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# President Donald Trump's Cabinet

President Donald Trump does not have the traditional cadre of Washington insiders and donors serving on his Cabinet. Most of his Cabinet — industry titans, military leaders and conservative activists — comprise one of the more eclectic and controversial presidential cabinets in modern history.

## ✓ AGRICULTURE

Former Georgia Gov. **Sonny Perdue**, whose name was one of the first to surface as a possible pick, seems to satisfy the agriculture industry's request for someone with farming experience. Perdue, who grew up on a row crop farm, has owned several small agribusiness and transportation companies.

During his two terms as governor, Perdue pursued economic development through trade and raised the profile of the Port of Savannah. He also focused on cutting government spending and improving education in the state.

## ✓ ATTORNEY GENERAL

Sen. **Jeff Sessions** (R-Ala.) is known for his hard-line views on immigration and legalization of marijuana.

In 1986, Sessions was a former U.S. prosecutor whose nomination for a federal judgeship was rejected by the GOP-controlled Senate Judiciary Committee because of accusations of racism. In 1995, he was elected Alabama's attorney general.

## ✓ COMMERCE

**Wilbur Ross** is a billionaire investor, former Rothschild banker and specialist in bankruptcy and corporate turnarounds. In 2000, he founded W.L. Ross, which has invested in nearly 180 companies, notably in Rust Belt states.

His firm is known to buy failed companies in distressed sectors — steel or coal — at steep discounts, implementing severe cost reductions, such as cutting worker pay and benefits, and selling investments for profit.

## ✓ DEFENSE

Retired Marine Gen. **Jim "Mad Dog" Mattis**, former U.S. Central Command chief, served more than four decades in the Marine Corps. From 2007 to 2010, Mattis served as NATO's supreme allied commander of transformation. He was the top U.S. commander in Iraq and Afghanistan from 2010 to 2013.

Mattis, who was active duty within the past seven years, would require a Congressional waiver to get confirmed.

## ✓ EDUCATION

**Betsy DeVos**, 58, a school-choice activist, billionaire philanthropist and Republican mega-donor, was the chair for the American Federation for Children, an advocacy group that has aggressively pushed to expand charter schools and school voucher programs that provide families with public money to spend on private school tuition.

## ✓ ENERGY

Former Texas Gov. **Rick Perry** heads an agency he once he promised to abolish during the 2012 presidential campaign.

Perry, a climate skeptic, leads an agency that oversees the security of the nation's nuclear weapons, writes efficiency regulations, runs energy research programs and funds basic science. Conservatives had favored him as someone with management experience who would be willing to question the agency's status quo.

## ✓ HHS

**Alex Azar**, confirmed Jan. 24, 2018, is a former pharmaceutical executive and twice-confirmed veteran of George W. Bush's HHS. Azar spent nearly a decade at Indianapolis-based Eli Lilly, where he rose to become president of the pharmaceutical giant's U.S. operations before leaving early in 2018.

Azar succeeded Tom Price, who resigned after POLITICO reported he spent roughly \$1 million on private and government air travel in just seven months on the job.



\*DeVos was confirmed with Vice President Mike Pence casting the tie-breaking vote.

## UPDATE

## ✓ DHS

**Kirstjen Nielsen**, who served as White House chief of staff John Kelly's No. 2 during his time as DHS secretary and moved with him to the West Wing as his principal deputy chief of staff when he was appointed in July, was confirmed Dec. 5, 2017.

Nielsen is a cybersecurity expert and an attorney with an extensive background in homeland security, including stints at TSA and on the White House Homeland Security Council under President George W. Bush.

## ✓ INTERIOR

Trump has tapped freshman Rep. **Ryan Zinke** (R-Mont.), an ex-Navy SEAL commander, to be Interior secretary. The offer comes just days after No. 4 House Republican Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.) was reported to be the favorite to win the position.

Out of all the Republicans on the Hill, Zinke has one of the strongest track records on conservation and public land issues.

He voted against the GOP's fiscal 2016 budget because it sold public lands and also opposed efforts by Rep. Rob Bishop (R-Utah) to hand over millions of acres of public land to the state.

## ✓ LABOR

**Alexander Acosta**, a former Justice Department official and current dean of Florida Int'l. Univ. College of Law, was named after Trump's first pick, fast-food CEO Andrew Puzder, backed out.

Acosta clerked for Justice Samuel Alito when he was a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. He also served on the Nat'l. Labor Relations Board under President George W. Bush from 2002 to 2003, then left the NLRB to become an assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's Civil Rights division. He served as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida from 2005 to 2009, when he joined Florida Int'l. Univ.

## STATE

Rex Tillerson, the longtime CEO of ExxonMobil, has been fired by Trump.

Trump will tap former four-term Rep. **Mike Pompeo** (R-Kan.), who served on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. A former Army officer, Pompeo graduated first in his class at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and graduated from Harvard Law School before working at Williams and Connolly, a top D.C. law firm.

Pompeo has butted heads with Muslim-American groups and wants to roll back reforms of domestic surveillance programs atop one of the nation's leading spy agencies.

## ✓ DOT

**Elaine Chao**, wife of Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), served as labor secretary for all eight years of George W. Bush's presidency. Chao also served as deputy secretary of transportation under President George H.W. Bush.

Chao is a Harvard Business School graduate; was a banker at Citigroup; and president and chief executive officer of the United Way of America. She is a fellow at Hudson Institute and sits on several corporate and nonprofit boards, including Wells Fargo, Dole Food and News Corp.

## ✓ TREASURY

**Steven Mnuchin** is a 17-year-veteran of Goldman Sachs who worked as the chairman and chief executive of his own private investment firm, Dune Capital Management. Dune, along with investors, bought IndyMac, a failed bank, from the FDIC in 2009. Under Mnuchin, the bank faced criticism over aggressive foreclosure tactics.

Mnuchin, an industry insider with close ties to Wall Street, served as finance chairman for Trump's campaign. He has no government experience.

## ✓ VETERANS AFFAIRS

**David Shulkin**, the former undersecretary for health at Veterans Affairs, has been tapped to lead the agency in the new administration. A former physician, Shulkin has served in his current role since 2015.

## ✓ HUD

Dr. **Ben Carson**, retired neurosurgeon and former director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Univ., cites his childhood in Detroit and his experience treating inner-city patients as qualifications to head an agency with an annual budget of \$47 billion. Carson has no experience in housing, governing or running a large bureaucracy.