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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-5401

May 4, 2009

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write to respectfully urge you to consider nominating Judge Sonia Sotomayor for the seat on the Supreme Court being vacated by Justice David H. Souter. I believe Judge Sotomayor's combination of professional and personal experience makes her an outstanding choice.

Judge Sotomayor would bring to the Court a wealth of experience as a judge, prosecutor, and attorney in private practice. For the past 16 years, she has served with distinction as a federal appellate judge on the Second Circuit and a district court judge in the Southern District of New York. Prior to her nomination to the federal bench by President George H.W. Bush and her elevation to the circuit court by President William J. Clinton, Judge Sotomayor was a partner at a prominent law firm, specializing in intellectual property and international transactions. Earlier in her career, Judge Sotomayor served as an assistant district attorney in New York City, prosecuting criminal cases of every stripe. Judge Sotomayor's varied legal background would provide her with an unparalleled ability to evaluate and decide the wide range of legal issues that come before the Court and to understand the implications of the Court's holdings on these matters for lower courts and future litigants.

Beyond her exceptional legal credentials, Judge Sotomayor possesses personal life experiences that would supply her with a valuable perspective on the issues that the Court confronts. Born to Puerto Rican parents and raised in a public housing project in New York City, she has faced and overcome many obstacles in her life. Although her talent and work ethic have taken her to Princeton University, Yale Law School and this country's most-respected legal institutions, by all accounts Judge Sotomayor remains grounded and deeply proud of her roots. Over the years she has served the Hispanic

community through involvement in the Association of Judges of Hispanic Heritage, the National Hispanic Bar Association and the Puerto Rican Bar Association. You have repeatedly said that you seek a nominee who understands the practical impact that the Court's decisions have on people's lives. I know of few candidates who meet this criterion to the degree that Judge Sotomayor does.

Judge Sotomayor's unique combination of legal and life experience makes her a fine choice to become this country's next Supreme Court Justice. Her selection would be a source of particular pride for the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico and for all Hispanics living in the United States. More generally, her nomination would serve as an inspiration to all those who remain skeptical about whether hard work can overcome humble beginnings. I very much hope that you will consider making Judge Sotomayor your choice for the Court.

Sincerely,



Pedro R. Pierluisi
Member of Congress