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 Our mission is to ensure that everyone has the knowledge, opportunity and freedom to make every child a wanted child and every family a healthy family.

March 27, 2003

Senate Legislative Affairs and Operations Committee  
Testimony by Pat Elzy, Director of Public Affairs  
Planned Parenthood Mar Monte

For the record, my name is Pat Elzy. I am the Director of Public Affairs for Planned Parenthood Mar Monte in Reno. On behalf of both Planned Parenthood Mar Monte and Planned Parenthood of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas, I am here to voice our opposition to Senate Joint Resolution 6 which requests Congress to vote on the appointment of Miguel A. Estrada to the United States Court of Appeals.

We believe the lack of information available regarding Mr. Estrada's views and judicial philosophy raise serious concerns about whether he should be given the enormous honor and responsibility of a lifetime appointment to this nation's second most powerful federal court. Both at his hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee and in written questions, Mr. Estrada was asked directly about his views on privacy and reproductive rights. He failed to answer substantive questions on fundamental legal matters. Mr. Estrada also declined to provide the Senate with the legal memoranda he wrote while working for the Department of Justice. Without more information about Mr. Estrada, it would be simply irresponsible to put him on the bench.

Planned Parenthood, the world's largest and most trusted voluntary family planning organization, has a long-standing history of working to ensure the protection of reproductive rights as well as working to advance the social, economic, and political rights of women. Because lower federal courts exercise enormous power in deciding cases involving women's rights, the right to privacy, reproductive freedoms, and other basic civil rights, we believe that judges appointed to these courts must demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding these fundamental rights.

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Judicial appointments should be considered in a thoughtful thorough manner. Unless and until Mr. Estrada responds to legitimate questions about his judicial philosophy, his nomination must be blocked. This nominee has not demonstrated a commitment to protect our hard-won civil liberties.

Planned Parenthood joins the following broad coalition of civil rights, labor, women's, and environmental organizations in opposing Mr. Estrada's nomination to the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals:

- ADA Watch/Coalition for Disability Rights
- AFL-CIO
- Alliance for Justice
- American Association of University Women
- Americans for Democratic Action
- Congressional Black Caucus
- Congressional Hispanic Caucus
- Earthjustice
- Feminist Majority
- Labor Council For Latin American Advancement
- Leadership Conference on Civil Rights
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc.
- NARAL Pro-Choice America
- National Council of Jewish Women
- National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association
- National Fair Housing Alliance
- National Organization for Women
- National Partnership for Women and Families
- National Women's Law Center
- People for the American Way
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America
- Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund
- Sierra Club
- Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project
- United Auto Workers
- Working Assets

In conclusion, I ask you to oppose Senate Joint Resolution 6. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to express these concerns.

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