

Government Relations Update

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Transition of Power—Obama's List of Cabinet Picks Grows; Senate Democratic Committee Leadership Posts Announced for 111th Congress

President-elect Barack Obama has completed the selection of cabinet appointments faster than any President-elect in recent memory. Having begun by hiring his White House staff, Obama has now filled out the ranks of his cabinet with picks widely regarded as experienced and pragmatic. This *Government Relations Update* will review the recent appointments and also discuss leadership changes now expected on Capitol Hill.

Obama Cabinet Appointees

There was a flurry of nominations recently as President-elect Obama prepared to head to Hawaii to celebrate the holidays. Obama has reached out to a wide variety of experienced candidates to form his team. The cadre of nominees includes women, minorities, current and former governors, Members of Congress, as well as two Republicans—the current Defense Secretary Robert Gates, and Congressman Ray LaHood from Obama's home state of Illinois.

A comprehensive list of announced cabinet selections and a brief summary of the nominee's background is provided below.

- **Department of Agriculture—Gov. Tom Vilsack (D-IA).** Vilsack, a Pennsylvania native, served two terms as governor of Iowa until 2006. He ran a short campaign for president in this past election cycle, but it never gained any momentum. He is known as a strong advocate of ethanol and other bio-fuels, an issue that is expected to be on the front burner next year.
- **Department of Education—Arne Duncan.** Duncan is the current chief executive of the Chicago public school system, a position he has held for seven years. Duncan has earned a reputation as a reformer who is not afraid to take action on pressing issues such as teacher quality and failing schools, but also has a good relationship with the teacher's unions.
- **Department of Housing and Urban Development—Shaun Donovan.** Donovan is the current New York City housing commissioner, a position he has held since 2004. Donovan was once the acting commissioner of the Federal Housing Administration under President Bill Clinton, and is known as an expert in financing deals to create affordable housing.
- **Department of Interior—Senator Ken Salazar (D-CO).** Salazar is currently serving his first term in the U.S. Senate. He is the former director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources and state attorney general. He is known as a staunch conservationist; however, he has backed offshore oil drilling and subsidies for ranchers on public land. He has vowed to work on the federal government's relationship with the Native American community in his new post.

- **Department of Labor—Congresswoman Hilda Solis (D-CA).** Elected to Congress in 2000, Solis served two years in the California Assembly and six in the California State Senate before coming to Washington. During her tenure in Congress, she has pushed for more training of “green collar” jobs. She is known for being pro-labor, and is wary of free trade deals.
- **Department of Transportation—Congressman Ray LaHood (R-IL).** LaHood is retiring this year after serving seven terms in Congress. Known as a Republican moderate, he sits on the House Appropriations Committee, and is a former member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. He was involved in efforts to secure funding for highway construction and airport expansion in Illinois, and was chief planner for a Illinois regional agency that dealt with transit and housing issues. Some transportation advocates have expressed concern over his lack of experience in the field, however his close ties to the White House and ability to reach across the aisle should be a benefit to the department.
- **U.S. Trade Representative—Mayor Ron Kirk.** Kirk is the former mayor of Dallas, TX, as well as former Texas secretary of state. He is currently a member of a Houston-based law and lobbying firm. Kirk is known to be supportive of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)—an issue he does not see eye-to-eye on with Labor Secretary nominee, Hilda Solis.
- **Commodity Futures Trading Commission—Gary Gensler.** Gensler served at the Treasury Department under the Clinton Administration, and was a senior advisor to former Senator Paul Sarbanes (D-MD) during the time Sarbanes co-authored legislation to increase oversight of the accounting industry.
- **Securities and Exchange Commission—Mary L. Schapiro.** Schapiro is currently the head of the Financial Services Regulatory Authority. She is the former acting commissioner at the SEC, and chief of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Because of her prior experience, it is said that her selection will make it easier for the Obama Administration to merge the two agencies as part of a broad regulatory overhaul.
- **Small Business Administration—Karen Gordon Mills.** Mills is a Maine-based private equity investment banker. She chairs the Maine Governor’s Council on Competiveness and the Economy and was a founding partner and managing director of the New York-based venture capital firm, Solera Capital. Currently, the SBA chief is not a cabinet-level position; however, Senators Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME), the Chairwoman and Ranking Member of the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, are urging Obama to re-elevate the position back into the cabinet.



