

NOTABLE
Hispanic Americans

**SONIA
SOTOMAYOR**

FIRST LATINA TO SERVE ON THE SUPREME COURT



Kevin Cunningham

Mitchell Lane

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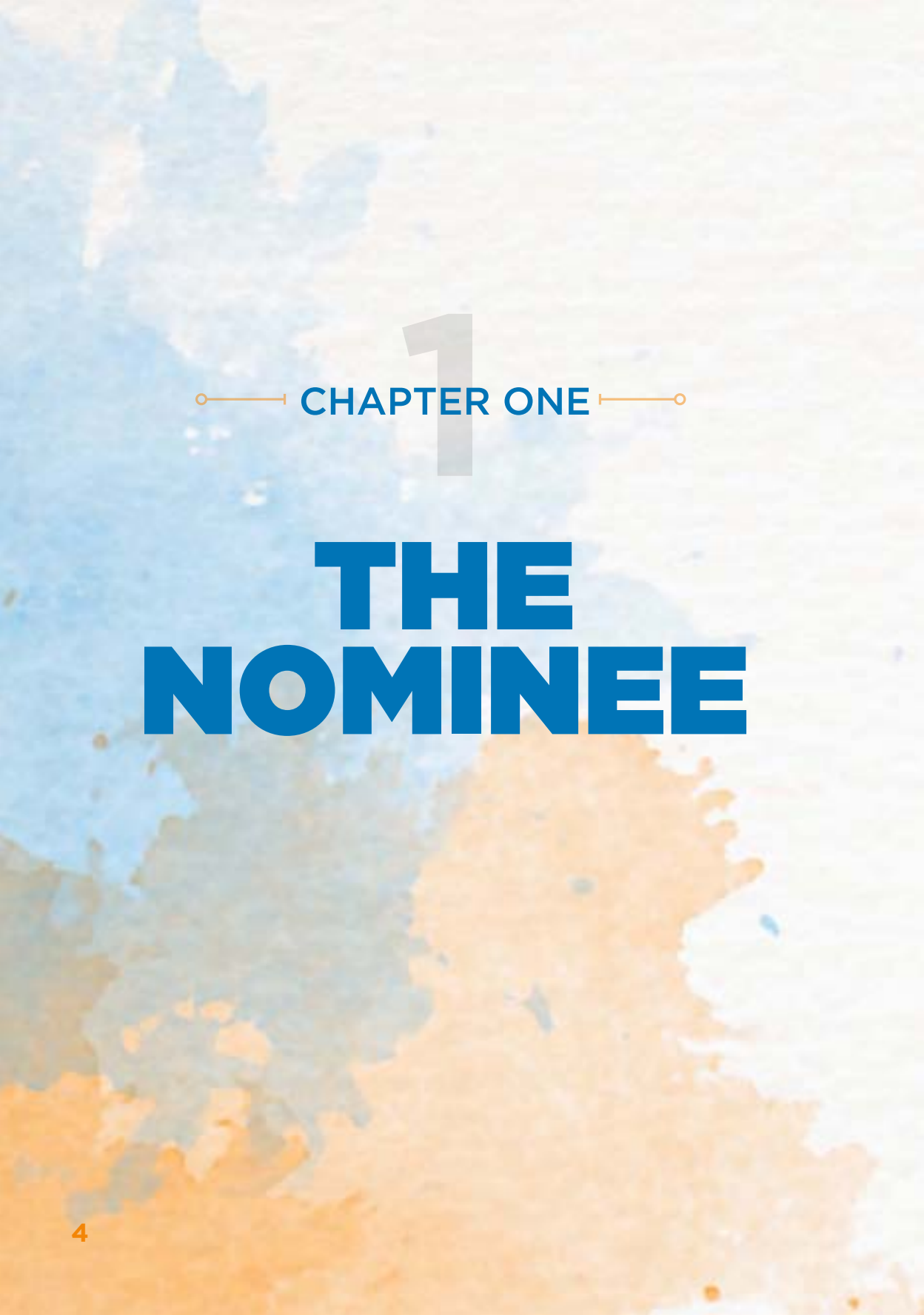
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CHAPTER ONE

**THE
NOMINEE**



President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor at the White House.

On May 26, 2009, President Barack Obama announced that he had chosen Sonia Sotomayor to serve on the Supreme Court. Justices on the Supreme Court have the final say in what becomes law in the United States. Their decisions can and often do affect every American citizen.

CHAPTER ONE

“Well, Sonia,” President Obama said, “what you’ve shown in your life is that it doesn’t matter where you come from, what you look like, or what challenges life throws your way, no dream is beyond reach in the United States of America.”

As the first Hispanic woman proposed for the Court, Sotomayor attracted more attention than most nominees. **Allies** lined up to praise her. People opposed to her searched for ways to defeat her nomination.

Supporters pointed out Sotomayor had served as a **federal** judge longer than any Supreme Court nominee in the last 100 years. Coworkers noted her hard work and tough-but-fair attitude. She had succeeded as a judge and a lawyer after being a top student at two of America’s best universities.

But the criticism turned ugly. One professor said Sotomayor was “not nearly as smart as she seems to think she is.” (He took back the words.) Journalists and TV hosts hinted Obama gave her special treatment because she was a person of color and had help from **affirmative action** programs.



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