



**From: Tom Jensen, Director of Public Policy Polling**

**To: Interested Parties**

**Subject: Americans Don't Trust Trump on Supreme Court Vacancy; 65% Want Hearings**

**Date: 5-9-16**

A new national Public Policy Polling survey finds Americans don't trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice, and would much rather have that decision in the hands of either Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton. Beyond that, there is growing support for filling the seat this year and failure to do so could result in strong backlash for Senate Republicans this fall.

Key findings from the survey include:

-Only 38% of voters nationally trust Donald Trump to nominate a Supreme Court justice, compared to 53% who don't trust him to do that. Only 57% of voters even within his own party trust Trump to make a selection, and more than 80% of Democrats as well as a majority of independents don't trust him with that responsibility.

-Americans, by double digit margins, trust both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton more with the duty of picking a Supreme Court justice than Trump. Obama beats Trump 53/37 on that question, and Clinton does by a similar 52/37 spread as well. What's particularly noteworthy is that in addition to more than 80% of Democrats, 29% of Republicans would prefer either Obama or Clinton making that decision to their own party's presumptive nominee for President.

-By a 58/37 spread, Americans want the Supreme Court seat to be filled this year. That's actually up from 56/40 support for filling it this year on a national PPP poll in early March. The reason for the shift is that 39% of Republicans now think the seat should be filled immediately, up from just 26% two months ago. That seems to suggest the





ascendance of Trump has changed the minds of many GOP voters across the country about continuing to obstruct the nomination of Merrick Garland.

-There's strong bipartisan consensus nationally that Garland at least deserves a fair shot at being confirmed. 65% of voters think the Senate should have hearings on his nomination, to only 17% opposed to doing that. There's 81/6 support among Democrats, 56/22 among independents, and 55/26 support even among Republicans for holding hearings.

-There could be a big price to pay politically for Senate Republicans if they continue to obstruct the Garland nomination. 50% of voters say they'd be less likely to vote for a Senator who opposed having confirmation hearings, compared to only 18% who say that stance would make them more likely to vote for their Senator. Among pivotal independents, voters are 23 points less likely to vote for a Senator opposed to at least having hearings on Garland's nomination.

-Mitch McConnell's unpopularity continues to be a huge drag on the brand of Senate Republicans. Only 11% of voters nationally approve of the job he's doing as Senate Majority Leader, to 61% who disapprove. Incumbents running for reelection across the country this year will be hurt by their association with him.

The bottom line is pretty clear- Americans want the Supreme Court seat filled this year. And support for doing that has gotten even greater over the last few months due to the substantial number of Republicans who don't trust Donald Trump making that decision for the country. Voters see the refusal of Senate Republicans to even hold hearings on Merrick Garland's nomination as unreasonable, and this issue could hurt them in the polls in November. It's been 3 months now, and there's no indication this political problem for them is going away.

Public Policy Polling interviewed 884 registered voters nationally on May 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. The survey's margin of error is +/-3.3%. This research was conducted on behalf of Americans United for Change.





## National Survey Results

- Q1** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Donald Trump?
- Favorable*..... 35%
  - Unfavorable* ..... 55%
  - Not sure* ..... 9%
- Q2** Do you trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice, or not?
- Trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice* ..... 38%
  - Do not trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice* ..... 53%
  - Not sure* ..... 9%
- Q3** Who would you trust more to nominate a Supreme Court justice: Barack Obama or Donald Trump?
- Trust Barack Obama more to nominate a Supreme Court justice* ..... 53%
  - Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice* ..... 37%
  - Not sure* ..... 9%
- Q4** Who would you trust more to nominate a Supreme Court justice: Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump?
- Trust Hillary Clinton more to nominate a Supreme Court justice* ..... 52%
  - Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice* ..... 37%
  - Not sure* ..... 11%
- Q5** Do you approve or disapprove of Senator Mitch McConnell's job performance?
- Approve* ..... 11%
  - Disapprove*..... 61%
  - Not sure* ..... 28%
- Q6** Do you think the vacant seat on the Supreme Court caused by the death of Antonin Scalia should be filled this year, or do you think the seat should be left empty for the rest of the year?
- The vacant seat on the Supreme Court should be filled this year* ..... 58%
  - The seat should be left empty for the rest of the year*..... 37%
  - Not sure* ..... 5%
- Q7** Do you think the Senate should have confirmation hearings for the nominee to fill Antonin Scalia's seat on the Supreme Court, or should he be rejected without being given any consideration?
- The Senate should have confirmation hearings for the nominee to fill the vacant Supreme Court seat*..... 65%
  - The nominee should be rejected without being given any consideration* ..... 17%
  - Not sure* ..... 18%
- Q8** If your Senator opposed having confirmation hearings for the nominee to fill Antonin Scalia's seat on the Supreme Court, would that make you more or less likely to vote for them this fall, or would it not make a difference?
- More likely*..... 18%
  - Less likely* ..... 50%
  - Wouldn't make a difference*..... 31%
- Q9** If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.
- Woman* ..... 53%
  - Man*..... 47%
- Q10** If you are a Democrat, press 1. If a Republican, press 2. If an independent, press 3.
- Democrat* ..... 38%
  - Republican*..... 38%
  - Independent*..... 24%



