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Politico  
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Dear Editor and Reporter,

Your colleague at The Washington Post, Joe Stephens, reported on May 7<sup>1</sup> that Judge Sonia Sotomayor of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit (CA2) earns \$179,500 [it is now \$184,500 retroactive to last January 1<sup>2</sup>] as a circuit judge annually—she took her commission on October 7, 1998<sup>3</sup>- plus earned a salary during the eight years that she was in private practice—at the intellectual property boutique Pavia & Harcourt-. Add to that her above median income as a U.S. district judge<sup>4</sup> since October 2, 1992, until her elevation to CA2. Yet “in recent years she has reported virtually no assets”. This raises the reasonable question: Where did the money go?

There are three basic ways of spending money: on goods, on services, or in charitable contributions.

1. It is unlikely that a public figure could have spent well over \$2,000,000 dollars on services, such as eating at expensive restaurants or going on extravagantly luxurious vacations, without attracting attention.
2. It is likely that if a person gave away to charitable entities almost every penny that she earned, she or the entities would bring it to public attention, if only to persuade others to contribute to her cherished charitable causes.
3. If the money went to the purchase of goods, the latter are somewhere, that is, either in:
  - a) household goods, and she would have had to buy lots of, and have space for, them;
  - b) personal goods, such as designer clothes, sparkling jewels, and stylish coiffure that everybody would have noticed; or
  - c) (i) investment goods, such as real property, which must be recorded in somebody’s name in the county clerk’s office, or  
(ii) certificates of deposit, stock and bonds, and similar financial instruments, all of which have to be reported in the annual judicial financial disclosure reports required under the Ethics in Government Act of 1978.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>[http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2009/05/07/sotomayor\\_rose\\_high\\_with\\_few\\_a.html?sid=ST2009050702123](http://voices.washingtonpost.com/44/2009/05/07/sotomayor_rose_high_with_few_a.html?sid=ST2009050702123); see also Keith B. Richburg “N.Y. Federal Judge Likely on Shortlist”, May 7, 2009; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/06/AR2009050603762.html>

<sup>2</sup> [Http://www.uscourts.gov/ttb/2009-03/article03.cfm?WT.cg\\_n=TTB&WT.cg\\_s=Mar09\\_article03\\_tableOfContents](Http://www.uscourts.gov/ttb/2009-03/article03.cfm?WT.cg_n=TTB&WT.cg_s=Mar09_article03_tableOfContents)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ca2.uscourts.gov/judgesmain.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Cf. A U.S. district judge now earns \$174,000; fn.1 supra. See 28 U.S.C. §§135, 461; 5 U.S.C. §5332.

<sup>5</sup> See Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 5 U.S.C. Appendix 4, §§101(f)(11) and 109(10). The report is very detailed and requires “a full and complete statement”, as provided for under §102(b)(1). Judges must file their reports with the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, and make them publicly available there. For AO’s address, see <http://www.uscourts.gov/comment.html>. The Act, with the addition of useful bookmarks, can be found at [http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/docs/5usc\\_Ethics\\_Gov\\_14apr9.pdf](http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/docs/5usc_Ethics_Gov_14apr9.pdf).

The date of 1978 as that of the adoption of the Act is very significant. Indeed, the Act was one of several pieces of legislation that Congress adopted to introduce transparency and accountability in government in the wake of the Watergate Scandal, which caused President Nixon to resign effectively on August 9, 1974, and sent to jail most of his top White House aides.

Two reporters, also at the Post, were instrumental in setting in motion the process that led to that legislation: Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein. They asked themselves, ‘Where did the money come from to pay the high-priced lawyers defending the presumed ‘garden variety’ burglars that broke into the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate Complex in Washington, D.C., on June 17, 1972? Their tenacious pursuit of an answer through a *Follow the money!* investigation allowed them to find out that the money had come from a slush fund of the Republican committee for the reelection of President Nixon: The burglars were operatives engaged in political espionage orchestrated by the President and his closest aides!

Reporters Bernstein and Woodward were rewarded handsomely for their highly professional and ethical investigative journalism: the bestseller “All the President’s Men” and the homonymous blockbuster film with Dustin Hoffman and Robert Redford; the Pulitzer Prize; and the recognition of a grateful nation for their contribution to a greater measure of honesty and accountability in our government.

Today the nation’s attention is focused on the process of confirming Judge Sotomayor as the new Justice. Checking her background and judicial philosophy is warranted because a judge’s faithful discharge of personal legal duties reflects her respect or lack thereof for the law and the quality of justice that she dispenses to others. However, you can broaden that focus to cover an issue of greater concern to all your current and potential readers and the general public, to wit, the integrity of judges generally, and in particular of circuit judges and the Justices that supervise them as Circuit Justices.<sup>6</sup> If the top judges do wrong, those below them do whatever they want. Due process is nobody’s doing, not even Judge Sotomayor’s.<sup>7</sup>

Hence, it is for you to find out, before it is too late<sup>8</sup>, where her money went. A revealing fact of her attitude toward judicial integrity is her participation in the non-disclosure of at least \$673,657 under circumstances strikingly similar to hers and the role therein of judges under her appellate supervision.<sup>9</sup> I have substantial and verifiable evidence that provides leads for a *Follow the money!* investigation of coordinated judicial wrongdoing. I can make it available to you.<sup>10</sup>

This is your opportunity to become the Woodward/Bernstein or Benjamin Bradlee, their editor, of our generation. Use it for the advancement of your career and the sake of millions of your readers and the public at large who receive or are denied justice depending on the integrity of judges that administer it under no more supervision than that of themselves and their peers.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, *Dr. Richard Cordero, Esq.*

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<sup>6</sup> 28 U.S.C. §42; Code of Conduct for U.S. Judges, Canon 3.B(4); [http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/docs/Code\\_Conduct\\_Judges\\_09.pdf](http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/docs/Code_Conduct_Judges_09.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/US\\_writ/2DrCordero-SCT\\_rehear\\_23apr9.pdf](http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/US_writ/2DrCordero-SCT_rehear_23apr9.pdf) >US:2518§C, 2528

<sup>8</sup> 2 Ex-Timesmen Say They Had a Tip on Watergate First, Richard Pérez-Peña, The New York Times, May 24, 2009; <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/25/business/media/25watergate.html>.

<sup>9</sup> [http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/US\\_writ/1DrCordero-SCT\\_petition\\_3oct8.pdf](http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/US_writ/1DrCordero-SCT_petition_3oct8.pdf), pages US:2456 §X and Exhibit CA:2180 (28 and 73 of the pdf file)

<sup>10</sup> Cf. [http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/Follow\\_money/DrCordero-journalists.pdf](http://Judicial-Discipline-Reform.org/Follow_money/DrCordero-journalists.pdf)