

Sonny Perdue Becomes the 9th Evangelical to Join the Trump Cabinet

Two years ago, if someone had told you that Donald Trump would be the 45th president of the United States and that evangelical Christians would hold a majority of the seats around his Cabinet Room table, you probably would've laughed him out of the room.

But that's the reality we will face in the days ahead.

The president-elect made his 15th and final nomination to the Cabinet on Thursday morning, naming former Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue to serve as his Secretary of Agriculture. Perdue, who is a veterinarian by profession, grew up on a small family-owned farm and has spent much of his life working in agribusiness.

"Sonny Perdue is going to accomplish great things as Secretary of Agriculture," Trump said. "From growing up on a farm to being governor of a big agriculture state, he has spent his whole life understanding and solving the challenges our farmers face, and he is going to deliver big results for all Americans who earn their living off the land."

Perdue earned a doctorate in veterinary medicine in 1971 from the University of Georgia. Following his service as a captain in the United States Air Force, Perdue became a successful small business owner, concentrating in agribusiness and transportation. Today, those businesses have grown to include several locations across the Southeast.

The former Houston County planning and zoning board member first ran for the Georgia State Senate in 1990, and spent the next 11 years in the General Assembly. He resigned his Senate

seat in 2001 to focus on his 2002 gubernatorial campaign.

He won election in both 2002—becoming Georgia's first GOP governor since Reconstruction—and 2006, but was constitutionally prohibited from seeking a third term.

"I am proud and honored to be joining President-elect Trump's administration as his secretary of agriculture," he said. "Beginning as a simple Georgia farm boy, making sure Americans who make their livelihood in the agriculture industry are thriving is near and dear to my heart, and I'm going to champion the concerns of American agriculture and work tirelessly to solve the issues facing our farm families in this new role."

Perdue and his wife of 44 years, Mary, have four children and 14 grandchildren. They served as foster parents for eight newborns who were awaiting adoption too.

He also has worn his Christian faith on his sleeve. As governor, during the worst drought his state has ever seen, he issued a call for prayer—and the rains fell. His nomination will mean nine of the 16 Cabinet positions—which includes Vice President-elect Mike Pence—will be filled by evangelicals.

Here's the list of other evangelicals who are slated to serve in key roles in the Trump-Pence administration:

- Attorney General Jeff Sessions
- Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke
- Secretary of Health & Human Services Dr. Tom Price
- Secretary of Housing & Urban Development Dr. Ben Carson
- Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao
- Secretary of Energy Rick Perry
- Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos
- Director of the EPA Scott Pruitt
- U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley
- Senior Counselor for Economic Initiatives Dina Powell
- Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats

▪ Director of Central Intelligence Mike Pompeo

During Thursday's final transition daily press briefing, the liberal mainstream media criticized Trump for selecting "another white man" for agriculture post. Spokesman Sean Spicer noted that several Hispanic candidates had been considered, but ultimately, the president-elect has been picking his nominees based on who will do the best job.

Spicer said there will likely be many "exciting" announcements regarding Hispanic roles in the administration coming up.