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Arturo Vargas

July 10, 2009

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Leahy and Senator Sessions:

On behalf of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), I am writing to express our strong support for the swift confirmation of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to serve as Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. NALEO is the leadership organization of the nation's more than 6,000 Latino elected and appointed officials.

Judge Sotomayor is an exceptionally accomplished jurist who has demonstrated a deep commitment to equal justice for all Americans. She has excelled as a prosecutor, a corporate litigator, a federal trial judge, and an appellate judge on the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Judge Sotomayor has more experience in the federal judiciary than any other person nominated to the United States Supreme Court in a hundred years.

In addition, during her distinguished career, Judge Sotomayor has combined a profound respect for the rule of law with careful and thoughtful analysis of the law's impact on the day-to-day realities of our diverse nation. Through her extensive public service efforts, she has promoted equal opportunity in employment and housing, and expanded access to the electoral process.

NALEO's Board reached the decision to support Judge Sotomayor's nomination after a thorough review of her qualifications conducted in accordance with the Board's principles governing the assessment of federal judiciary nominees. This assessment involved a comprehensive evaluation of the Judge's professional accomplishments, and her opinions and rulings that affect equal access to civic and economic opportunities. The Board also reviewed the Judge's record of service to the legal profession, the judiciary, and the public.

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We believe that the confirmation of Judge Sotomayor is particularly important, because it will help enhance the diversity of the nation's highest court, where no Latino has yet served. In order for our judicial system to carry out justice effectively and interpret our laws fairly, our judges must understand how laws affect the daily realities of the life of our nation's diverse residents. Latinos are the nation's second largest and fastest growing population group, and Judge Sotomayor will bring a deep understanding of the issues facing Latinos and all Americans to the Supreme Court. Thus, her service as an Associate Justice will greatly enrich the administration of justice in our nation.

NALEO believes Judge Sotomayor will be an invaluable asset to our nation's highest court because she possesses exceptional judicial expertise and a firm dedication to our laws and Constitution. The full Senate must confirm the Judge's nomination by the August Congressional recess in order for Judge Sotomayor to participate in September when the Court confers, and to be seated on the first Monday in October, when the court publicly convenes. We urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to help meet this schedule by advancing Judge Sotomayor's nomination to the full Senate as expeditiously as possible.

Thank you for attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 213-747-7606 or at avargas@naleo.org.

Sincerely,



Arturo Vargas
Executive Director