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## May 26, 2009

**Sonia Sotomayor: The reax race**

And the quick-reaction winner in the [Sonia Sotomayor](#) nomination sweepstakes is...the [Judicial Confirmation Network](#).

The conservative interest group appears to have been the first out of the gates with a reaction Tuesday morning, upon the news that President Barack Obama would name Sotomayor to the Supreme Court. Like every think tank, interest group and university faculty press shop worth its name, the Judicial Confirmation Network recognizes a high-visibility confirmation fight as a fabulous marketing opportunity. Speed and ease-of-use both matter: the point is to get into someone else's story.

Note to p.r. practitioners: The best approach is to include a quick canned quote from the expert(s), as well as a direct phone line to the expert. This allows the reporter to either cut and paste....err, take advantage of...the prepared comment or follow up with live questions.

The Judicial Confirmation Network release, including canned quote from counsel Wendy Long, arrived via e-mail at 8:59 a.m. Hellerman Baretz Communications sent a useful release at 9:28, pitching a Mayor Brown attorney who has argued before Sotomayor. At 9:34, the Constitutional Accountability Center submitted their observations. The Cato Institute weighed in at 9:52 a.m., followed by NOW at 9:55 and Republican-turned-Democrat Arlen Specter, who opined at 10:28.

The libs got into the act with the People for the American Way, whose release arrived at 10:33, after which one lawmaker after another began piling on -- mostly, and boringly, with variations either on the "grand slam winner" or the "thorough hearing required" themes.

Universities, too, can really use events like this to their advantage. Johns Hopkins presented several experts at 10:35 and the University of Connecticut at 10:50 offered up a useful author on Supreme Court nominations, followed by Northwestern University Law School etc etc etc

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"Suits & Sentences" is a legal affairs blog written by Michael Doyle, a reporter for [McClatchy's Washington Bureau](#). He was a Knight Journalism Fellow at Yale Law School, where he earned a Master of Studies in Law; he also earned a Masters in Government from The Johns Hopkins University with a thesis on the Freedom of Information Act. He teaches journalism as an adjunct instructor at The George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs.



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