

After 24 Bruising Hours, Betsy DeVos Confirmed as Education Secretary

After 24 hours of continuous debate, after which Vice President Mike Pence made history, President Donald Trump's nominee to lead the U.S. Department of Education, Betsy DeVos was confirmed by the Senate.

After Friday's cloture vote to advance DeVos' nomination, Democrats insisted upon 30 hours of "post-cloture debate" as allowed by Senate rules. Six hours of debate were held Friday, the other 24 began at noon EST on Monday.

The initial vote was 12-14 against confirmation. Midway through the vote, it stood at just 21-29 against. As senators continued to trickle in, it quickly became apparent that Democrats had failed to convince any other Republicans to oppose the DeVos nomination.

Sen. Steve Daines (R-Mont.) cast the final vote, creating a 50-50 tie. As Daines' vote was being recorded, Pence took over the president's chair and announced the final tally. He then cast the tiebreaking vote, the first time it has ever been done for a Cabinet confirmation.

DeVos will be sworn in later in the day at the White House. The president has not yet issued an official statement, but his @POTUS Twitter account offered congratulations to DeVos following the vote.

To ensure there were enough votes for her confirmation, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) had delayed the vote for Attorney General-designate Jeff Sessions, who is still a senator representing his home state of Alabama. His own confirmation vote is expected to be held Wednesday after a

cloture vote succeeded on a 52-47-1 vote.

The Senate recessed after the marathon session, but is scheduled to return to work at 2:30 p.m. EST Tuesday. {eo}