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More Support Than Oppose Hagel

Substantially more Americans support than oppose Barack Obama's selection of Chuck Hagel as secretary of defense, a nomination that's raised some objections but was boosted today by a key senator's endorsement.

Forty-two percent in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll support Hagel's nomination, vs. 24 percent opposed. That leaves a large number, 33 percent, undecided, as is typical in matters, such as a cabinet nomination, on which the public is not heavily focused.

Critics have questioned Hagel's commitment to Israel, his reluctance as senator to sanction Iran unilaterally and his views on gay rights, among other matters. He received help today when Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said he was prepared to support Hagel. That follows Hagel's endorsement by former Secretary of State Colin Powell on Sunday.

A former Republican U.S. senator from Nebraska, Hagel's nomination is supported by 61 percent of Democrats in the ABC/Post survey (with just 12 percent opposed) and 40 percent of independents (vs. 28 percent opposed). Despite his party affiliation, fewer Republicans, 28 percent, support the nomination; 35 percent oppose it.

Similarly, given his selection by Obama, Hagel is backed by 56 percent of liberals, a key Obama support group – nearly double Hagel's 31 percent support among conservatives. Moderates favor the choice by 44-19 percent in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#).

The survey was done by landline and cellular telephone Jan. 10-13 among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, and the results have a 3.5 point-error margin. Here's the full question:

Do you support or oppose Obama's nomination of former Republican Senator Chuck Hagel as secretary of defense? Do you feel that way strongly, or somewhat?

Support NET	42
Support, strongly	19
Support, somewhat	23
Oppose NET	24
Oppose, somewhat	10
Oppose, strongly	14
No opinion	33