Obama Administration Cabinet Appointees

Agriculture	Tom Vilsack, former Governor of Iowa (D)	Announced
Commerce	Bill Richardson, Governor of New Mexico (D)	Announced
Defense	Robert Gates, current Secretary of Defense	Announced
Education	Arne Duncan, Chicago Schools Chief Executive Officer	Announced
Energy	Steven Chu, Director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory	Announced
Environmental Protection Agency	Lisa P. Jackson, former Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection	Announced
Health and Human Services	Tom Daschle, former U.S. Senator (D-SD)	Announced
Homeland Security	Janet Napolitano, Governor of Arizona (D)	Announced
Housing and Urban Development	Shawn Donovan, New York City Housing Commissioner	Announced
Interior	Ken Salazar, U.S. Senator (D-CO)	Announced
Justice (Attorney General)	Eric Holder, former deputy attorney general under Clinton	Announced
Labor	Hilda Solis, U.S. Congresswoman (D-CA)	Announced
OMB	Peter R. Orszag, current head of Congressional Budget Office and former economic adviser to President Clinton	Announced
State	Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Senator (D-NY)	Announced
U.S. Trade Representative	Ron Kirk, former Mayor of Dallas, TX (D)	Announced
Transportation	Ray LaHood, U.S. Congressman (R-IL)	Announced
Treasury	Timothy F. Geithner, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York	Announced
United Nations Ambassador	Susan E. Rice, senior fellow at Brookings Institution and served in White House and State Department under Clinton	Announced
Veterans Affairs	General Eric Shinseki, four-star general and former Army Chief Staff	Announced

White House and Other Staff

Chief of Staff	Rahm Emanuel, U.S. Congressman (D-IL)	Announced
Press Secretary	Robert Gibbs	Announced
Assistant for Legislative Affairs	Paul Schiliro	Announced
Communications Director	Ellen Moran	Announced
National Security Advisor	James L. Jones	Announced
Coordinator of Energy and and Climate Policy	Carol Browner	Announced
White House Counsel	Gregory Craig	Announced
Commodity and Futures Trading Commission	Gary Gensler	Announced
Securities and Exchange Commission	Mary L. Schapiro	Announced
Small Business Administration	Karen Gordon Mills	Announced
Senior Advisor	David Axelrod	Announced
Senior Advisor	Valerie Jarrett	Announced
Senior Advisor	Pete Rouse	Announced

Congressional Leadership Updates

Congressional committee leadership and membership changes for the 111th Congress are slowly being announced. Most decisions, however, will not be finalized until January when Congress reconvenes. Provided below are updates on the announcements and recommendations that have been made thus far.

House

House Democratic leaders have officially selected Congressman Edolphus Towns (D-NY) to chair the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. Towns is replacing Congressman Henry Waxman, who left the committee to chair the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Due to his new post at Oversight and Government Reform, Towns has agreed to take a two-year leave of absence from the Energy and Commerce Committee, on which he currently sits.

Congressman Dave Camp (R-MI) has been selected ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee. Camp will be replacing Congressman Jim McCrery (R-LA) who is retiring. Other changes to the Ways and Means Committee roster include new members Danny K. Davis (D-IL); Bob Etheridge (D-NC); Raul M. Grijalva (D-AZ); Brian Higgins (D-NY); and John Yarmuth (D-KY).

Congressman Doc Hastings (R-WA) has been elected ranking member on the Natural Resources Committee for the 111th Congress. Congressman Don Young (R-AK), the current ranking member and former committee chairman, currently faces legal scrutiny for his relationship to an oil services company and a transportation project in Florida. Due to the investigation, Young said that he will temporarily give up his post.

Most recently, Congressman Xavier Becerra (D-CA) announced his intentions to remain at his post in Congress rather than accept the offer to serve as U.S. Trade Representative under the Obama Administration. Becerra is the current Vice Chairman of the Democratic Caucus, and serves on the powerful Ways and Means Committee. He has cited his desire to complete unfinished business in the House as the reason why he will not leave for the Obama Administration.

