status.

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**The California Latino Legislative Caucus** serves as a forum for members of the State Senate and Assembly to identify key issues affecting Latinos and develop avenues to empower the Latino community throughout California. Following in the footsteps of generations of pioneering Latinos who settled and helped build this great state, Latino legislators united in 1973 to maximize their power notwithstanding their limited numbers. Since its creation 40 years ago the Caucus has grown in both numbers and stature. It boasts a rich history of legislative and political success and serves as one of the most influential and strategic organizations in the state.