

Finally: President Trump Has a Complete Cabinet

Nearly 100 days into his presidency, President Donald Trump now has a complete Cabinet following the confirmation of former Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue, as his agriculture secretary.

Unlike most of his other appointments, however, the former two-term governor sailed through the confirmation process. The final Senate vote was 87-11. The delay in getting him on the Cabinet doesn't lie with Democrats, but rather on the Trump administration itself.

Perdue's nomination was announced mere hours before the president's inauguration, and there were several delays in handing over the required documentation to the Senate Agriculture Committee before confirmation hearings could begin. The delays upset a number of Republicans on the committee who have been eager to move on rural issues.

He was scheduled to be sworn in this morning at an event that received little fanfare, and then he was slated to make his first remarks to career staff at the USDA headquarters in Washington, D.C. Like many of the other Trump administration departments, there will be an initial priority on regulatory reform, but this is one of the most complex departments in all of government, having its fingers on issues ranging from land stewardship and crop recommendations to food quality inspections and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as Food Stamps.

And all of those issues are tied into one piece of legislation: The Farm Bill, which is due for renewal as part of the Fiscal Year 2019 budget. Planning on that monstrous piece of legislation usually begins a year or two in advance,

meaning the Republican-controlled Congress and the Trump administration are already behind schedule.

Like the effort to repeal and replace Obamacare, the Farm Bill is not a black-or-white issue, and several different factions will have to come together to create a compromise bill. That also means the process requires a more eagle-eyed approach than with most other pieces of legislation, because special interest groups—a wide range of them—play such a big role in its development.

Perdue, a Southern Baptist, is one of nine evangelicals on the Cabinet. {eoa}