

Obama to Nominate Chuck Hagel for Defense Secretary

Conservative Republicans, outwardly opposing Hagel, are gearing up for a fight in his confirmation process

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President Obama is [expected](#) to officially announce the [nomination](#) of former GOP Nebraska Senator Chuck Hagel for his next Secretary of Defense at some point on Monday, as conservatives prepare for grueling hearings to block his nomination.

Hagel has been the [rumored](#) presumptive nominee for weeks, and the Republican Party's dismissive reaction to his potential nomination put in doubt the Obama administration's willingness to finally pick him.

Hagel is a bit of an outsider when it comes to his own Republican Party: he's less inclined to intervene militarily abroad, favors a more diplomatic and less belligerent approach to countries like China and Iran, and has criticized the Israel lobby's disproportionate influence in Congress.

Some Republicans have simply expressed a reserved interest in a thorough confirmation hearing for Hagel.

"I'm going to take a look at all the things Chuck has said over the years," Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said on ABC's *This Week*. "I'm going to want to see how the hearings go."

But the more conservative, hawkish-on-foreign-policy GOPers are downright livid and [outwardly opposing Hagel](#).

"This is an in-your-face nomination by the president," Sen. Lindsey Graham said. "This is a controversial pick."

Some have claimed the passionate hostility towards Hagel's slightly less hawkish views is a result of Congress taking cues from the Israel lobby.

But some Israeli sources [have said](#) they don't care too much about Hagel's views on Israel – US policy towards Israel won't fundamentally change with or without him. They are primarily concerned about his less belligerent views on Iran.

But the Israeli's would be upset about virtually any nominee on those grounds, given the fact that the Netanyahu government went so far as to consider [provoking unnecessary war](#) with Iran in an attempt to indirectly drag the US into bombing Iran.

It's interesting to note that members of Congress like Lindsey Graham are more loyal to Israel even after it tried to surreptitiously drag the US into war, than they are to a longtime member of their own party.

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