

NBC's *Today*

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27 seconds

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE: Supreme Court Showdown. Ketanji Brown Jackson defending her sentencing record on day two of her confirmation hearings.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Supreme Court Showdown]

KETANJI BROWN JACKSON: Once —

SENATOR JOSH HAWLEY (R-MO): You had discretion, Judge. You admit that, right? I just want to be —

JACKSON: Senator, sentencing is a discretionary act of a judge, but it's not a numbers game.

GUTHRIE: Just ahead, the Republican line of attack. The moment that led Senator Lindsey Graham to storm out and the new questions Judge Jackson will face today.

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7:14:28 a.m.

3 minutes and 3 seconds

GUTHRIE: We turn now to Craig. He is — we have the confirmation of Judge Jackson, now it'll be the third day today.

CRAIG MELVIN: Yeah, Savannah and Hoda. Good morning. Good morning to you as well. Judge Jackson will be sitting for her second and final day of questions to become the high court's next justice. She faced hours of questioning on Tuesday, including a few heated moments with Republican lawmakers. NBC's Garrett Haake is covering every twist and turn on Capitol Hill for us. Garrett, good morning to you.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Supreme Court Confirmation Hearing]

GARRETT HAAKE: Hey, Craig, good morning. Yeah, Judge Jackson will be back today for what could be a very long day after a 13-hour session in the room behind me yesterday. She fielded questions about her personal life, about her judicial philosophy, and some questions that may have had more to do with the political ambitions of the senators asking. For Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, a marathon day in the Senate's hot seat. The 51-year-old federal judge, already an historic nominee, would become the first woman on the Supreme Court if confirmed.

JACKSON: I don't really have a justice that I've molded myself after or that I would. What I have is a record.

HAAKE: Jackson preemptively addressing some Republican concerns that she was overly lenient in sentencing child pornography cases.

JACKSON: As a mother and a judge who has had to deal with these cases, I was thinking that nothing could be further from the truth.

HAAKE: Defending herself when pressed.

JACKSON: Once —

HAWLEY: You had discretion, Judge. You admit that, right? I just want to be —

JACKSON: Senator, sentencing is a discretionary act of a judge, but it's not a numbers game.

HAAKE: The Judge also explaining her former role as a public defender, assigned clients including terrorist suspects at Guantanamo Bay.

JACKSON: You are standing up for the constitutional value of representation.

HAAKE: That topic causing a fiery exchange between Republican Lindsey Graham and Democratic Dick Durbin with Graham storming out. Judge Jackson sidestepping some of the committee's most political questions, like whether she'd support adding justices to the Supreme Court —

JACKSON: In my view, judges should not be speaking in — to political issues.

HAAKE: — and dismissing some questions entirely. Texas Senator Ted Cruz asking about anti-racist books taught at a private school where she sits on the board.

SENATOR TED CRUZ (R-TX); That include a book called *Antiracist Baby*. [SCREEN WIPE] Do you agree with this book that is being taught with kids that babies are racist?

JACKSON: Senator, I do not believe that any child should be made to feel as though they are racist.

HAAKE: Democrats left last night's hearing confident that Judge Jackson will still have the votes she needs to be confirmed. If every Democrat sticks together, they can confirm her without any Republican votes. They're hoping to do so by Easter, Craig.

MELVIN: Garrett Haake, once again, in the room where it's happening. Garrett, thank you so much.