



Media Fairness Initiative

A Look at Bias in the News



Media Show Double Standard on Court Nominees 6/3/09



The national media have shown a clear double standard in their treatment of President Obama's nominee to the Supreme Court, Judge Sonia Sotomayor, compared to two justices nominated by President Bush, Justice Samuel Alito and Chief Justice John Roberts.

For example, network evening newscasts used the term "conservative" to describe Judge Sotomayor's critics more often than they used the term "liberal" to describe Sotomayor herself.

Also, the networks and national newspapers like The New York Times and The Washington Post described Justice Alito and Justice Roberts as "conservative" far more frequently than they have labeled Judge Sotomayor as "liberal."

In addition, the national media have heralded Judge Sotomayor's impressive life story, despite largely ignoring a similar personal story of former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales during his confirmation.

Networks Ignore Cost of Cap-And-Trade

Network news programs have been reluctant to cover cap-and-trade legislation and its enormous cost to taxpayers, according to an analysis by the Media Research Center (MRC).

The three network evening news programs mentioned cap-and-trade in only four stories between Jan. 20 and May 25, according to MRC. **None of the stories thoroughly explained the policy and examined its costs to businesses, consumers and the national economy.** Three of the four stories only mentioned briefly cap-and-trade.



The Congressional Budget Office estimated that the legislation would cost U.S. families an average of \$1,600 in increased energy costs each year.

Thousands Sign Petition to Protect Free Speech

Nearly 400,000 Americans have signed a petition to protect free speech and oppose the reinstatement of the so-called Fairness Doctrine, according to the Free Speech Alliance (FSA).

The FSA delivered the petitions to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid urging them to allow a stand-alone floor vote on the Broadcaster Freedom Act, which would prevent reinstatement of the Fairness Doctrine.

The FSA is made up of 67 organizations representing millions of Americans dedicated to defending free speech against a return of the Fairness Doctrine or any other assault on the First Amendment and talk radio.