

1. **Mark your confusion.**
2. **Show evidence of a close reading.**
3. **Write a 1+ page reflection.**

Kavanaugh Accuser Christine Blasey Ford Reaches Tentative Deal to Testify before Senate Judiciary Committee on Thursday

Source: Sarah D. Wire, LATimes.com, September 22, 2018

Christine Blasey Ford, the California woman who alleges Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her in high school, is willing to “provide her firsthand knowledge” to the Senate Judiciary Committee this week, her attorneys said Saturday, and the committee has tentatively agreed to hold a hearing on Thursday.

Lawyers for Ford, a research psychologist at Palo Alto University, said they want another meeting with committee staffers to negotiate her appearance, however, meaning a resolution to the politically sensitive standoff is not yet certain.

In an email to the Judiciary Committee, Ford’s lawyers said they were “disappointed with the leaks and the bullying that have tainted the process” since Ford’s name and allegations first surfaced last weekend, abruptly putting Kavanaugh’s nomination into jeopardy.

The Senate committee tentatively agreed to let Ford testify Thursday, the Associated Press reported late Saturday, although it’s not clear if Kavanaugh will face off against his accuser, or who will conduct the questioning. Representatives of the committee will speak to Ford’s lawyers Sunday to continue working out details.

Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa), the committee chairman, had not spoken publicly about the new developments as of late Saturday. He may yet decide to move forward with a committee vote on Kavanaugh on Monday, as he had wanted, or postpone a vote to accommodate Ford’s requests.

Other Republicans on the committee expressed frustration at the latest communication, with some dismissing it as a delaying tactic for partisan purposes less than two months before the midterm election.

“This is exactly where we were on Monday morning — without agreeing to a date, time, and terms we are no closer to hearing from Dr Ford then we were when her lawyers said Dr. Ford was willing to testify during their media tour,” Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah) tweeted Saturday.

Ford’s allegation that an inebriated Kavanaugh pinned her to a bed and attempted to remove her clothing while muffling her cries at a party in the early 1980s, when both were students at elite private high schools near Washington, D.C., has roiled Kavanaugh’s expected confirmation.

President Trump weighed in Friday, tweeting, “If the attack on Dr. Ford was as bad as she says, charges would have been immediately filed with local Law Enforcement Authorities by either her or her loving parents.” In response, tens of thousands of Americans began using the hashtag #WhyIDidntReport to describe their own experiences with assault.

Kavanaugh has vigorously denied Ford’s accusation. In a statement Saturday, White House spokeswoman Kerri Kupec said the nominee is “ready, willing and eager to testify as soon as possible.”

Republican leaders need to tread softly as they work to get Kavanaugh onto the Supreme Court with a slim, 51-to-49-seat majority in the Senate. His confirmation could shift the ideological makeup of the nation’s highest court for decades.

Several Senate Republicans have indicated they are eager to hear from Ford and then move forward with the process, fearful that repeated delays will prevent Kavanaugh from assuming the bench.

But some GOP senators considered likeliest to join Democrats in voting against Kavanaugh have emphasized that they aren't comfortable moving ahead without hearing directly from Ford. They will be closely watching how the Judiciary Committee treats her.

Grassley has agreed to Ford's requests to allow just one TV camera to be in the hearing room and to limit news media access, to provide breaks during the testimony, and to keep Kavanaugh out of the room while Ford testifies.

But he balked at her requests that Kavanaugh testify first, that only senators — and not committee attorneys — ask questions, and that subpoenas be issued to compel other potential witnesses to testify.

Democrats on the committee have joined Ford in pushing for those stipulations, saying that senators have a responsibility to ask the questions, and accusing Republicans of not taking the accusation seriously by rushing the hearing.

Republicans hope to avoid a repeat of the divisive confirmation hearings of Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas in 1991, and the politically awkward optics of a panel of men — in the #MeToo era — questioning a woman alleging being the victim of a sexual attack. All GOP members of the committee are male. They have pushed for staff or outside counsel to ask Ford and Kavanaugh questions.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), the highest-ranking Democrat on the committee, accused Republicans of bullying Ford and said there were unpleasant echoes of how Thomas' accuser, Anita Hill, was treated before Thomas was confirmed.

"It's clear that Republicans have learned nothing over the last 27 years," Feinstein said Friday. "Bullying a survivor of attempted rape in order to confirm a nominee — particularly at a time when she's receiving death threats — is an extreme abuse of power."

Ford first contacted Feinstein in a letter in July, seeking confidentiality. After Ford's name and allegations became public last weekend, Feinstein was criticized by Republicans and her general election opponent, Democratic California state Sen. Kevin de León, for not sharing her information before Kavanaugh had undergone his confirmation hearings.

Spokesmen for Grassley and Feinstein did not return requests for comment Saturday.

After a week of mostly silence from Ford's attorneys, Grassley initially set a 5 p.m. Friday deadline for Ford to make a decision on whether to testify, but then postponed that to 10 p.m., adding that if she did not reply the committee would go forward with a hearing Monday without her and vote on Kavanaugh's nomination.

Ford's attorneys asked late Friday evening for an extra day to consult with their client, saying the Republicans' deadline was "aggressive and artificial." Grassley said Friday he would give Ford more time to make a decision, but signaled his patience was running thin. "Dr Ford if u changed ur mind say so so we can move on I want to hear ur testimony. Come to us or we to u," he tweeted.

Possible Response Questions:

- Pick a passage from the article and respond to it.
- Discuss a "move" made by the writer in this piece that you think is good/interesting. Explain.