NASW

...the power of social work

National Association of Social Workers

June 3, 2009

Hon. Patrick Leahy, Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee
433 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Leahy:

On behalf of the 150,000 members of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), I am writing in support of the nomination of Sonia Sotomayor to the United States Supreme Court. Judge Sotomayor has a distinguished judicial record that is highlighted by her respect for human dignity and the needs of all Americans.

Judge Sotomayor has issued several rulings we support as social workers, and she boldly dissented on cases in which individual rights were not fully appreciated by the majority. For example, Judge Sotomayor has upheld the rights of citizens to sue corporations acting on behalf of the federal government when the corporation in question has violated the citizen's rights. She has also prevented insurance companies from suing to reclaim benefits after the victim of an injury won a related lawsuit. The latter decision was upheld by a diverse majority of U.S. Supreme Court Justices.

In terms of dissenting opinions, Judge Sotomayor courageously supported the rights of adolescent girls whom she believed were needlessly strip searched in juvenile detention centers. Although her colleagues disagreed, Judge Sotomayor's dissent reinforced her regard for the safety and well being of all people.

Additionally, Judge Sotomayor would bring increased diversity to the Court. Like all deliberative bodies, the Court functions best when it considers a broad range of perspectives. This leads to rulings that cover the rights and interests of many oppressed, underserved, and underrepresented groups. Judge Sotomayor's decisions have proven that she is not just an example of such diversity, but also a champion of it.

Judge Sotomayor's overall record has demonstrated the judicial sensitivity NASW has always endorsed and valued. As a result, I am pleased to extend our full support for her nomination.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth J. Clark

Elizabeth J. Clark, PhD, ACSW, MPH
Executive Director

750 First Street NE, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20002-4241
(202) 408-8600 • FAX (202) 336-8310 • www.socialworkers.org

AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO
VerDate Nov 24 2008 11:18 Jun 24, 2010 Jkt 056940 PO 00000 Frm 01159 Fmt 6601 Sfmt 6601 S:\GPO\HEARINGS\56940.TXT SJUD1 PsN: CMORC
56940.746