



National Council of Jewish Women

Dear Leaders,

As it states in the Torah, "You shall appoint magistrates and officials for your tribes... and they shall govern the people with due justice. You shall not judge unfairly; you shall show no partiality... Justice, justice shall you pursue..." (16:18-20). In this spirit, NCJW and its sections labor to ensure a judiciary committed to equal justice under the law. Through campaigns, advocacy, and education initiatives, we have helped to promote a fair and balanced judiciary by supporting the nomination and confirmation of federal Judges who are committed to fundamental freedoms. The fruit of our hard work could be seen on July 28, 2009 when Justice Sonia Sotomayor was confirmed to the US Supreme Court.

This historic event would not have happened without the grassroots efforts of our NCJW members who worked alongside and often in partnership with progressive groups nationwide. Today, I would like to call your attention to a small piece of the local section activities that ultimately resulted in the confirmation of a Supreme Court Justice committed to upholding core constitutional values.

Our **Southern Maine** section coordinated a community-wide watch party for Justice Sotomayor's testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, and worked to educate their members and local community on her qualifications. Beyond the Supreme Court, Southern Maine has been very active in supporting other executive nominees, including supporting Dawn Johnsen, a nominee to head of Justice Department's office of legal counsel.

The **Pittsburgh** section took direct actions to educate their community on Justice Sotomayor's record of excellence: members hosted a state-wide conference call the week of the nomination, organized a state-wide coalition meeting, coordinated lobby visits with Senator Casey's and Senator Specter's chiefs of staff, and hosted a media readiness training to learn how to more effectively communicate with the media about judicial nominations and other issues. As a result of these efforts, Pittsburgh section leaders **Elena Rovner** and **Judi Kasdan** were featured in a *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* piece about community organizing around the nomination.

Our **Cleveland** and **Omaha** sections are currently building coalitions around a fair judiciary. In each section, members lobbied their senator's offices to encourage their support for the confirmation of Justice Sotomayor.

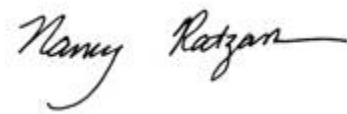
These are only a handful of the intense efforts of our NCJW sections. As a result of their hard work, we not only have an exceptionally well-qualified new Supreme Court Justice, but it also led to an invitation to take part in the celebration of Justice Sotomayor's confirmation at the White House. Sammie Moshenberg, our representative at the event, can attest to the fact that without the efforts of our local sections and of all of our members we would not been there to celebrate. However, we know well that our work is far from over. There are many

nominations and confirmations to come, and I know that through our dedication to justice — *tzedek* — we will continue to celebrate many more victories.

Watch out for more news and information in the near future on our work to ensure the confirmation of federal judges committed to the constitutional values of individual rights and freedoms. Until then, if there is a project, person, or action that you would like to share with your fellow NCJW members from across the country, please visit the success stories page of www.ncjw.org and tell us about it. Sharing our successes through stories will not only help us bond, it will fortify our capacity to deliver our mission.

Hazak, Hazah, V' nithazek – may we go from strength to strength by strengthening each other.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Ratzan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

President
National Council of Jewish Women
A faith in the future. A belief in action.

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March 21-23, 2010 — Washington, DC

Registration for NCJW's premier public policy event begins soon.