



## DOMINICAN AMERICAN NATIONAL ROUNDTABLE

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*For Immediate Release*

### **DANR APPLAUDS PRESIDENT OBAMA'S NOMINATION OF JUDGE SONIA SOTOMAYOR TO THE SUPREME COURT**

Washington, DC — May 27, 2009 — The Dominican American National Roundtable (DANR) applauds President Barack Obama's nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to the United States Supreme Court. If confirmed, Sotomayor will be the first Hispanic and third woman to sit on the nation's highest court.



Throughout its history as a nation, the United States of America has been enriched by the influence of a Latino culture. Today, more than 40 million Hispanics live in the US; they are a diverse collection of cultures, beliefs and political views. Sotomayor will represent that diversity on the Supreme Court.

"Judge Sotomayor's unique American story will bring a singular perspective to the Supreme Court," stated Néstor Montilla, President of the Dominican American National Roundtable. "Her nomination is a milestone for women, Puerto Ricans and the entire Latino community."

Judge Sotomayor's record is exemplary. She has a long and distinguished career on the federal bench. She is qualified to serve on the Supreme Court and fits the President's criteria for a Supreme Court nominee: "I will seek someone who understands that justice isn't about some abstract legal theory or footnote in a casebook," said President Obama. "It is also about how our laws affect the daily realities of people's lives, whether they can make a living and care for their families, whether they feel safe in their homes and welcome in their own nation. I view that quality of empathy, of understanding and identifying with people's hopes and struggles, as an essential ingredient for arriving at just decisions and outcomes."

The DANR and its Board of Directors applaud President Obama's understanding that it is time for a Hispanic Justice to be seated on the highest court of our land.

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*About the DANR - Established in 1997, The Dominican American National Roundtable is a non-profit organization whose mission is to advocate for the empowerment of Dominicans in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Territories. Based in Washington, DC, the DANR is the first and only national organization advocating on behalf of the over one million Dominican Americans in areas concerning education, health, economic development, immigration, and civic empowerment at the national level. The DANR National Conference is the only conference in the United States that brings together Dominicans from around the country under one roof for the purpose of community empowerment (<http://www.danr.org>).*

TESTIMONY BY LILLIAN RODRIGUEZ LOPEZ  
PRESIDENT, HISPANIC FEDERATION  
BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
ON PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 1982-A  
DATE: MAY 28, 2009

IN COLLEGE, WHEN YOU DO PUBLIC SPEAKING, THEY WARN YOU TO AVOID THE OVERUSE OF SUPERLATIVES. I WANT TO WARN YOU IN ADVANCE THAT THIS TESTIMONY IS ONE OF SUPERLATIVES BECAUSE I HAVE THE HONOR TO COME BEFORE YOU TO SUPPORT THE RESOLUTION ON THE NOMINATION OF SONIA SOTOMAYOR TO THE HIGHEST COURT IN THIS LAND – THE SUPREME COURT.

HER NOMINATION IS HISTORIC – FOR PUERTO RICANS, FOR LATINOS, FOR THIS COUNTRY. SHE IS A DAUGHTER OF THIS CITY AND SHE STANDS AS ONE OF THE FINEST AND MOST ACCOMPLISHED CITIZENS WE HAVE. I WANT TO APPLAUD AND THANK PRESIDENT OBAMA FOR THIS NOMINATION.

JUST AS HIS NOMINATION AND ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WILL INSPIRE MANY GENERATIONS TO COME – SO WILL THE APPOINTMENT OF SONIA SOTOMAYOR TO THE SUPREME COURT INSPIRE SO MANY YOUNG AND OLDER PEOPLE AROUND THIS COUNTRY. OUR CHILDREN WILL ONCE AGAIN KNOW – ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE BRONX -- THAT WITH HARD WORK AND DEDICATION ANY DREAM CAN COME TRUE.

