

Statement of
The Honorable Patrick Leahy

United States Senator
Vermont
July 16, 2009

Closing Statement Of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee,

On The Confirmation Hearing For Judge Sonia Sotomayor
To Be An Associate Justice Of The Supreme Court Of The United States

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Judge Sotomayor, this hearing has extended over four days. And the first day you listened to our opening statements rather extensively. You shared with us a very concise statement about your own fidelity to the law. I suspect it will be in law school text in years to come.

Over the last three days, you've answered our questions from senators on both sides of the aisle. And I hope I speak for all the senators, both Republican and Democratic, on this committee when I thank you for answering with such intelligence, grace and patience.

I also thank the members of your family for sitting here also for such intelligence, grace, and especially patience.

During the course of this week, almost 2,000 people have attended this hearing in person -- 2,000. Millions more have seen it, heard it, or read about it, thanks to newspapers, blogs, television, cable, webcasting.

I think through these proceedings, the American people have gotten to know you. Even though I sat on two different confirmation hearings for you over the past 17 years, I feel I've gotten to know you even better.

The President told the American people in his Internet address back in May that as a justice of the Supreme Court, you would, quote, "bring not only the experience acquired over the course of a brilliant legal career, but the wisdom accumulated over the course of an extraordinary journey - a journey defined by hard work, fierce intelligence and enduring faith that, in America, all things are possible."

We bore witness of that this week. That experience and wisdom will benefit all Americans. And when you walk under that piece of Vermont marble over the door of the Supreme Court, speaking of equal justice under law, I know that will guide you.

Judge Sotomayor, thank you. Godspeed.

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