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Justice Kennedy Announces Retirement: What Happens Next

Justice Anthony Kennedy announced in late June that he will be retiring from the U.S. Supreme Court. Kennedy's retirement paves the way for President Trump's second Supreme Court nomination. In the coming months, the confirmation process hinges on approval from the U.S. Senate.

The Process:

STEP 1

NOMINATION

President Trump will announce his nomination for the vacant Supreme Court seat.

STEP 2

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

The nomination is sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee. The Committee collects necessary records on the nominee, holds hearings on the nomination, then votes on the nomination and sends its recommendation to the full Senate. The Committee can recommend, reject, or offer no recommendation regarding the nominee.

STEP 3

THE SENATE

The full senate debates the nomination. The Senate rules allow unlimited debate (filibustering) on the debate. Historically, 60 votes were necessary to end debate and bring the nomination up for a vote.

However, in April 2017, Senate Republicans voted to change filibuster rules to allow a simple majority vote (51 votes) to end debate. This makes it easier for the majority party to confirm a judicial nominee.

STEP 4

THE VOTE

When there are sufficient votes to end the debate, the Senate votes on the nomination. A simple majority of the Senators present and voting is required for the judicial nominee to be confirmed. If there is a tie, the Vice President, who serves as President of the Senate, casts the deciding vote.

As President's Trump nominee moves through the Senate confirmation process, it is **vital** that our communities contact their Senators and make their voices heard on the nominee. Democratic Senators are already calling for the nomination process to take place after the midterm elections in order to allow the newly elected Senate to confirm the President's nominee.

Call your Senators at 202-224-3121 to voice your opinion on when the nomination should take place and how you want them to vote on the eventual nominee.

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