

Jeff Sessions Is Now the U.S. Attorney General

President Donald Trump is finally getting more members added to his Cabinet this week, but it's continuing at a snail's pace.

Wednesday night, after another brutal 30-hour post-cloture debate, U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions was confirmed as attorney general in a 52-47 vote. As is tradition, Sessions voted "present." Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.V.) broke party lines to support the nomination.

Near the end of the marathon debate session—the second of four planned this week—Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.), the only GOP African-American in the Senate, gave a powerful 35-minute speech about the manner in which liberals have conducted themselves and why he had supported the nomination. [Click here to see a video of the speech.](#)

After the vote, Sessions tendered his resignation, effective at 11:55 p.m. EST on Wednesday, and gave a brief farewell address. In it, he addressed some of the hateful things that had been said about him during the previous 30 hours of debate, but offered his hope that Democrats could eventually reconcile and restore collegiality to the Senate.

"Reconciliation is important," he said. "We ought to do that in this body. We ought to try to fight for our values, and not give an inch—you don't have to back down if you believe you're right and you shouldn't back down, but there are ways that we can get along personally. And I would say that would be my prayer for this body."

[Click here to see video of that speech.](#)

Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley, a Republican, has not yet

announced a replacement for Sessions, but it is widely believed he will select Attorney General Luther Strange. A special election would need to be held, but Strange would hold the seat until then—and has indicated he intends to run in the special election.

After Sessions' confirmation vote, the Senate immediately took up a cloture vote for U.S. Rep. Tom Price (R-Ga.), Trump's nominee to lead the Department of Health & Human Services. The seven-term congressman is an orthopedic surgeon by profession and has been an outspoken critic of Obamacare.

The cloture vote passed on strictly party lines, 51-48. Democrats, under the rules of the Senate, will be allowed to hold the floor for up to 30 hours of post-cloture debate, as they have for Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and Sessions. If they do the same with Price's nomination, the post-cloture clock began at precisely 7 p.m. EST Wednesday, meaning the soonest a vote could come is 1 a.m. Friday.

The Senate is also slated to take up the nomination of Treasury Secretary-designate Steven Mnuchin. With approximately an hour for a final vote on Price and a cloture vote for Mnuchin, plus 30 hours of post-cloture debate, the treasury secretary-designate's confirmation vote would likely happen at approximately 8 a.m. EST Saturday.

Once Sessions is sworn in, that will give the president six of his 14 Cabinet members. As has been noted in the debates this week, this is the slowest confirmation process since George Washington was president. {eo}