SONIA SOTOMAYOR HAS AN EXEMPLARY RECORD, AS A LAWYER, AS A PROSECUTOR, AS A JUDGE. HER RECORD IS UNBLEMISHED. SHE HAS A BRILLIANT LEGAL MIND AND IS WELL-RESPECTED BY HER PEERS AND SO MANY OTHERS THROUGHOUT THIS COUNTRY. SHE HAS SERVED ON THE U.S. COURT OF APPEALS -- SECOND CIRCUIT -- FOR 11 YEARS --- DISTINGUISHING HERSELF THROUGH HER INSIGHTFUL AND SOPHISTICATED LEGAL OPINIONS. SHE WILL PROTECT AND SERVE WITH HONOR IN THE ROLE OF SUPREME COURT JUSTICE BECAUSE SHE HOLDS DEAR NOT ONLY THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, BUT THE PROTECTION OF LIBERTIES FOR ALL OUR CITIZENS AND THE PRACTICE OF APPROPRIATE JUDICIAL RESTRAINT.

HER CAREER, HER SKILLS, HER COMMITMENT PRESENT AND FUTURE TO UPHOLDING THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY ARE NOT IN QUESTION. NOR CAN THEY BE ALLOWED TO BE PLACED INTO QUESTION. SONIA SOTOMAYOR IS THE BEST QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL TO SERVE AS OUR NEXT JUSTICE, REGARDLESS OF RACE, ETHNICITY, CREED OR BACKGROUND.

I WANT TO THANK THE CITY COUNCIL AND ITS MEMBERS FOR CONSIDERING THIS RESOLUTION. I URGE YOU TO CONTINUE TO SEND MESSAGES THAT ARE LOUD AND UNEQUIVOCAL TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. SENATE, PARTICULARLY THE MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, THAT WE SEEK A SPEEDY AND AFFIRMATIVE CONFIRMATION OF SONIA SOTOMAYOR.

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## NAACP New York State Conference

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

HAZEL N. DUKES  
President

I bring you greetings from Hazel N. Dukes, President, of the NAACP New York State Conference and member of the NAACP National Board of Directors the NAACP. I am Ken Cohen, Regional Director of the NAACP New York State Conference Metropolitan Council. I am honored to be here today representing the NAACP to speak on behalf of President Barack Obama's nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor, to be appointed as the next United States Supreme Court Justice.

The NAACP has a long rich history of bringing issues before the United States Supreme Court and in most instances the findings that have been rendered by this country's highest court has been favorable in providing justice for the human and civil rights of people of all colors. The NAACP legacy has produced honorable people such as Justice Thurgood Marshall who became the first African American to sit on the United States Supreme Court. Although Judge Sotomayor will not be the first woman to sit on the Supreme Court following Justice Sandra Day O'Conner and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Judge Sotomayor will be the first Latina to fill this prestigious position.

Judge Sotomayor's parents immigrated to New York from Puerto Rico making her and her brother the first of her family born in New York City, mainland United States. She is now living the dream that brought her parents to New York. While her story is not very different from that of many New Yorkers, what Sonia Sotomayor did over the years to rise to the challenge must be commended. With the loss of her father during her formative years and her mother taking on the challenge to work double shifts as a nurse to insure that she and her brother would become individuals who would leave their parents proud, it is clear that the discipline needed to reach her goals has paid off. Sonia Sotomayor has the potential to leave an even greater legacy for this Nation as a Justice of the United States Supreme Court. The NAACP New York State heartily and enthusiastically supports Judge Sotomayor to be the next Justice of the United States Supreme Court. She has the intellectual toughness, the legal acumen, the judicial experience at both the trial and appellate levels; and an understanding heart to render equal justice under the law to all who will be affected by her role on the Court.

Judge Sotomayor has always set the highest standards of excellence for herself and has achieved them. She graduated with high honors from two of our Nation's most prestigious academic institutions, Princeton University as an undergraduate and Yale Law School. She won the praise of the legendary Manhattan District Attorney as an Assistant District Attorney; and she also earned high respect as a corporate lawyer before she was nominated by President George H. W. Bush to the Federal District Court here in New York. She was later nominated by President Bill Clinton to the Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit. Such bipartisan acknowledgement of her exceptional legal skills and judicial temperament is noteworthy. However, no matter how great the conquest, Justice Sotomayor has never forgotten her roots. Sonia Sotomayor continues to share her accomplishments with the city and community she grew up in by mentoring children and creating opportunities for those young folks who need direction and "tender loving care."

Judge Sotomayor's life of extraordinary achievements demonstrates that hard work, inner determination and a vision of what is possible can make dreams become reality. The NAACP New York State Conference proudly and enthusiastically supports President Obama's nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to become a Justice of the United States Supreme Court; and we urge you to use your good offices to achieve a speedy confirmation.