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Jailed

The U.S. Attorney's Office recommended no jail time. D.C.'s Pretrial Services Agency called for community service. But last week, D.C. Superior Court Judge Brian Holeman sent Elena Sassower to prison for six months -- the maximum penalty for disrupting Congress. Sassower, a judicial ethics advocate who was arrested last year after requesting to testify at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, has filed an emergency appeal requesting a stay of her sentence. The June 28 sentencing surprised many in the courtroom. Holeman, one of the court's newest judges, ordered that Sassower be taken into custody immediately. Mark Goldstone, Sassower's attorney adviser and a veteran protest lawyer, calls the sentence unfair. Holeman initially sentenced Sassower to 92 days and suspended that term, placing her on two years' probation. But as Holeman ticked off a long list of probation requirements, including staying away from all federal buildings on Capitol Hill and cutting off nearly all communication with various senators and staffers, Sassower became visibly agitated. Sassower rejected probation after Holeman said she would have to write letters of apology to certain senators and a federal judge, whose nomination Sassower opposed.

-- Tom Schoenberg