

President-Elect Trump Faces Brutal Week of Confirmation Hearings

In 2009, on President Barack Obama's first day in office, the Senate confirmed seven of his Cabinet appointees.

Over the course of the following week, 18 more were confirmed.

Don't expect the same to be true for President-elect Donald Trump, despite the breathtaking pace at which he rolled out his initial nominations. Democrats, led by Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), have vowed to make the confirmation process as painfully difficult as possible for the incoming administration.

"Any attempt by Republicans to have a series of rushed, truncated hearings before Inauguration Day and before the Congress and public have adequate information on all of them is something Democrats will vehemently resist," Schumer said. "If Republicans think they can quickly jam through a whole slate of nominees without a fair hearing process, they're sorely mistaken."

Democrats can't stop the nominations. In 2013, they executed the so-called "nuclear option," removing the 60-vote requirement for confirmations. In so doing, they paved the way for guaranteed confirmations—barring any surprise disclosures—for all of Trump's nominees.

The pace at which those confirmations will come is what is now up for debate. During the Monday-morning transition daily press briefing, however, incoming White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer weighed in, saying national security is at stake if Democrats follow Schumer's lead.

“They can aimlessly follow Sen. Schumer and put the American economy and security at risk because of the uncertainty created by lack of continuity of government, or they can join the timely and thorough vetting of cabinet nominees and ensure the president is ready to govern on Day One,” he said.

Regardless, the incoming Trump administration faces what will likely be a brutal first week of confirmation hearings in the Senate. Nine of his appointees will face the Senate, beginning with Attorney General-designate Jeff Sessions.

Here is the complete list (all times EST):

- Attorney General-designate Jeff Sessions—9:30 a.m. Tuesday and Wednesday
- Secretary of Homeland Security-designate Gen. John Kelly, USMC (ret.)—3:30 p.m. Tuesday
- Secretary of State-designate Rex Tillerson—9 a.m. Wednesday and Thursday
- Secretary of Education-designate Betsy DeVos—10 a.m. Wednesday
- CIA Director-designate Mike Pompeo—10 a.m. Wednesday
- Secretary of Transportation-designate Elaine Chao—10:15 a.m. Wednesday
- Secretary of Defense-designate Gen. James Mattis, USMC (ret.)—9:30 a.m. Thursday
- Secretary of Housing and Urban Development-designate Dr. Ben Carson—10 a.m. Thursday
- Secretary of Commerce-designate Wilbur Ross—10 a.m. Thursday {eo}