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January 9, 2006

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Fax (202) 224-3479

Dear Senator Leahy:

Recognizing the profound significance of the Judiciary Committee hearings on the nomination of Judge Samuel Alito, Jr. to the United States Supreme Court for the future of jurisprudence in the United States, Women of Reform Judaism, comprised of 75,000 members in 550 affiliates in North America, urges you to oppose his confirmation.

Women of Reform Judaism rarely opposes judicial nominations. Its resolution "Judicial and Executive Branch Nominations" adopted in 2004, however, emphasizes the need for balance of legal and social perspectives on the federal bench. This resolution also enables Women of Reform Judaism to oppose judicial candidates whose record demonstrates opposition to the core values, rights and principles supported by our organization.

In his years in the Reagan Administration and on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, Judge Alito has been a strong and consistent voice for restricting women's rights, extending police powers and destroying the wall separating church and state in schools and in community religious displays. Judge Alito has also taken anti-affirmative action positions and has supported stringent barriers in discrimination cases. Judge Alito's vote could be a crucial one on the court in all these areas and more, replacing the balance provided by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor with a marked shift that would endanger the civil liberties and civil rights of the people of the United States.

Committed to the precepts of our tradition and adhering to the words of Deuteronomy, which tell us to pursue justice (Deuteronomy 16:20), we look to the Supreme Court to protect the civil liberties and civil rights of all Americans. Based on his record, we are concerned that Judge Alito will be unable to put aside his private views to dispense equal justice for all and oppose his confirmation.

Respectfully,

Shelley Lindauer

Rosanne M. Selfon

Women of Reform Judaism, an affiliate of the Union for Reform Judaism, is the collective voice and presence of women in congregational life. Stronger together, we support the ideals and enhance the quality of Jewish living to ensure the future of progressive Judaism in North America, Israel and around the world.

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