**Q11** If you are Hispanic, press 1. If white, press 2. If African American, press 3. If other, press 4.

<i>Hispanic</i> .....	10%
<i>White</i> .....	70%
<i>African American</i> .....	12%
<i>Other</i> .....	7%

**Q12** If you are 18 to 45 years old, press 1. If 46 to 65, press 2. If you are older than 65, press 3.

<i>18 to 45</i> .....	38%
<i>46 to 65</i> .....	39%
<i>Older than 65</i> .....	23%



	Base	Gender	
		Wom...	Man
<b>Trump Favorability</b>			
Favorable	35%	34%	37%
Unfavorable	55%	59%	51%
Not sure	9%	7%	12%

	Base	Gender	
		Wom...	Man
<b>Trust Trump to Nominate Justice Yes/No</b>			
Trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice	38%	39%	36%
Do not trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice	53%	55%	51%
Not sure	9%	6%	13%

	Base	Gender	
		Wom...	Man
<b>Trust More to Nominate: Obama or Trump</b>			
Trust Barack Obama more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	53%	51%	57%
Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	37%	38%	37%
Not sure	9%	12%	6%

	Base	Gender	
		Wom...	Man
<b>Trust More to Nominate: Clinton or Trump</b>			
Trust Hillary Clinton more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	52%	48%	56%
Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	37%	37%	37%
Not sure	11%	15%	7%

	Base	Gender	
		Wom...	Man
<b>McConnell Approval</b>			
Approve	11%	8%	15%
Disapprove	61%	57%	64%
Not sure	28%	35%	21%

	Base	Gender	
		Wom...	Man
<b>Vacant SCOTUS Seat Filled / Left Empty</b>			
The vacant seat on the Supreme Court should be filled this year	58%	55%	61%
The seat should be left empty for the rest of the year	37%	40%	33%
Not sure	5%	5%	6%





	Base	Gender	
		Wom...	Man
<b>Senate Hold Confirmation Hearings Yes/No</b>			
The Senate should have confirmation hearings for the nominee to fill the vacant Supreme Court seat	65%	62%	68%
The nominee should be rejected without being given any consideration	17%	17%	18%
Not sure	18%	21%	14%

	Base	Gender	
		Wom...	Man
<b>Senator Oppose Hearings More/Less Likely</b>			
More likely	18%	19%	17%
Less likely	50%	48%	53%
Wouldn't make a difference	31%	33%	30%

	Base	Party		
		Democr...	Republic...	Independ...
<b>Trump Favorability</b>				
Favorable	35%	16%	56%	34%
Unfavorable	55%	80%	31%	54%
Not sure	9%	4%	14%	11%

	Base	Party		
		Democr...	Republic...	Independ...
<b>Trust Trump to Nominate Justice Yes/No</b>				
Trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice	38%	17%	57%	40%
Do not trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice	53%	80%	28%	50%
Not sure	9%	3%	14%	10%





	Base	Party		
		Democr...	Republic...	Independ...
<b>Trust More to Nominate: Obama or Trump</b>				
Trust Barack Obama more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	53%	87%	29%	38%
Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	37%	12%	62%	40%
Not sure	9%	1%	9%	23%

	Base	Party		
		Democr...	Republic...	Independ...
<b>Trust More to Nominate: Clinton or Trump</b>				
Trust Hillary Clinton more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	52%	83%	29%	40%
Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	37%	13%	61%	36%
Not sure	11%	4%	10%	24%

	Base	Party		
		Democr...	Republic...	Independ...
<b>McConnell Approval</b>				
Approve	11%	9%	18%	4%
Disapprove	61%	68%	53%	61%
Not sure	28%	22%	30%	35%

	Base	Party		
		Democr...	Republic...	Independ...
<b>Vacant SCOTUS Seat Filled / Left Empty</b>				
The vacant seat on the Supreme Court should be filled this year	58%	86%	39%	42%
The seat should be left empty for the rest of the year	37%	12%	57%	43%
Not sure	5%	2%	3%	15%

	Base	Party		
		Democr...	Republic...	Independ...
<b>Senate Hold Confirmation Hearings Yes/No</b>				
The Senate should have confirmation hearings for the nominee to fill the vacant Supreme Court seat	65%	81%	55%	56%
The nominee should be rejected without being given any consideration	17%	6%	26%	22%
Not sure	18%	13%	20%	22%

	Base	Party		
		Democr...	Republic...	Independ...
<b>Senator Oppose Hearings More/Less Likely</b>				
More likely	18%	15%	21%	18%
Less likely	50%	66%	41%	41%
Wouldn't make a difference	31%	19%	38%	41%





