

Trump Transition Tracker

Updates as of 1PM EST Tuesday, November 19, 2024

Transition Updates

President-Elect Trump continues to make appointments at breakneck speed. He has made 13 cabinet-level appointments in the two weeks since the election, five times faster than Biden made his appointments and four times faster than Trump in his first administration. Trump remains steadfast in his promise to only appoint loyalists to his administration who will root out what he calls “the deep state,” the vast federal bureaucracy that he saw as resisting his wishes during his first term. He also [vocally supports](#) some of his more controversial picks, including his nominee for Attorney General Matt Gaetz, daring the Senate to reject his picks.

Trump vows to keep his campaign pledge for mass deportations. On Monday, Trump [said](#) he would declare a national emergency and use the U.S. military to carry out his mass deportation plans. The ACLU has already [filed](#) a suit to get information on how the Trump administration will carry out its plans. Trump’s team is reportedly working on a plan to craft executive actions to withstand legal challenges. There are still several unknown hurdles to cross, and the plan will likely get tied up in the courts, slowing down the process.

Trump is impacting what Congress does right now. Republicans in Congress are waiting for a signal from Trump about how to approach the FY 2025 spending bills. Currently, the government is funded through December 20. Will Congress take up and pass bills in the current lame-duck session so that Trump has a clean slate when he assumes office on January 20? The most likely scenario is that Congress passes another stopgap spending bill until March, re-writing all the bills to favor Republicans but potentially sidetracking any first 100-day priorities. Another possibility is approving a continuing resolution until September 30, 2025, which means Biden policies and Democratic initiatives remain in place for the year. Congress is on the clock and is desperate for guidance by the end of the week.

Trump has kept a low public profile compared to the 2016 transition where he publicly paraded many potential nominees. Aside from meeting with President Biden at the White House and Republicans on Capitol Hill, his first real public appearance was at the UFC Championship fight in Madison Square Garden [Saturday night](#). This was telling because a significant share of UFC’s audience is young men, an audience targeted by Trump’s campaign in the Fall through TikTok and popular podcasts. Trump was accompanied by Elon Musk, Joe Rogan, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr, Vivek Ramaswamy, Tulsi Gabbard, and House Speaker Mike Johnson.

Coming in Thursday’s edition of the Trump Transition Tracker, information on recess appointments.

Trade, Tariffs & Investments

Pro-Tariff Wall Street CEO for Commerce Secretary: Trump named Transition Co-Chair and Cantor Fitzgerald CEO Howard Lutnick as Commerce Secretary. As a staunchly pro-tariff Wall Streeter, Lutnick is expected to support Trump’s agenda on trade while communicating it to markets.

Internal Conflict Over Treasury Secretary: The delay in choosing a Treasury Secretary relative to other appointments stems from internal disagreement between policy factions over who is the best candidate for the position. The frontrunner for the position at time of writing is hedge-fund investor Scott Bessent. Dark horse candidates include former Federal Reserve Governor Kevin Warsh and investor Marc Rowan.

Regulation & Deregulation

Fossil Fuels at Core of Trump Energy Policy: Trump’s nominee for Energy Secretary is [expected](#) to promote fossil fuels to increase electricity generation as demand rises, a reversal from current pro-renewable energy policies. As the CEO of Liberty Energy, Secretary-designee Chris Wright has called climate change activists “alarmists” and sued Biden’s SEC to stop the implementation of climate risk disclosure rules.

Health and Food Industries Brace for Change: The nomination of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. for HHS Secretary signals coming [changes](#) in federal health priorities, particularly around vaccines, scrutiny of pharmaceutical companies, and drug development. Kennedy’s leadership of HHS could influence policy around alternative health, fluoride in water and cuts to staff in HHS and its agencies such as CDC, FDA, and NIH. Along with broader administration priorities, there will be efforts to reshore the medical supply chain and leave the World Health Organization (though this takes a year to go into effect).

New Federal Framework for Self-Driving Cars: Trump’s transition team has told advisors of [plans](#) to make a federal framework for self-driving vehicles one of the Transportation Department’s top priorities, with a particular emphasis on companies like Tesla looking to launch robotaxis without manual steering.

Technology

Trump Appoints Hawkish Tech Commissioner as FCC Chairman: Dubbed a “free speech warrior” by Trump, Brendan Carr will seek to use the FCC as a vehicle for aggressively tackling Big Tech and limiting Section 230 Communications Decency Act (CDA) protections on free speech censorship. However, Carr will lack a GOP majority on the FCC at the outset of his chairmanship, which could limit some regulatory pursuits.

Trump-proofing CHIPS Investments: The incoming Trump administration’s ability to reverse Biden-era chip investments will be [limited](#) by President Biden’s Commerce Department recent announcement that locked in \$6.6 billion in CHIPS Act funding for three TSMC chip fabrication plants in Arizona.

Latest Trump Appointments

Secretary of Commerce

Howard Lutnick

White House Press Secretary

Karoline Leavitt

Secretary of Transportation

Sean Duffy

Secretary of the Interior

Doug Burgum

Chairman of the FCC

Brendan Carr

Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Douglas Collins

Secretary of Energy

Chris Wright

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