

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2009 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ON THE FRONTLINES FOR WOMEN

*For 37 years, the National Women's Law Center has expanded the possibilities for women and girls in the United States. The Center uses the law in all its forms: getting new laws on the books; litigating groundbreaking lawsuits all the way to the Supreme Court, and educating the public about ways to make the law and public policies work for women and their families. In 2009, the Center played a pivotal role in advancing rights and opportunities for women, including through the judicial system. No one better exemplifies the extraordinary talent and rich diversity that women have brought to the judiciary than **Justice Sonia Sotomayor**. The Center is proud to have worked to secure the confirmation of the first Latina, the first woman of color, and only the third woman to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court, through an analysis of her legal record, Congressional testimony, and other materials and outreach to educate and engage the public.*

- Won a major pay equity victory when President Obama signed the **Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act** one week into his new Administration, following the Center's extensive campaign that pushed for passage of the law, which restored legal protections for victims of pay discrimination after a harmful 5-4 Supreme Court decision.
- Helped many low-income women and families stay afloat in the worst recession since the Great Depression by securing in the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) the **most significant increase in assistance** for low-income families in more than a decade—including increased investments in child care, Head Start and Early Head Start; increased tax benefits for low- and middle-income families, including an expansion of the refundable Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit and the creation of a new Making Work Pay Tax Credit; restored funding for child support enforcement; and incentives for states to reform unemployment insurance coverage for women and low-wage workers—by highlighting the needs of women and families in the worsening economy and promoting effective ways to address these needs.
- Galvanized **a national movement to end insurance companies' discriminatory practices** of gender rating, excluding coverage for maternity care and treating domestic violence and Cesarean sections as pre-existing conditions, leading to a new Arkansas law and steps taken by the District of Columbia, Mississippi, North Carolina, North Dakota and Oklahoma to prohibit insurers from denying coverage to survivors of domestic violence, a new California law prohibiting gender rating, and prohibitions on these and other forms of gender discrimination in pending federal health care reform legislation, by releasing a ground-breaking report, *Nowhere to Turn: How the Individual Health Insurance Market Fails Women*, and a 2009 update, *Still Nowhere to Turn: Insurance Companies Treat Women Like a Pre-existing Condition*, and by launching a national public awareness campaign, *Being a Woman is Not a Pre-existing Condition*, which engaged nearly 100,000 people in its first week alone.
- Secured other key components of the Center's **health care agenda** in pending health care reform legislation, including premium subsidies and limits on cost-sharing that make health care more affordable and Medicaid expansions that help more low-income women obtain comprehensive coverage, through the Center's award-winning *Reform Matters: Making Real Progress for Women and Health Care* project, which provides policy advocates the tools to fight for progressive health care reform and educates the public about what is at stake for women in the health care reform debate.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

- Issued a major new **award-winning report on the Latina dropout crisis**, *Listening to Latinas: Barriers to High School Graduation*, with partner Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, to document the scope of the problem and provide concrete policy recommendations on ways to improve graduation rates and prepare Latinas for college, and launched an effort to secure the needed improvements.
- Helped **preserve child care assistance** in several states, including for 15,000 children in Arizona and 3,000 children in Alabama, by widely disseminating written materials and providing targeted technical assistance to state advocates and policy makers on the effective use of ARRA early childhood funds.
- Contributed to **two U.S. Supreme Court victories**, serving as co-counsel on *amicus* briefs in *Crawford v. Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee*, which established that employees are protected from retaliation for cooperating with an employer's internal investigation of sexual harassment, and *Fitzgerald v. Barnstable School Committee*, which safeguarded women's and girls' rights by allowing them to pursue constitutional, in addition to Title IX, claims of gender discrimination in schools.
- Secured the **reversal of the "global gag rule"** and **passage of the Prevention Through Affordable Access Act**, which sharply lowers birth control prices on college campuses and in community clinics, by playing a leadership role in a reproductive rights coalition and providing information and technical analyses on these measures to the new Administration.
- Helped launch and provided leadership to a new coalition to address broad issues of tax policy, winning approval of a federal budget that both promotes and pays for **critical investments important to women and families** in a fiscally responsible way, and conducted a tax education campaign in all 50 states that helped increase by over \$4 billion the tax assistance provided to individuals and families.
- Won **an important equal pay case**, *Mikula v. Allegheny County of Pennsylvania*, in which the Third Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Center client Mary Lou Mikula, giving the new Ledbetter Fair Pay Act a strong interpretation.
- Helped state advocates **win contraceptive insurance coverage battles**, including an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ruling that North Carolina college Belmont Abbey's elimination of contraceptive coverage from its employee benefit plan constitutes illegal sex discrimination and the defeat of an effort to repeal a Montana law requiring insurers to provide contraceptive coverage.
- Secured in the **Early Learning Challenge Fund** legislation passed by the House of Representatives several key components of the federal Agenda for Affordable, High-Quality Child Care developed and promoted by the Center as leader of a nationwide coalition of early care and education advocates.
- Worked with state-based advocates to **defeat onerous abortion restrictions**, including abortion bans, in North Dakota, West Virginia, Arizona and Louisiana by providing technical assistance and mobilizing supporters around the country.