	Base	Race			
		Hispani- c	White	African Americ...	Other
<b>Trump Favorability</b>					
Favorable	35%	11%	45%	5%	24%
Unfavorable	55%	63%	50%	88%	38%
Not sure	9%	26%	5%	6%	38%

	Base	Race			
		Hispani- c	White	African Americ...	Other
<b>Trust Trump to Nominate Justice Yes/No</b>					
Trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice	38%	11%	48%	8%	24%
Do not trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice	53%	63%	47%	86%	41%
Not sure	9%	26%	4%	6%	35%

	Base	Race			
		Hispani- c	White	African Americ...	Other
<b>Trust More to Nominate: Obama or Trump</b>					
Trust Barack Obama more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	53%	91%	44%	89%	32%
Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	37%	8%	49%	10%	13%
Not sure	9%	1%	7%	1%	55%

	Base	Race			
		Hispani- c	White	African Americ...	Other
<b>Trust More to Nominate: Clinton or Trump</b>					
Trust Hillary Clinton more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	52%	89%	42%	90%	30%
Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	37%	9%	49%	6%	14%
Not sure	11%	1%	9%	4%	56%

	Base	Race			
		Hispani- c	White	African Americ...	Other
<b>McConnell Approval</b>					
Approve	11%	29%	10%	2%	16%
Disapprove	61%	53%	65%	50%	48%
Not sure	28%	18%	25%	48%	36%

	Base	Race			
		Hispani- c	White	African Americ...	Other
<b>Vacant SCOTUS Seat Filled / Left Empty</b>					
The vacant seat on the Supreme Court should be filled this year	58%	80%	51%	88%	43%
The seat should be left empty for the rest of the year	37%	15%	47%	5%	21%
Not sure	5%	4%	2%	6%	35%







	Base	Race			
		Hispani- c	White	African Americ...	Other
<b>Senate Hold Confirmation Hearings Yes/No</b>					
The Senate should have confirmation hearings for the nominee to fill the vacant Supreme Court seat	65%	86%	64%	67%	46%
The nominee should be rejected without being given any consideration	17%	4%	23%	1%	8%
Not sure	18%	10%	13%	32%	46%

	Base	Race			
		Hispani- c	White	African Americ...	Other
<b>Senator Oppose Hearings More/Less Likely</b>					
More likely	18%	3%	21%	6%	29%
Less likely	50%	78%	50%	51%	18%
Wouldn't make a difference	31%	19%	29%	43%	53%

	Base	Age		
		18 to 45	46 to 65	Older than ...
<b>Trump Favorability</b>				
Favorable	35%	30%	40%	38%
Unfavorable	55%	58%	53%	54%
Not sure	9%	13%	7%	8%

	Base	Age		
		18 to 45	46 to 65	Older than ...
<b>Trust Trump to Nominate Justice Yes/No</b>				
Trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice	38%	29%	43%	43%
Do not trust Donald Trump to nominate a new Supreme Court justice	53%	56%	52%	51%
Not sure	9%	15%	5%	7%





	Base	Age		
		18 to 45	46 to 65	Older than ...
<b>Trust More to Nominate: Obama or Trump</b>				
Trust Barack Obama more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	53%	56%	52%	51%
Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	37%	29%	42%	42%
Not sure	9%	14%	5%	7%

	Base	Age		
		18 to 45	46 to 65	Older than ...
<b>Trust More to Nominate: Clinton or Trump</b>				
Trust Hillary Clinton more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	52%	58%	48%	48%
Trust Donald Trump more to nominate a Supreme Court justice	37%	24%	45%	45%
Not sure	11%	18%	7%	7%

	Base	Age		
		18 to 45	46 to 65	Older than ...
<b>McConnell Approval</b>				
Approve	11%	12%	9%	14%
Disapprove	61%	56%	66%	59%
Not sure	28%	32%	25%	27%

	Base	Age		
		18 to 45	46 to 65	Older than ...
<b>Vacant SCOTUS Seat Filled / Left Empty</b>				
The vacant seat on the Supreme Court should be filled this year	58%	64%	56%	51%
The seat should be left empty for the rest of the year	37%	29%	40%	43%
Not sure	5%	7%	4%	6%





	Base	Age		
		18 to 45	46 to 65	Older than ...
<b>Senate Hold Confirmation Hearings Yes/No</b>				
<b>The Senate should have confirmation hearings for the nominee to fill the vacant Supreme Court seat</b>	65%	62%	68%	65%
<b>The nominee should be rejected without being given any consideration</b>	17%	12%	21%	20%
<b>Not sure</b>	18%	26%	11%	15%

	Base	Age		
		18 to 45	46 to 65	Older than ...
<b>Senator Oppose Hearings More/Less Likely</b>				
<b>More likely</b>	18%	16%	17%	24%
<b>Less likely</b>	50%	50%	52%	49%
<b>Wouldn't make a difference</b>	31%	34%	31%	27%

