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The Hotline

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THE BLOGOMETER

The Blogometer is a daily report from The Hotline taking the temperature of the political blogosphere. The Blogometer appears in The Hotline's subscription-only tip sheet and in this space every weekday at noon.

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May 26, 2009

5/26: It's Sotomayor

Most conservative bloggers [concede](#) that SCOTUS nominee/Second Circuit judge **Sonia Sotomayor** is "very likely to be confirmed." However, that's not stopping them from pushing a negative narrative about her. The primary line of attack in the conservative blogosphere is that Sotomayor is a relatively unimpressive jurist who was only selected because of her ethnicity and gender. [Ramesh Ponnuru](#) describes Sotomayor as "**Obama's Harriet Miers**" while [Erick Erickson](#) declares: "Conservatives rejoice. Of all the picks Obama could have picked, he picked the most intellectually shallow." While some [righty bloggers](#) are criticizing Sotomayor's judicial philosophy, there isn't (yet) a groundswell of support for a GOP filibuster.

Meanwhile, liberal bloggers love the political implications of the pick, as they believe that GOPers will alienate female voters and Hispanic voters if they attack Sotomayor's qualifications and intellect. [John Aravosis](#) calls the nomination "a brilliant move by the Obama people" while [Chris Bowers](#) writes: "Not only will they be unable to stop Sotomayor, but they will look terrible trying to stop her. (Let's attack empathy some more! Let's demonize minorities some more!)"

What else is happening in the blogosphere?

- Conservative bloggers ([Liebau](#), [Johnson](#), [Morrissey](#), [Reynolds](#)) are accusing the Obama admin. of not taking the [North Korea nuclear program](#) seriously. Liberal bloggers ([Dayen](#), [Lemos](#), [Benen](#)) are also offering their thoughts on the North Korea situation.
- Liberal bloggers ([Greenwald](#), [Dayen](#), [Llorens](#), [Beutler](#)) are buzzing about the news that Sen. **Russ Feingold** (D-WI) [wrote a letter](#) to Obama criticizing the President's "indefinite detention" plan for suspected terrorists.
- Conservative bloggers ([Johnson](#), [Morrissey](#), [Lane](#)) are praising MN Gov. **Tim Pawlenty** (R) for [employing some legislative maneuvering](#) to balance the state's budget.

SOTOMAYOR: Obama's Harriet Miers?

Conservative bloggers are portraying Sotomayor is a relatively unimpressive jurist who was only nominated because of her race and gender:

- [Michelle Malkin](#): "So, it's Sonia Sotomayor. Identity politics triumphs."
- [NRO's Ponnuru](#): "[B]ased on the early signs it appears that President Obama has made the crassest of political picks."
- [Right Wing News' John Hawkins](#): "Barack Obama picked Sonia Sotomayor because she's Hispanic, female, and is willing to put liberal political concerns above the Constitution. That checks a couple of important political boxes for him and gets him a liberal judge on the court."
- [The Cato Institute's Ilya Shapiro](#): "In picking Sonia Sotomayor, President Obama has confirmed that identity politics matter to him more than merit. Judge Sotomayor is not one of the leading lights of the federal judiciary and would not even have been on the shortlist if she were not Hispanic. She has a mixed reputation, with a questionable temperament and no particularly important opinions in over 10 years on the Second Circuit. [...] If this is the kind of 'empathy' the president wants from his judges, we are in for a long summer—and more bitter confirmation battles in the future."
- [RedState's Erickson](#): "Conservatives rejoice. Of all the picks Obama could

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