

Sandoval withdraws name from high court consideration

By Michelle Rindels, AP

Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval said Thursday he is not interested in being considered for the U.S. Supreme Court at this time, and he has told the White House so.

The Republican governor issued a statement the day after the *Washington Post* reported the White House was considering him as a potential replacement for the late Justice Antonin Scalia.

Senate Republicans have said they will not consider a nominee from President Obama during an election year.

"Earlier today, I notified the White House that I do not wish to be considered at this time for possible nomination to the Supreme Court of the United States," Sandoval wrote. "The notion of being considered for a seat on the highest court in the land is beyond humbling, and I am incredibly grateful to have been mentioned."

He offered no reason for his decision but said he also expressed his position to senators Harry Reid, Dean Heller and Mitch McConnell.

The Senate's vetting process for any nominee is expected to be viciously political, if hearings take place at all. Sandoval's mention was thought to be a way around Republican senators' resistance to considering an Obama nominee.

Republican Sen. Dean Heller of Nevada last week suggested the next justice could be a Nevadan. He said Thursday he hopes Sandoval's name will come up again later.

"As a friend and former colleague of Governor Sandoval's, I

believe he is eminently qualified for this position," Heller said. "But, I support his decision to withdraw his name from consideration for the Supreme Court vacancy. I hope the next president will consider him in the future."

Sandoval, 52, is a former federal judge and popular second-term governor.