

Current Status of Trump's Cabinet and Other High Level Appointees

N.B. All Cabinet-level appointments need to be confirmed by the Senate before they are officially appointed.

John Kelly: Secretary of Homeland Security, confirmed on January 20th, a relatively uncontroversial pick. Confirmed

James Mattis, Secretary of Defense, relatively uncontroversial pick, confirmed

Nikki Haley, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations (non-cabinet position). Though a well-respected politician, there was some question during her hearings as to what qualifications she has for the position. 1/24

Elaine Chao, Secretary of Transportation. Unlike many of Trump's other cabinet nominees, Chao has prior experience working in the White House, having served as secretary of Labor under George W. Bush. She faced little pushback from Democrats during her hearing.

Rex Tillerson, Secretary of State, was confirmed by the Senate on February 1st. Tillerson had been approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 23rd, and on Monday, the Senate voted to end a Democratic filibuster delaying Tillerson's vote. A full Senate vote occurred in the afternoon on Wednesday, with Tillerson being approved 56-43.

This was a very controversial choice on Trump's part, largely due to Tillerson's business interests in Russia. He faced scrutiny from Democrats and some Republicans in his hearing, especially when he refused to say that Russian President Vladimir Putin has committed war crimes. Senator Marco Rubio, member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, had hinted that he might not support Tillerson, but he ultimately voted in favor of Tillerson's approval.

Mike Pompeo, CIA Director (non-cabinet position) confirmed.

Ryan Zinke, Secretary of the Interior. He was approved by the United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on January 31st, needs approval from the Senate. Senate vote has not yet been scheduled.

Some Democratic senators, including Maria Cantwell of Washington, expressed concern during Zinke's hearing about the Trump administration's handling of federal lands.

“The Trump administration has made it clear it wants to pursue an aggressive energy development agenda undoing reasonable protections on environmentally sensitive lands and waters,” she said.

He was also pressed about climate change, finally saying when questioned by Senator Bernie Sanders that “man has had an influence.”

Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce. The Senate Commerce Committee voted to send him to the full Senate on January 24th. He does not currently have his Senate vote scheduled. Ross' hearing was another contentious one, and senators were surprised when he revealed that he once unknowingly hired an undocumented worker.

Ben Carson, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, recently cleared the Senate Banking Committee; the committee voted unanimously to confirm him on January 24th. His Senate vote is not yet scheduled.

“Dr. Carson's answers weren't perfect,” she wrote. “But at his hearing, he committed to track and report on conflicts of interest at the agency. In his written responses to me, he made good, detailed promises, on everything from protecting anti-homelessness programs to enforcing fair housing laws. Promises that – if they're honored – would help a lot of working families.”

Rick Perry, Secretary of Energy, was approved by the United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on January 31st in a 16-7 vote. His Senate vote is not scheduled. Perry received the support of some Democrats, including Debbie Stabenow, Joe Manchin, and Catherine Cortez Mast. However, Democratic Senator Maria Cantwell said she “The governor's responses for the record left me wondering whether he would stand up to fight the White House's approach to these programs”.

During his confirmation hearing, Rick Perry said he regretted calling for the Energy department to be defunded. He also, to the surprise of some Democrats, acknowledged that the Earth's climate is changing.

“I believe the climate is changing,” he said. “I believe some of it is naturally occurring, but some of it is also caused by man-made activity.”

Tom Price, Secretary of Health and Human Services, is awaiting a full Senate vote after being approved by committee.

Price's committee vote was scheduled to take place on February 1st. But Democrats, in protest of Price's nomination, did not show up. Committee rules require that at least one Democrat be present for the vote to occur, and so by not being there, the Democrats could theoretically delay the vote.

Steven Mnuchin, Secretary of Treasury, a controversial pick due to his time with OneWest Bank, which has been criticized for cruel and overly aggressive foreclosure practices. He was confirmed by the committee Feb.1 And as with Price, Democrats did not show up for the vote, but Republicans moved to suspend the rules and vote on Mnuchin without Democrats present. Democrats began their boycott on Tuesday, saying they needed to know more about Mnuchin's background.

