



## PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

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### **PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE STATEMENT ON GAO'S ACTING OFFICIALS DECISION**

**WASHINGTON** – The nonpartisan, nonprofit Partnership for Public Service today released the following statement from President and CEO Max Stier on the Government Accountability Office decision declaring illegal the appointments of Acting Homeland Security Secretary Chad Wolf and Acting Deputy Secretary Ken Cuccinelli.

“Today’s GAO decision on the unlawful appointment of the two top acting officials at the Department of Homeland Security is a civics lesson on the Constitution and the Senate’s advise and consent role. Appointees who are nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate are an administration’s best way to avoid legal uncertainties under the Constitution or law. The president has an obligation to put forward qualified nominees for positions subject to Senate confirmation, and the Senate should act on those nominees.

“The administration and the Senate share responsibility—and blame—for a process that is broken. It is telling that it was the House of Representatives which, in requesting the GAO analysis, demonstrated more concern for the Senate’s advise and consent role than the Senate itself.”

President Trump has had more acting officials during his first three years in office than each of the previous five presidents had during their entire presidencies. While President Trump has had 27 acting Cabinet officials in his first three years alone, the preceding five administrations had an average of about seven acting Cabinet officials per four-year term.

As of Monday, August 10, 2020, of the 757 key presidential appointment needing Senate confirmation positions tracked by the Partnership and the Washington Post, 228 remain unfilled with a confirmed official. At DHS, only 35 percent of the Senate confirmed positions have permanent leaders. Acting officials, for example, currently are in charge of the nation’s three immigration agencies, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

During the past 19 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](http://ourpublicservice.org) to learn

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