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PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE URGES PRESIDENT TRUMP TO SEIZE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS DURING HIS SECOND YEAR

WASHINGTON – President Donald Trump took steps during his first year in office to begin reorganizing federal agencies and modernizing IT systems, but continues to operate without the political leaders who are needed to oversee these and other important management initiatives throughout the government.

Max Stier, president and CEO of the nonpartisan, nonprofit Partnership for Public Service, said the president laid the groundwork in 2017 for improving government performance by challenging agencies to come with up plans for streamlining operations, bringing in new ideas from the private sector and outlining a management agenda.

“President Trump has a tremendous opportunity during his second year in office to strengthen government accountability and make agencies work better for the American people, but it will require a firm commitment for improved management and focused leadership,” said Stier.

In addition to plans already underway, Stier believes the administration should place an emphasis on employee engagement, recruiting and retaining smart, committed people to public service, and improving the citizen experience with federal agencies.

Stier said the administration’s desire to improve government efficiency could be hampered by the high number of political leadership vacancies, due in part to the president’s slow pace in picking nominees in the early months of his term, and Senate delays in confirming appointees.

“It is imperative for the president to nominate qualified candidates for critical unfilled positions, and for the Senate to promptly confirm these nominees,” said Stier. “The high number of leadership vacancies will have negative implications for the administration’s ability to govern effectively and implement management reforms.”

Trump has fallen behind his predecessors in filling important top government posts. As of January 13, less than 40 percent of the 633 key, Senate-confirmed appointments still had no nominee.

It is encouraging that President Trump has nominated high-quality talent for crucial management positions, like Jeff Pon as the director of the Office of Personnel Management and Margaret Weichert as the deputy director for management of the Office of Management and Budget. However, key positions remain without a nominee, such as the IRS commissioner, director of the Census Bureau, ambassador to the Republic of Korea, assistant secretary for nuclear energy at the Department of Energy and director of the National Counterterrorism Center.

Additionally, the departments of Commerce, Education and Labor still do not have a deputy secretary in place.

Here is a look the historical appointments data for the past few administrations at the one-year mark in comparison to the Trump administration:

	Nominated	Confirmed	"Failed"	Average Days to Confirm
Trump (as of Jan. 13)	559	301	78 ¹	72
Obama	690	452	18	54
W. Bush	741	493	125 ²	36
Clinton	633	471	11	38
H.W. Bush	478	405	12	48

Caveats: these numbers exclude non-civilian and judiciary positions, as well as hold-overs. Additionally, it is important to know that the "confirmed" and "failed" are part of the nomination count, and are not a separate entity. Note that Congress.gov often updates the following day, so the numbers for Trump are subject to change.

¹On January 3, 2018, the Senate returned 64 of President Donald Trump's pending nominations, as required by congressional procedure. 55 of these nominations have been resubmitted to date.

²On August 3, 2001, the Senate returned all of President George W. Bush's pending 117 nominations, as required by congressional procedure. 113 of these nominations were later re-submitted. The Senate passed measures that prevented this from happening to Obama, Clinton and H.W. Bush.

Here are [key Senate-confirmed positions](#) that have been filled according to our appointments tracker with The Washington Post:

Trump Administration Department-Level Senate-Confirmed Appointment Snapshot (as of Jan 13)

	Number of Tracked Positions	Nominations Submitted to the Senate	Withdrawn	Confirmed	Positions Filled	Percent of Positions Nominated	Percent of Positions Filled
United States Trade Representative	4	4	0	1	1	100%	25%
Department of Education	15	14	1	4	4	67%	27%
Department of Justice	31	18	0	9	9	45%	29%
Department of Transportation	20	12	0	6	6	50%	30%
Department of Agriculture	13	7	0	4	4	46%	31%
Department of the Treasury	30	19	1	10	10	47%	33%

Department of the Interior	17	13	0	6	6	59%	35%
Department of Labor	14	16	1	5	5	71%	36%
Department of Energy	22	12	0	8	8	50%	36%
Environmental Protection Agency	13	9	0	5	5	54%	38%
Office of Management and Budget	5	5	0	2	2	100%	40%
Office of the Director of National Intelligence	5	4	0	2	2	80%	40%
Department of State ³	152	94	1	60	61	54%	40%
Department of Health and Human Services ¹	17	19	0	9	8	94%	47%
Department of Homeland Security ²	17	14	1	9	8	71%	47%
Department of Commerce	21	18	1	10	10	76%	48%
Small Business Administration	4	4	0	2	2	100%	50%
Department of Housing and Urban Development	13	12	0	8	8	77%	62%
Department of Defense	55	53	3	34	34	82%	62%
Central Intelligence Agency	3	3	0	2	2	100%	67%
Department of Veterans Affairs	11	8	0	8	8	73%	73%

Nominations submitted to Senate includes nominations that have been confirmed, returned or withdrawn. Percent of positions nominated includes all positions that have a confirmed Trump nominee, or a Trump nominee is in the Senate process (has not been withdrawn or returned). We track full-time, executive branch positions, excluding: career ambassadors nominated by President Obama and currently occupying a post, part-time positions, U.S. attorneys, and U.S. Marshals and termed positions that aren't currently vacant. As termed positions and career ambassadorships become vacant, we update the tracker accordingly.

¹*Tom Price was confirmed to be the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, but resigned, leaving the secretary role currently unfilled.*

²*John F. Kelly was confirmed to be the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, but then became the chief of staff of the White House, leaving the secretary role currently unfilled.*

³*John J. Sullivan received one nomination to fill two roles within the State Department. This is why the "Confirmed" and "Filled" counts are different.*

At Trump's one-year mark, the Partnership also has released an updated [Presidential Transition Guide](#) that is designed to help candidates and incoming administrations navigate the transition process and prepare to govern. The revised guide includes a new chapter outlining steps that incumbents who are seeking re-election should take to prepare for a second term.

During the past 17 years, the nonpartisan, nonprofit Partnership for Public Service has been dedicated to making the federal government more effective for the American people. We work across administrations to help transform the way government operates by increasing collaboration, accountability, efficiency and innovation. Visit ourpublicservice.org to learn more.

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