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Public Backs Scalia Replacement Hearings by Nearly 2-1

By Ally Brodsky

Americans broadly favor Senate hearings on a U.S. Supreme Court nomination by Barack Obama, with nearly half of Republicans – as well as large majorities of Democrats and independents alike – pushing back against the GOP leadership on whether to consider a nominee.

Sixty-three percent overall in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll favor hearings and a vote on whether to accept Obama's nomination of a replacement for Antonin Scalia, the high court justice who died Feb. 13. Half as many, 32 percent, say hearings should be set aside and the nomination left for Obama's successor, the position taken by the Senate's Republican leaders.

Seventy-nine percent of Democrats and 62 percent of political independents favor hearings on Obama's nominee. Republicans split on the issue, with 46 percent in favor, 49 percent opposed.

There are similar ideological divisions in the poll, conducted for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#), with three-quarters of liberals and 71 percent of moderates supporting the hearings. Conservatives are divided, with 48 percent in favor and 46 percent against.

Strength of sentiment also is greater for rather than against Senate hearings. Forty-four percent of Americans are "strongly" in favor, compared with 25 percent strongly opposed.

Among other groups, 80 percent of those who approve of Obama's work in office support hearings, but so do 60 percent of those who "somewhat" disapprove. Opposition reaches a majority, 57 percent, only among those who disapprove strongly.

Traditionally more Democratic groups broadly support hearings, including 86 percent of blacks and 67 percent of Hispanics. But so do 59 percent of whites.

Support reaches 73 percent among college graduates and 69 percent among adults younger than 40. It's notably low, 44 percent, among those who are angry with the way the federal government is working, and 56 percent among seniors.

Obama reportedly began meeting with potential nominees this week.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone March 3-6, 2016, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,000 adults. Results have a margin of sampling error of 3.5 points, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 34-25-32 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents.

The survey was produced for ABC News by Langer Research Associates of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y. See details on the survey's methodology [here](#).

Full results follow.

1-28, 33 previously released; 29-30, 32 held for release.

31. The death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia has opened a seat on the U.S. Supreme Court. After Obama nominates someone to replace Scalia, do you think the Senate should (hold hearings and vote on whether to accept the nomination), or should the Senate (NOT hold hearings, which would block the nomination and leave it to the next president)? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

| | -- Should hold hearings -- | | | --- Not hold hearings --- | | | No |
|--------|----------------------------|----------|----------|---------------------------|----------|----------|---------|
| | NET | Strongly | Somewhat | NET | Somewhat | Strongly | opinion |
| 3/6/16 | 63 | 44 | 19 | 32 | 6 | 25 | 5 |

*** END ***