

Rep. Tom Price to Lead Key Department of the Federal Government

In the wake of the 2016 presidential election, the Republicans' effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act—also known as ObamaCare—is already underway.

But they know, as does President-Elect Donald Trump, they cannot leave an empty void. Tuesday morning, Trump announced his pick for Secretary of Health and Human Services, the key figure in the effort to replace ObamaCare—and, perhaps, the most important job in his forthcoming Cabinet.

U.S. Rep. Dr. Tom Price (R-Ga.), chairman of the House Budget Committee, is an orthopedic surgeon who joined the House of Representatives following the 2004 general election. He has previously served as chairman of the House Republican Policy Committee and the Republican Study Committee, two high-ranking positions in the House Republican Conference.

“Chairman Price, a renowned physician, has earned a reputation for being a tireless problem-solver and the go-to expert on healthcare policy, making him the ideal choice to serve in this capacity,” Trump said. “He is exceptionally qualified to shepherd our commitment to repeal and replace Obamacare and bring affordable and accessible healthcare to every American. I am proud to nominate him as Secretary of Health and Human Services.”

A native of Lansing, Michigan, Price received his bachelor and doctoral degrees from the University of Michigan and completed his orthopedic surgery residency at Emory University in Atlanta. He then practiced medicine for 20 years in Roswell, Georgia, before entering politics, becoming the first-ever Republican majority leader of the Georgia Senate prior to

running for Congress.

"It is an honor to be nominated to serve our nation as Secretary of Health and Human Services," Price said. "Thanks to President-elect Trump and Vice President-elect Pence for their confidence. I am humbled by the incredible challenges that lay ahead and enthusiastic for the opportunity to be a part of solving them on behalf of the American people.

"There is much work to be done to ensure we have a healthcare system that works for patients, families, and doctors; that leads the world in the cure and prevention of illness; and that is based on sensible rules to protect the well-being of the country while embracing its innovative spirit."

Another major component of Trump's plan to "drain the swamp" in Washington, D.C., is to rein in so-called entitlements by rooting out fraud, waste and abuse. To lead those efforts, the president-elect has nominated Seema Verma, one of the leading experts in the country on Medicare and Medicaid, to serve as Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Verma is the President, CEO and founder of SVC, Inc., a national health policy consulting company. For more than 20 years, Ms. Verma has worked extensively on a variety of policy and strategic projects involving Medicaid, insurance and public health, working with governors' offices, state Medicaid agencies, State Health Departments and State Departments of Insurance, as well as the federal government, private companies and foundations.

"I am pleased to nominate Seema Verma to serve as Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services," Trump said. "She has decades of experience advising on Medicare and Medicaid policy and helping states navigate our complicated systems."

Verma's selection is an indication of the influence Vice

President-elect Mike Pence is wielding in the new administration. She was the architect of the Healthy Indiana Plan, the nation's first consumer-directed Medicaid program under former Gov. Mitch Daniels, as well as Pence's "HIP 2.0" waiver proposal when he was governor of the Hoosier Sftate.

She also served as the state of Indiana's health reform lead following the passage of Obamacare in 2010.

"I am honored to be nominated by President-elect Trump today," she said. "I look forward to helping him tackle our nation's daunting healthcare problems in a responsible and sustainable way."

Verma is a graduate of the Richard G. Lugar Excellence in Public Service Series, and in 2016, Pence awarded her the Sagamore of the Wabash, the highest honor an Indiana governor can bestow. Additionally, she was recently selected to participate in the American Enterprise Institute Leadership Network.

Prior to consulting, she served as vice president of planning for the Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County and as a director with the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials in Washington, D.C. She received her master's degree in public health, with a concentration in health policy and management from Johns Hopkins University, and her bachelor's degree in Life Sciences from the University of Maryland.

"Together, Chairman Price and Seema Verma are the dream team that will transform our healthcare system for the benefit of all Americans," Trump said. {eo}