



Dear Senator,

I am writing to express my concern about the many forced vacancies in the Biden administration due to holds placed on their confirmation hearings. While objections and holds on Senate-confirmed officials is nothing new, and such tactics have been employed by both parties, the dangers of an excessively understaffed government are great. I urge you to work with your Democratic colleagues to swiftly grant them fair confirmation hearings.

According to the Partnership for Public Service, only 127 of the 800 positions they consider most fundamental are confirmed. There are over 200 nominations that are currently awaiting a confirmation vote. With multiple crises happening around the world, including the global COVID19 pandemic, we cannot afford to have dozens of State Department nominees and ambassadors stuck in the nomination process with only a Senator or two holding up their confirmation votes.

Domestically, the position of Deputy Administrator of the Small Business Administration has been vacant for nearly four years. The Biden administration tapped Dilawar Syed, an eminently qualified nominee, to fill this position back in March. Yet, six months later and the Senate is still yet to vote on whether to confirm Mr. Syed. By not helping to fill this role, the Senate is preventing the Small Business Administration from filling out its top leadership ranks and fulfilling Congress' mandate to help small businesses recover from a once-in-a-generation public health and economic crisis.

The tactics by some Senators, placing endless holds on qualified nominees or denying committees a quorum so they cannot even meet to discuss nominees, must end. The politicization of presidential nominees is fueling a toxic, increasingly polarized environment on Capitol Hill. Further, it is demoralizing and debilitating government agencies that are forced to expend valuable resources on excessive document requests and requests for supplemental information on issues often completely unrelated to the nomination at hand.

Please, make no mistake, I am not encouraging you to vote yes on all of President Biden's nominees. It is your job as a Senator to review nominees and, based on their qualifications and their potential service to our nation, vote to confirm or reject them. I am, however, encouraging you to do your job and help ensure expeditious hearings on the administration's nominations. It was wrong for Democratic Senators to hold up nominees for political purposes during the Trump administration just as it is wrong for Republican Senators to do so now.

Our country suffers when we don't have key leadership positions filled. Please, do your job. Remove your holds. Show up and vote.

Sincerely,

Christine Todd Whitman
Former Governor of New Jersey
Senior Advisor to the Renew America Movement