



From: Yujia Sun, Public Policy Polling®

To: Interested Parties

Subject: Majority of Swing State Voters Agree that Vacant SCOTUS Seat Should be Filled this Year; Plurality Less Likely to Vote for Candidates Who Oppose Hearings

Date: September 7, 2016

A new Public Policy Polling survey finds that a majority of voters across the crucial Senate battleground states of New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Iowa are unified in supporting President Obama's efforts to fill the vacant seat on the Supreme Court before the end of the year, and they endorse – by wide margins – the Senate ending its stalemate and holding confirmation hearings for nominee Judge Merrick Garland.

53% of New Hampshire voters, 51% of Pennsylvania voters, and 50% of Iowa voters agree that the empty seat should be filled by President Obama this calendar year as opposed to the following year when the next President takes office, as Senate Republicans have proposed for the last 175 days. And, by margins of 27 points in New Hampshire (56/29), 25 points in Pennsylvania (56/31), and 26 points in Iowa (56/30), voters say that the Senate should uphold its constitutional duty and have confirmation hearings for President Obama's nominee Judge Garland to fill the vacancy.

The Republican senators in these swing states are all in tightly contested races this November, and would be wise to reconsider their unpopular stances on the nomination of Judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court. The Democratic challengers are leading the Republican incumbents by three points in both New Hampshire and Pennsylvania, and in Iowa, six points separates Democratic challenger Patty Judge and Republican incumbent Chuck Grassley. But voters are committed to taking action at the ballot box this November, with a plurality of voters across all three states (39% in New Hampshire, 36% in Pennsylvania, and 40% in Iowa) saying they would be less likely to vote for their incumbent Republican senators if they opposed holding hearings for Garland.

Additional findings from the survey include:

- Independent voters are strongly in favor of ending the gridlock over Judge Garland's nomination. In all three states (54% in NH, 53% in PA, and 58% in IA), a majority of Independents believe that the Senate should hold confirmation



hearings for Garland. A plurality of Independents in both New Hampshire (38%) and Pennsylvania (42%) say they would be less likely to vote for their incumbent Republican senators if they opposed Garland's confirmation hearing.

- More than three in four voters in the three states (76% in New Hampshire, 82% in Pennsylvania, 77% in Iowa) – including majorities of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents – believe that 150 days or less is an appropriate amount of time for the Senate to consider and vote on the President's nominee. Judge Merrick Garland's nomination has remained before the Senate for 175 days.
- A majority of voters in all three states (52% in NH, 50% in PA, 51% in IA), including a plurality of Independents in all three, believe that their respective Republican Senators are playing politics rather than doing what is in the best interest of the country by refusing to hold confirmation hearings for Merrick Garland.
- In addition to voters' disapproval of holding up the Supreme Court nomination, a majority of voters in the three states (54% in NH, 51% in PA, 52% in IA) also disapprove of Senate Republicans shutting down confirmation hearings on President Obama's nominees to lower federal Courts.

PPP surveyed 585 likely New Hampshire voters, 814 likely Pennsylvania voters, and 827 likely Iowa voters from August 30-31, 2016. The margin of error is +/-4.1% for the New Hampshire survey, +/-3.4% for the Pennsylvania survey, and +/-3.4% for the Iowa survey. 80% of interviews for the poll were conducted over the phone with 20% interviewed over the internet to reach respondents who don't have landline telephones.