Office of Communication

and Legislative Affairs CONTACT: Kimberly Smith-Brown

131 M Street NE James Ryan

Washington DC 20507

(202) 663-4191 newsroom@eeoc.gov

(202) 663-4191

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**EEOC GENERAL COUNSEL**

**DAVID LOPEZ TO DEPART AGENCY**

WASHINGTON — David Lopez, general counsel of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) since 2010, announced today that he will depart the agency after 6 ½ years of service in early December.

Lopez was nominated twice by President Obama and confirmed by the Senate in 2010 and 2014. Lopez was the first EEOC field trial attorney to be appointed as the agency's general counsel, the first Latino general counsel, and, after 6 1/2 years, is the longest-serving general counsel in the history of the agency. During his tenure, Lopez has cultivated EEOC as “one national law enforcement agency,” encouraging EEOC's litigators nationwide to work collaboratively and cohesively with each other and other internal partners.

Under Lopez’s leadership, EEOC's litigation program has been extremely successful. Among the notable victories is the $240 million jury verdict -- the Commission's largest award ever -- in [Henry's Turkey Service](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/5-1-13b.cfm), a case brought on behalf of over 30 intellectually disabled men and a $1.5 million sexual harassment and retaliation verdict in Memphis, affirmed by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in [New Breed Logistics](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/4-23-15.cfm).

Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Commission in [EEOC v. Abercrombie & Fitch Stores, Inc.](http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/14pdf/14-86_p86b.pdf), holding that an employer may not refuse to hire an applicant if the employer was motivated by avoiding the need to accommodate a religious practice. In this case, Samantha Elauf was denied hire because she wore a headscarf (hijab), and thus failed to conform to the company’s “look policy.”

Lopez has been a leader in pressing protections for the LGBT community. Under his leadership, EEOC filed and settled its first cases alleging sex discrimination on the basis of transgender status against [Lakeland Eye Clinic](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/4-13-15.cfm) and [Deluxe Financial](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/1-21-16.cfm), and on the basis of sexual orientation against [Scott Medical Health Center and Pallet Companies dba IFCO Systems NA](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/3-1-16.cfm).

Among other achievements, Lopez founded the Commission's Immigrant Worker Team, a group that helped strengthen and coordinate EEOC's enforcement and outreach on employment discrimination issues affecting immigrant and other vulnerable workers. Notable cases that EEOC litigated under Lopez’s leadership that involved immigrant and vulnerable workers include [Vail Run Resort](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/2-12-16.cfm) (over $1 million for Latina workers subjected to egregious sexual harassment and retaliation); [Mesa Systems, Inc.](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/9-30-13a.cfm) ($450,000 for Hispanic workers subjected to derogatory slurs and discrim­inatory application of English-only policy); and [ABM Industries, Inc.](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/9-2-10.cfm) ($5.8 million settlement for Latina janitorial workers subjected to rape, unwelcome groping and explicit sexual comments). Other key cases include: [Boh Brothers](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/9-30-13b.cfm) (plaintiffs can prove same-sex harassment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act with "gender stereotyping" evidence); [Houston Funding](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/5-31-13a.cfm) ("lactation" discrimination violates Title VII as amended by the Pregnancy Discrimination Act); and [BMW](https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/newsroom/release/9-8-15.cfm) ($1.6 million and job opportunities in case alleging criminal background screen unlawfully discriminated against African-Americans).

Lopez has been recognized by various organizations for his work. In 2016, he received the National Religious Freedom Award from the [International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA)](http://www.irla.org/), [Liberty Magazine](http://www.libertymagazine.org/), and [North American Religious Liberty Association (NARLA)](http://religiousliberty.info/religious-liberty-summit-2016) for his advocacy of civil, religious and employment rights throughout his government career. In 2014, the [National Law Journal](http://www.nationallawjournal.com/id=1202648667420/Americas-50-Outstanding-General-Counsel?slreturn=20160501133955) named Lopez one of “America's 50 Outstanding General Counsels,” and the magazine [Diversity and the Bar](http://www.diversityandthebardigital.com/datb/september_october_2014?pg=45%23pg45) recognized him as a “Latino Lumin­ary” for his work as a civil rights attorney and as general counsel. In 2012, he was awarded the Friend in Government Award from the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC). In 2011, *Hispanic Business* named Lopez to its list of “100 Influentials” in the Hispanic community.

“Throughout his long and distinguished career, David Lopez has fought tirelessly to advance equal opportunity for all" said EEOC Chair Jenny Yang. "His tenure as EEOC’s General Counsel has been marked by groundbreaking legal victories that have removed significant barriers to equality in the workplace. Under his leadership, EEOC has achieved favorable results in over 90 percent of its cases over the past six years. David has made a significant contribution to EEOC and he will be greatly missed by friends and colleagues throughout the agency.”

Prior to becoming general counsel, Lopez held various positions at EEOC, including supervisory trial attorney in the Phoenix District Office and special assistant to former EEOC Chair Gilbert F. Casellas. Before joining EEOC, Lopez was a senior trial attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Employment Litigation Section. Between 1988 and 1991, he was an associate with Spiegel and McDiarmid in Washington, D.C.

EEOC enforces the federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. More information is available at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov).

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