

TEA PARTY PATRIOTS

Supreme Court Nomination Toolkit



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PATRIOTS

PURSUE YOUR AMERICAN DREAM

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How to Use this Toolkit

Dear Patriots:

Tea Party Patriots' Support Team frequently provides toolkits to help you engage on the major legislative battles taking place in Washington, DC. This toolkit is focused on the Supreme Court vacancy left by the late Justice Antonin Scalia. Justice Scalia was the Court's most influential Justice. He consistently and ardently defended the Constitution. His most significant contribution, in fact, may not be the opinions he authored – as cherished as those are - but actually the way he helped shape the Court's approach to the Constitution. Over the past three decades, he faithfully insisted on looking closely at the text of the Constitution, the intent of our nation's founders, and the historical application of the law, which, to a remarkable degree, propelled the entire Court to delve deep into the Constitution.

President Obama and the Left are eager to fill the vacancy during this election season, but this would be a huge mistake for three reasons: 1) There is really no rush to fill the vacancy. The Court has operated well with eight justices in the past and will be able to function until after the election with eight Justices; 2) Approving of a Supreme Court Justice during an election year would be historically significant – and in fact is such a rare occurrence that it has been more than 80 years since it last happened; 3) Allowing a lame duck president to make such a lifetime appointment to the Court would rob the American people of their voice in this process.

This toolkit is designed to help you engage with Senators and to raise awareness in your community about the significance of this Supreme Court fight. We have included a sample letter to the editor, talking points, sample social media, and a sample letter to your Senator.

We look forward to seeing how you employ these resources!

The Tea Party Patriots Support Team



Talking Points about the Supreme Court Vacancy

- **It has been more than 80 years since a Supreme Court seat that was vacated in a presidential election year was filled by Senate confirmation.** (Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes retired in 1932, and his seat was filled by Justice Benjamin Cardozo.)
- **It has been 100 years since a Supreme Court seat that was vacated in a presidential election year due to the death of the sitting justice was filled by Senate confirmation.** (Justice Joseph Rucker Lamar died in 1916 and his seat was filled by Justice Louis Brandeis when President Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, nominated him and the Democrat-controlled Senate confirmed him.)
- **At no time since the Civil War has a Supreme Court seat that was vacated in a presidential election year been filled by Senate confirmation by a Senate that was controlled by a different party than the party of the nominating President when the President was in the final lame duck year of his term.**
- When the Democrats were in the majority in the Senate from June 2001 to January 2003, they denied a Judiciary Committee hearing to 32 of President George W. Bush's nominees. The Democrats want Americans to forget that recent history as they pressure the GOP to rush to confirm President Obama's nominee.
- Elections have consequences. One of the consequences of the 2014 elections, in which Republicans took the majority in the Senate, is that President Obama cannot expect the Senate to rubber-stamp his nominee selections.

Sample Social Media

SAMPLE TWEETS:

[.@GrassleyOffice](#): Please remain firm and wait until after election for #SCOTUS hearings.
#NoHearingsNoVotes

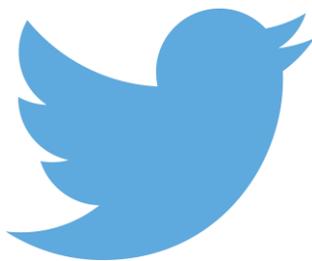
[.@KellyAyotte](#): No #SCOTUS confirmation until after #election2016. #NoHearingsNoVotes

[.@SenateMajLdr](#): No #SCOTUS confirmation until after #election2016! Let the people decide.
#NoHearingsNoVotes

In 2007 @SenSchumer agreed with us that there should not be a #SCOTUS confirmation in last year of presidency. #NoHearingsNoVotes

No more @BarackObama nominees to #SCOTUS. Let the people decide in #Election2016!
#NoHearingsNoVotes

Senate Dems from 01-03 denied hearings to 32 Bush nominees. But now they want to ram through Obama #SCOTUS nominee?? #NoHearingsNoVotes





How to Write a Letter to the Editor

What is a Letter to the Editor?

A letter to the editor is a letter written to the Editor of a newspaper. The letter is an opportunity for you to express your opinion about a recent article published in the paper or an issue in the news.

Writing letters to the editor is an important engagement tool for activists. They allow activists to do the following:

- 1) Reach a broader audience than you normally would have;
- 2) Hold your local journalists accountable;
- 3) Present alternative views on political issues.

Letters to the editor are usually found in the first section of the newspaper or on the editorial page.

Guidelines for Getting a Letter to the editor Published

Most newspapers publish guidelines with their specific requirements for getting a letter published, but here are some general rules that will help you get your letter to the editor published.

- * Include your name and address and a telephone number where you can be reached.
- * Be respectful and courteous, even when disagreeing with the Editorial Board about a specific issue.
- * Be specific. If you are opposed to Obamacare, mention the specific reasons why. Provide examples.
- * Cite your sources. If you include any quoted material, be sure to correctly cite your source or attribute the quote.
- * Use proper grammar. Spellcheck your letter and be sure to use proper grammar. Refer to *The Elements of Style* for a great overview of effective writing.
- * Be concise. Letters to the editor are much more likely to be published if they are 300 words or less. Make your point as clearly and concisely as possible.

