

The logo for the New York City Bar, featuring the text "NEW YORK CITY BAR" in a serif font, centered between two horizontal bars.

Contact: Alan Rothstein
(212) 382-6623

**THE ASSOCIATION OF THE BAR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
FINDS JUDGE SONIA SOTOMAYOR
HIGHLY QUALIFIED FOR U.S. SUPREME COURT**

New York, June 30, 2009 – Patricia M. Hynes, President of The Association of the Bar of the City of New York, announced that the Association has concluded that Judge Sonia Sotomayor is Highly Qualified to be a Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

The Association found that Judge Sotomayor demonstrates a formidable intellect; a diligent and careful approach to legal decision-making; a commitment to unbiased, thoughtful administration of justice; a deep commitment to our judicial system and the counsel and litigants who appear before the court; and an abiding respect for the powers of the legislative and the executive branches of our government.

In conducting its evaluation, the Association reviewed and analyzed information from a variety of sources: Judge Sotomayor's written opinions from her seventeen years on the circuit court and district court; her speeches and articles over the last twenty-one years; her prior confirmation testimony; comments received from the Association's members and committees; press reports, blogs and commentaries; interviews with her judicial colleagues and numerous practitioners; and an interview with Judge Sotomayor.

The Association determined that Judge Sotomayor possesses, to an exceptionally high degree, all of the qualifications enumerated in the Guidelines established by the Association for considering nominees to the United States Supreme Court: (1) exceptional legal ability; (2) extensive experience and knowledge of the law; (3) outstanding intellectual and analytical talents; (4) maturity of judgment; (5) unquestionable integrity and independence; (6) a temperament reflecting a willingness to search for a fair resolution of each case before the court; (7) a sympathetic understanding of the Court's role under the Constitution in the protection of the personal rights of individuals; and (8) an appreciation for the historic role of the Supreme Court as the final arbiter of the meaning of the United States Constitution, including a sensitivity to the respective powers and reciprocal responsibilities of the Congress and Executive.

The Association has been evaluating judicial candidates for nearly 140 years in a non-partisan manner based upon the nominees' competence and merit. Although the Association had evaluated a number of Supreme Court candidates over the course of its history, in 1987 it determined to evaluate every candidate nominated to the Supreme Court.

In 2007, the Executive Committee of the Association moved from a two-tier evaluation system in which candidates were found to be either "qualified" or "not qualified", to a three-tier evaluation system. The ratings and the criteria that accompany them are as follows:

"Qualified." The nominee possesses the legal ability, experience, knowledge of the law, intellectual and analytical skills, maturity of judgment, common sense, sensitivity, honesty, integrity, independence, and temperament appropriate to be a Justice of the United States Supreme Court. The nominee also respects precedent, the independence of the judiciary from the other branches of government, and individual rights and liberties.

"Highly Qualified." The nominee is qualified, to an exceptionally high degree, such that the nominee is likely to be an outstanding Justice of the United States Supreme Court. This rating should be regarded as an exception, and not the norm, for United States Supreme Court nominees.

"Not Qualified." The nominee fails to meet one or more of the qualifications above.

The present review is the first time the Association has utilized this three-tier system for a Supreme Court review.

About the Association

The New York City Bar Association (www.nycbar.org), since its founding in 1870, has been dedicated to maintaining the high ethical standards of the profession, promoting reform of the law and providing service to the profession and the public. The Association continues to work for political, legal and social reform while implementing innovative means to help the disadvantaged. Protecting the public's welfare remains one of the Association's highest priorities.