

Rex Tillerson Confirmed as Secretary of State

Late Wednesday afternoon, the U.S. Senate voted 56-43 to confirm the nomination of former Exxon-Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson as secretary of state.

The Republican votes to ensure his confirmation had been shored up for weeks, but Democrats had stalled out the process indefinitely by refusing to take part in the committee votes needed to send his nomination to the floor. That was worked out earlier in the day Wednesday, and a cloture vote was quickly approved to open the door for a full confirmation vote.

Four members of the Democratic caucus broke ranks and voted with Republicans to approve Tillerson's nomination. They were:

- Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.V.),
- Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.),
- Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.), and
- Sen. Angus King (I-Maine)

It was not immediately clear when Tillerson would be sworn in, but it was expected to happen yet Wednesday evening. The confirmation comes as hundreds of Department of State officials have declared their opposition to President Donald Trump's refugee freeze and border security proposals. {eoa}