

Two court vacancies to fill?

Dennis Coday | Feb. 5, 2010 NCR Today

ABC News [is reporting](#) [1] that "lawyers for President Obama have been working behind the scenes to prepare for the possibility of one, and maybe two Supreme Court vacancies this spring."

ABC says, "Court watchers believe two of the more liberal members of the court, justices John Paul Stevens and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, could decide to step aside for reasons of age and health."

Stevens is no surprise. Justice Stevens, 89, didn't hire a full complement of clerks that was seen as sign of his intent to retire. At the time, he quipped to reporters, "That can't be news" he said, declining to reveal his plans. "I'm not exactly a kid."

Justice Ginsburg, 76, has had some health issues: surgery for early stage pancreatic cancer last year. But she reported "completely normal health" in a news release last September, and ABC says that sources close to Ginsburg dismissed retirement speculation.

The speculation and the behind the scenes prep work probably say less about the health of sitting justices and more about the importance the Obama administration and his supporters place on court appointments. Obama's criticizing the court in his State of the Union address -- highly unusual if not unprecedented -- points to how intense and partisan the next one -- or two -- nominations battles will be.

Here's ABC News' picks for Obama's [Top Candidates for Supreme Court](#) [2]

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[1] http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/Supreme_Court/white-house-prepares-possibility-supreme-court-vacancies/story?id=9740077&page=1

[2] <https://www.ncronline.org/Top%20Candidates%20for%20Supreme%20Court>