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President Obama has nominated Judge Sonya Sotomayor to the Supreme Court, a surprising – and inspirational - selection. If confirmed by Congress, Sotomayor would be the second woman on the Supreme Court and the third woman ever picked for the job. She would also be the first Latina in the position. Since the announcement, media pundits and politicos have discussed Sotomayor's background and what role it will play in her decision making. Her appointment to the Supreme Court would be a breath of fresh air to America's judicial system; the country needs a Justice who understands exactly how the average American lives.

Judge Sotomayor was raised by her Puerto Rican family in a public housing project in the South Bronx in New York. Her father, a factory worker with only a third-grade education, died when she was just nine years old, leaving her mother, a nurse who worked six days a week, to raise her. Despite her family struggles, Sotomayor excelled academically and eventually won a scholarship to Princeton University. She then went on to study at Yale Law School.

The Judge's background is not much different from the President's: being raised by a single mother in less than ideal circumstances, rising above all obstacles and working hard to achieve academic and career goals. Obama's real-life upbringing, away from the country clubs and prep schools that most politicians are accustomed to, is one of the reasons he connected so well with the American public. Many believed he understood them, their struggles and their desires. It is Sotomayor's similar background that will provide her with the sensitivity and empathy needed to serve as a Supreme Court Justice. She will bring to the court both an academic and real-world understanding of the issues the Court votes on, not just ivory tower intellectual thought that rarely finds its way to the average man or woman on the street.

The Judge's rulings on lower courts are a strong indication that she will work to maintain civil rights gains made over the last several decades. Sotomayor ruled against white firefighters from New Haven, Connecticut who claimed reverse discrimination when they were not promoted after possible race-based irregularities with a required test were discovered; promotions for all fire fighters, black or white, were put on hold while the city investigates. The course is currently in front of the Supreme Court.

Sotomayor's appointment also brings the Court one step closer to reflecting the way America actually looks. Women make up over half of the U.S. population while Latinos comprise about 14-percent of the American people. Currently the Court only has one woman and two people of color among its ranks. Sotomayor's selection brings diversity to a ruling body that is dominated by white men.

If confirmed, Sotomayor will bring more federal judicial experience to the Court than any justice in 100 years. Her resume shows a true commitment to justice. She is exactly who the Court has been waiting for.