Betsy DeVos: Secretary of Education, voted on January 31st to approve and send her to a full Senate vote.

DeVos did not receive the vote of any Democrat on the committee. One Republican senator, Lisa Murkowski, voted for DeVos during the hearing but said she wasn't committed to voting for her in the full Senate vote. Murkowski later announced that she will vote against Betsy DeVos.

"I have serious concerns about a nominee to be secretary of Education...who has been so immersed in the discussion of vouchers," [Murkowski said on Wednesday](#).

Republican Senator Susan Collins also said she will vote against DeVos. "I come to the floor to announce a very difficult decision that I have made, and that is to vote against the confirmation of Betsy DeVos to be our nation's next secretary of Education," [Collins said](#).

If every Democrat unites in their opposition to DeVos, the vote will be 50-50, with the tie being broken by Vice President Mike Pence. But if Democrats remain united and one additional Republican turns against DeVos, she will not be confirmed, making her the first cabinet nominee in over 30 years to be rejected by the Senate.

Jeff Sessions, Attorney General. Senate Judiciary Committee met on February 1st. Every Republican voted for Sessions, and every Democrat voted against him.

This vote came after Senator Al Franken delivered a lengthy speech accusing Sessions of lying about his record. "I asked him about his claim that he has filed twenty or thirty desegregation cases, a claim he made in a 2009 interview with

the National Review,” Franken said. “In response, Senator Sessions said, ‘the records do not show that there were twenty or thirty actually filed cases.’”

Linda McMahon, Head of the Small Business Administration, was approved by the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee on January 31st in an 18-1 vote. The only senator to vote against McMahon was Cory Booker. Her Senate vote has not yet been scheduled.

Scott Pruitt Director of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently testified before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. His committee vote was scheduled to occur on Wednesday, but Democrats boycotted it.

- Scott Pruitt is a dangerous ally of Big Polluters. **He has sued the EPA 14 times and has personally received nearly \$350,000 from fossil fuel interests over the course of his career.**
- **Nominating Scott Pruitt is the opposite of draining the swamp.** Over his career, he has sided with polluters and looked out for their profits — at the expense of air, water and public health — at every opportunity.
- **The overwhelming majority of Americans want to act on climate change and protect our air and water. The Senate must vote NO on Scott Pruitt.**

Pruitt has over the years fought against the Environmental Protection Agency.

Mick Mulvaney, Office of Management and Budget, met with the U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee for his confirmation hearing on January 24th.

The committee was expected to vote on Mulvaney's nomination on February 1st, but this vote was delayed on Wednesday morning, with Democrats saying they wanted more time to review an FBI background check that had arrived to them late, [according to Politico](#).

David Schulkin, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, had confirmation hearing on Wednesday afternoon. He promises to reform the department of Veterans Affairs. “There will be far greater accountability, dramatically improved access, responsiveness and expanded care options, but the Department of Veterans Affairs will not be privatized under my watch,” he said. “If confirmed, I intend to build a system that puts veterans first and allows them to get the best possible health care and services, wherever it may be — in VA or community care.”

Andrew Puzder, Secretary of Labor, is awaiting his hearing in front of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

This hearing has been delayed four times so far; it was originally scheduled for January 12th, then moved to January 17th, moved again to February 2nd, and it is now scheduled for February 7th, [according to The Washington Post](#). All of these delays have come as Democrats await key financial disclosure paperwork from Puzder.

Robert Lighthizer, U.S. Trade Representative. Lighthizer's confirmation hearing has not been scheduled, although he did recently meet with Republican Senator Chuck Grassley, [according to Grassley's Facebook page](#).

Sonny Perdue, Secretary of Agriculture, is awaiting a confirmation hearing. The date for this hearing has not yet been set. He will likely be the last member of Donald Trump's cabinet to be confirmed, as he was the last member to be announced; Trump named Perdue as his choice for Agriculture secretary the day before his inauguration.