



PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

CENTER *for* PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

THE PACE OF APPOINTMENTS AND CONFIRMATIONS TO SENATE-CONFIRMED POSITIONS DURING A PRESIDENT'S FIRST TWO YEARS

Updated June 2, 2023

Presidents are responsible for about 4,000 political appointments, about 1,200 of which require Senate confirmation. The Partnership for Public Service's [Center for Presidential Transition](#) has been tracking the rate of submissions and confirmations for each of the last few administrations. The following data was compiled to compare how President Joe Biden's first two years in office compare with the previous three presidents.

Unless otherwise noted, the following data represents nominations for all civilian positions including ambassadors, judges, marshals and U.S. attorneys.

For a detailed list of the Biden's nominees and their current statuses, see the [Biden Political Appointee Tracker](#) which is updated weekly by the Partnership and The Washington Post.

Note: A few numbers for year one differ slightly from the Center's report about [Biden's first year](#) because the Center improved its methods for combining concurrent and simultaneous nominations during the past year. A small update was made to Obama's confirmed numbers on June 2, 2023.

Appointments and confirmations of Senate-confirmed positions during a president's first two years				
All civilian positions				
		Year 1 (Dec 31)	Year 2 (Dec 31)	Combined
W. Bush	Submitted	676	426	1102
	Confirmed	506	451	957
Obama	Submitted	653	385	1038
	Confirmed	450	431	881
Trump	Submitted	553	471	1024
	Confirmed	316	304	620
Biden	Submitted	648	366	1014
	Confirmed	357	436	793
<p>Source: Data compiled by the Partnership for Public Services' Center for Presidential Transition from Congress.gov.</p> <p>Notes: Consists of all civilian positions including ambassadors, judges, attorneys and U.S. marshals. Number of confirmations in year two may be larger than submissions because some nominations submitted in the first year were not confirmed until year two. Nominations that were returned and resubmitted soon after are combined, as are simultaneous nominations to related positions.</p>				



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The Partnership's Center for Presidential Transition helps ensure the efficient transfer of power that our country deserves. The Center's Ready to Govern® initiative assists candidates with the transition, works with Congress to reform the transition process, develops management recommendations to address our government's operational challenges, and trains new political appointees.

Appointments and confirmations of Senate-confirmed positions during a president's first two years				
All civilian positions except for judges, attorneys and marshals				
		Year 1 (Dec 31)	Year 2 (Dec 31)	Combined
W. Bush	Submitted	517	269	786
	Confirmed	413	274	687
Obama	Submitted	561	216	777
	Confirmed	397	273	670
Trump	Submitted	400	314	714
	Confirmed	251	174	425
Biden	Submitted	524	239	763
	Confirmed	283	322	605
<p>Source: Data compiled by the Partnership for Public Services' Center for Presidential Transition from Congress.gov.</p> <p>Notes: Consists of all civilian positions excluding judges, attorneys and U.S. marshals. Data includes ambassadors. Number of confirmations in year two may be larger than submissions because some nominations submitted in year one were not confirmed until year two. Nominations that were returned and resubmitted soon after are combined, as are simultaneous nominations to related positions.</p>				

Average length in days to confirm a Senate-confirmed political appointee across administrations through year two	
All civilian positions	
	Average number of days
W. Bush	79.6
Obama	97.7
Trump	119.0
Biden	144.6
<p>Source: Data compiled by the Partnership for Public Services' Center for Presidential Transition from Congress.gov.</p> <p>Notes: Consists of all civilian positions including ambassadors, judges, attorneys and U.S. marshals. Data is through Dec. 31 of the president's second year. The confirmation process is defined as the time between a president sending a formal nomination to the Senate and the confirmation vote. Nominations that were returned and resubmitted soon after are combined, as are simultaneous nominations to related positions.</p>	

Percent of nominations confirmed in a president's first two years	
All civilian positions	
	Success rate
W. Bush	87%
Obama	85%
Trump	61%
Biden	78%
<p>Source: Data compiled by the Partnership for Public Services' Center for Presidential Transition from Congress.gov.</p> <p>Notes: Consists of all civilian positions including ambassadors, judges, attorneys and U.S. marshals. Data is through Dec. 31 of the president's second year. Nominations returned and resubmitted soon after are combined, as are simultaneous nominations to related positions.</p>	

Returned nominations

According to Senate rules, nominations are returned to the president automatically when they have not been confirmed or rejected at the time the Senate adjourns at the end of a congressional session (which roughly correlates to the calendar year) or when the Senate adjourns for more than 30 days.

When the Senate convenes in a new session, the president can resubmit the nomination of the same individual to a position or can choose to put forward a different nominee for the position. Biden's administration resubmitted slightly less than half of the 190 returned nominations on the very same day—Jan. 3, 2023—they were returned.

Returned nominations at end of year two		
All civilian positions		
	Returned	Dates of Senate actions
W. Bush	136	Nov. 20, 2002
Obama	146	Dec. 22, 2010
Trump	282	Jan. 3 and Jan. 4, 2019
Biden	190	Jan. 3, 2023
<p>Source: Data compiled by the Partnership for Public Services' Center for Presidential Transition from Congress.gov.</p> <p>Notes: Consists of all civilian positions including ambassadors, judges, attorneys and U.S. marshals. Simultaneous nominations to related positions are combined.</p>		