Sample Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Since the late Justice Antonin Scalia's tragic passing last month, Democrats in the Senate have told us repeatedly about the importance of filling the vacancy immediately with an Obama nominee. But that argument runs directly opposite of historical precedent, the Democrats' own record from the last ten years, and the wishes of many Americans who would prefer to wait until a new president is sworn into office next January.

On the first point about historical precedent, we see that it has been *more than 80 years* since an election-year vacancy was filled the same year. The Democrats would like us to believe that it is extraordinarily rare for a Supreme Court seat to remain unfilled; in reality, it would be historically significant if Justice Scalia's seat were to be filled during this election year.

On the second point of the Democrats' record on the issue of filling judicial vacancies, the Democrats today in the Senate probably wish we did not have such easy online access to their voting records, floor statements, and YouTube videos. A simple Google search reveals that Sens. Schumer, Leahy, Reid, and Durbin repeatedly obstructed President George W. Bush's judicial nominees – and they did so before President Bush was in his final months in office. Vice President Biden, who previously served in the Senate, voted 29 times to filibuster Republican judicial nominees. President Obama, too, voted to prevent any confirmation vote for Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito.

Finally, on the third point about the American public's wishes, it is important to remember that elections have consequences. Of course, the Democrats would prefer to forget that the 2014 elections ever took place. Americans gave the GOP the majority in the Senate, in large part because we wanted to make sure that President Obama's reckless agenda would not be rubber-stamped during his last two years in office. Part of President Obama's agenda now includes making his third appointment to the Supreme Court, but there simply is no reason to rush this process.

On each of these points – historical precedent over the last century, the Democrats' own record on the topic, and the wishes of the American people – Republican Senators are on firm ground to refuse to hold a Judiciary Committee hearing this year on any Obama nominee to the Court.

It is important for us to remind [INSERT THE NAMES OF BOTH OF YOUR UNITED STATES SENATORS] that part of their duty in the Senate is to serve as a check on the executive's power. Americans want to be heard this November and there is no reason to fill the vacancy on the Court before the election.

Sample Letter to Republican Senator

YOUR NAME
YOUR ADDRESS

The Honorable **[FULL NAME]**
[INSERT WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE ADDRESS]

[INSERT DATE]

Dear Senator:

I am writing as your constituent to urge you to oppose any Supreme Court nominee President Obama makes during this lame duck period of his final term in office.

The Democrats often remind us that elections have consequences. Indeed, elections certainly do have consequences, but the Democrats would prefer to forget that the 2014 elections ever took place. Americans gave your political party the majority in the Senate, in large part because we wanted to make sure that President Obama's reckless agenda would not be rubber-stamped during his last two years in office. Part of President Obama's agenda now includes making his third appointment to the Supreme Court, but there simply is no reason to rush this process.

President Obama, New York Senator Chuck Schumer, and others on the Left are rushing to put another liberal Justice on the Court, and it's easy to understand why. Replacing Justice Scalia, the Court's most thoughtful originalist, with a progressive, "results-oriented" Justice would dramatically change the make-up of the Court, and would immediately change the outcome of several major upcoming decisions.

The Supreme Court will function perfectly fine with eight justices over the next ten months. Please do everything within your power to block President Obama from putting one more Justice on the Supreme Court.

I will follow up with your staff by phone this week to hear more about how you plan to allow the next President to make this important nomination.

I look forward to speaking with your staff!

Sincerely,

How to Host a Street Rally

Steps for Organizing a Sign Waving Event/Local Street Rally

When this movement started there were only 22 people who committed around the country to hosting events. None of those 22 really had any idea if people would show up or not. Still, they knew they had to bring attention to the out of control government. You may not have a lot of people join you the first week or two you host a sign waving event. Keep going anyway. This is important to do. Have the courage to make your voice heard even if you do not know how many others will be there with you. Know that you will NOT be alone as others around the country will also be participating simultaneously around the country.

- 1) Secure a location: You will want your event to be at an intersection with heavy traffic to maximize visibility. Confirm with local officials that you are allowed to wave signs at this location.
- 2) Make signs. We have included in this week's toolkit some suggestions for quick slogans and messages for your signs. Feel free to write your own, but try to stay with the main themes of "train wreck" AND "we can't afford this amnesty."
- 3) Have one sign say something to this effect: "We'll be here every Thursday at 5:30 pm – Come join us!"
- 4) Advertise your event: Use your Facebook and other social media to let all of your activists and friends know about the event.
- 5) Invite the press: Notify local press (TV, radio, and newspapers) that there will be a street rally on Thursday at 5:30 pm and invite them to attend.
- 6) On the day of the event, send an email reminder to all of your group's members.
- 7) Take pictures! Be sure to take pictures of your sign waving event. Send the pictures to us and also be sure to post your pictures on your Facebook page and any other online tools that you use.



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About Tea Party Patriots

Tea Party Patriots stands for every American, and is home to millions who have come together to pursue the American Dream and to keep that Dream alive for their children and grandchildren.

What unites the tea party movement is the same set of core principles that brought America together at its founding, that kindled the American Dream in the hearts of those who struggled to build our nation, and made the United States of America the greatest, most successful country in world history.

At its root the American Dream is about freedom. Freedom to work hard and the freedom to keep the fruits of your labor to use as you see fit without harming others and without hindering their freedom. Very simply, three guiding principles give rise to the freedom necessary to pursue and live the American Dream: Personal Freedom, Economic Freedom and a Debt-Free Future.