The victories won on behalf of women and their families during 2009 would not have been possible without the volunteer assistance that many organizations and individuals generously provided to the Center. In the past year, organizations and individuals providing *pro bono* support included: Arnold & Porter; Covington & Burling; Crowell & Moring; DLA Piper US; McDermott Will & Emery; Melissa Hart; Hogan & Hartson; Holland & Knight; Lichtman, Trister & Ross; Steptoe & Johnson; and Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice.

Organizations and individuals sponsoring fellowships included: Deborah Slaner Larkin & The MARGARET Fund; Latham & Watkins; Mayer Brown; Steptoe & Johnson and the Women's Law and Public Policy Fellowship Program.

The Center deeply appreciates these contributions and looks forward to continuing to work together to expand the possibilities for women and their families in the years to come.

IN THE HEADLINES

Obama May Break With Tradition for High Court Pick

“Marcia Greenberger, co-president of the National Women’s Law Center, said it’s imperative that the president select a woman to join forces on the court with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. ‘We have clearly moved past the days when one woman on the highest court in the land is sufficient,’ she said.”

Boston Globe
May 2, 2009

A Call to Allow Women to Serve on Submarines

“Nancy Duff Campbell, an advocate for expanding the role of women in the armed forces, said it would be easy to resolve problems with so-called hot-bunking. ‘They say, ‘How could we have the women sleeping in the same area as men?’” said Ms. Campbell, co-president of the National Women’s Law Center. ‘But they already separate where the officers sleep from the enlisted, so it’s not like it can’t be done.’ ”

New York Times
September 27, 2009

First Lady Pushes Cause of Reform

“Women frequently are charged more than men of the same age for the same insurance when shopping for individual policies; one study found the disparity can be as great as 48 percent. Insurance companies are regulated at the state level; only 10 states ban gender rating, and two others offer limited protection, according to a 2008 report from the National Women’s Law Center.”

Washington Post
September 19, 2009

Title IX Ruling in California Could Lead to Stricter Standards

“‘It is a boost in the momentum toward the real goal of equality of opportunity and not a goal of approximate equality, but real equality,’ said Marcia Greenberger, co-president of the National Women’s Law Center, an advocacy group that often litigates gender-equity cases.”

New York Times
June 19, 2009

As Aid Shrinks, More ‘Stuck’ for Day Care

“At least nine states have growing waiting lists for subsidies, says Helen Blank, director of leadership and public policy with the National Women’s Law Center. ‘It’s a fragile system,’ says Blank, who tracked state child care subsidies in a report last month. She says states are having to ‘make choices in terms of who you help, what you pay providers and what you charge parents.’ ”

USA Today
October 5, 2009

Legal Changes Open Doors to Working Women

“‘[Title VII] was the bedrock of the early legal protections,’ according to Nancy Duff Campbell, Co-President of the National Women’s Law Center. ‘The law was important,’ she said, ‘in hiring, promotion, and pay, but it also helped get women into jobs like firefighters and police officers, by striking down tests that were used to keep them out.’”

[MSNBC.com](#)

October 16, 2009

Area Gets Funds for Care of Children

“Advocates said the \$2 billion was a first step toward erasing past shortages. ‘This increase was desperately needed. . . . There have been just enormous gaps,’ said Joan Entmacher, director for family economic security at the National Women’s Law Center, a Washington-based think tank.”

[Washington Post](#)

April 10, 2009

Justices Rule for Whistle Blowers

“Marcia Greenberger, co-president of the National Women’s Law Center, called the ruling a ‘landmark day for all workers in America, and especially for women. Sexual harassment remains a pervasive problem in the workplace, and employees need full protection against retaliation when they have the courage to speak up to eliminate the problem.’”

[Chicago Tribune](#)

January 27, 2009

Health Care Fight Becomes a Battle of the Sexes: Insurance Rates for Female-Dominated Businesses Much Higher Than Average

“The National Women’s Law Center has been publicizing the issue with a campaign called ‘Being a Woman Is Not a Pre-Existing Condition.’ Women already make less money than men, says Judy Waxman, vice president for health and reproductive rights, and to force them to also pay more for health insurance is blatantly unfair. Moreover, the extra money an employer must pay to insure a group of women often gets passed along to workers in the form of higher premiums and deductibles. ‘It’s time to level the playing field,’ she says.”

[Today.MSNBC.com](#)

October 28, 2009

Latinas Uniting Via Online Sites

“For example, an August report by MALDEF and the National Women’s Law Center says 41% of Latina students do not graduate from high school because of challenges related to poverty, immigration status, a high teen pregnancy rate and limited English skills.”

[USA Today](#)

October 5, 2009