Senate

This week, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) formally announced the Democrat's Senate committee chairmanships. However, the task of deciding committee membership and subcommittee chairmanships has yet to be completed. The process has

been slowed down by the contested Senate race in Minnesota between Republican incumbent Senator Norm Coleman and Democratic candidate Al Franken. The Democratic leadership is also waiting on the seats of President-elect Obama, Vice President-elect Biden, and Senators Hillary Clinton and Ken Salazar to be filled as they all vacate their positions for the White House and the Obama Administration, respectively. Further complicating the Senate process is Reid's mandate that all full committee chairmen give up all but one subcommittee gavel, and that all those with just subcommittee gavels maintain no more than two—a requirement that has initiated a tedious re-shuffling of seats.

Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) will be vacating his spot on the Senate Judiciary Committee. Kennedy, who is recovering from brain cancer, is the second ranking Democrat on the powerful committee. However, he will not be giving up his chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, according to aides.

New Senate committee chairmen include Senator John Kerry (D-MA) at Foreign Relations; Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) at Commerce, Science, and Transportation; Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA) at Intelligence; Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) at Rules and Administration; and Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) at Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Reid's recommendations will not be official until the Senate officially approves them in an organizing resolution laying out committee membership which will not occur until January.



Provided below is a current list of 111th Congressional committee assignments that have been announced thus far. Updates will be forthcoming as the list continues to fill out. Members listed in italics are new to the committee or are assuming a new position within the committee.

House Committee on Agriculture

Republicans

Frank D. Lucas (OK-3) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Appropriations

Democrats

John Salazar (CO-3)

Lincoln Davis (TN-4)

Republicans

Jerry Lewis (CA-41) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Armed Services

Republicans

John McHugh (NY-23) – Ranking Member

House Committee on the Budget

Republicans

Paul Ryan (WI-1) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Education and Labor

Republicans

Buck McKeon (CA-25) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Energy and Commerce

Democrats

Henry Waxman (CA-30) - Chair

Kathy Castor (FL-11)

Bruce Braley (IA-1)

Chris Murphy (CT-5)

Jerry McNerney (CA-11)

John Sarbanes (MD-3)

Betty Sutton (OH-13)

Zack Space (OH-18)

Republicans

Joe Barton (TX-6) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Financial Services

Republicans

Spencer Bachus (AL-6) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Foreign Affairs

Republicans

Ilena Ros-Lehtinen (FL-18) - Ranking Member

House Committee on Homeland Security

Republicans

Peter King (NY-3) - Ranking Member

House Committee on the Judiciary

Republicans

Lamar Smith (TX-21) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Natural Resources

Republicans

Doc Hastings (WA-4) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Democrats

Edolphus Towns (NY-10) - Chair

Republicans

Darrell Issa (CA-49) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Rules

Republicans

David Dreier (CA-26) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Science and Technology

Republicans

Ralph Hall (TX-4) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Small Business

Republicans

Sam Graves (MO-6) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Republicans

John Mica (FL-7) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Veteran's Affairs

Republicans

Steve Buyer (IN-4) – Ranking Member

House Committee on Ways and Means

Democrats

Charlie Rangel (NY-15) - Chair

Danny Davis (IL-7)

Bob Etheridge (NC-2)

Raul Grijalva (AZ-7)

Brian Higgins (NY-27)

John Yarmuth (KY-3)

Republicans

Dave Camp (MI-4) – Ranking Member

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry

Democrats
Tom Harkin (IA) – Chair

Senate Committee on Appropriations

Democrats
Daniel Inouye (HI) - Chair

Senate Committee on Armed Services

Democrats
Carl Levin (MI) - Chair

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Democrats
Chris Dodd (CT) – Chair

Senate Committee on the Budget

Democrats
Kent Conrad (ND) - Chair

Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation

Democrats
Jay Rockefeller (WV) – Chair

Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Democrats
Jeff Bingaman (NM) - Chair

Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works

Democrats
Barbara Boxer (CA) – Chair

Senate Committee on Finance

Democrats
Max Baucus (MT) – Chair

Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

Democrats
John Kerry (MA) – Chair

Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

Democrats
Ted Kennedy (MA) – Chair

Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Democrats
Joe Lieberman (CT) – Chair

Senate Committee on the Judiciary

Democrats
Patrick Leahy (VT) – Chair

Senate Committee on Rules and Administration

Democrats
Charles Schumer (NY) – Chair

Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Democrats
Mary Landrieu (LA) – Chair

Senate Committee on Veteran’s Affairs

Democrats
Daniel Akaka (HI) - Chair

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