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Presenter: Judith Polson,  
NOW-NYC Chair

## **Democratic Party Must Deliver on Women's Issues** *NOW-NYC Chair Judith Polson Urges DNC to Include Women's Voices*

Thank you for holding these hearings. My name is Judith Polson. I am a downsized Wall Street Vice-President. I am also a grassroots activist, an early donor to Senator Obama's campaign, and a maximum donor to Senator Clinton's campaign.

The women I know do not give their support. We negotiate it.

Despite Jeremiah Wright's pronouncement, I, as a woman, do know exactly what it is like to have to work twice as hard to get accepted by the "rich folks who run everything". Women were a key force in the abolitionist movement, and in the ratification of the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Senator Obama has stated that he would be president of all the people. Senator Obama: 54% of the American people are women and girls. Yet when your fellow Senator was compared to a witch, a scolding mother, and a nagging 1<sup>st</sup> wife, the silence from the Democratic leadership, including Senators Obama and Edwards, and Governor Dean, was deafening. Had similar racial epithets been hurled against Senator Obama, the public outrage from the men and women of the party would have been nuclear.

Therefore, I call upon the DNC to include the following 4 planks in the party's 2008 platform:

- Plank 1: access to health care for all women, for all their health needs, even those needs that some people don't approve of.
- Plank 2: concrete policies to reduce violence against women, and to treat such violence as the hate crimes they are.
- Plank 3: pay equity, so that women are fairly compensated for the value they add to our economy. As the *New York Times* reported yesterday, in the last 8 years, more than 12 years of gains for women holding jobs in their prime earning years have been erased. Even the few women at higher pay grades are being forced out and replaced by men—Erin Callan from Lehman, Diane Scheuneman from Merrill Lynch, and yes, Carly Fiorentina from HP, are only a few of the most visible examples.
- Plank 4: a condemnation of the injection of false and repugnant gender stereotypes into our democratic process, and a commitment to fight sexism with the same dedication as the party now fights other forms of bias.

In conclusion: I remember the disunity of the '68 convention, and I do not wish to see that recur. And I am excited at the prospect of voting for a black person for President. But all that does not change the fact that Democratic women have made enough sandwiches. If Senator Obama and the DNC want my support—and the support of women like me—they must deliver on women's issues of health care, pay equity, and elimination of sexism and violence against women. And regardless -- I won't iron anybody's shirt.