

The Biden Administration: Who Will Sit in Key Positions?

As a former U.S. Senator and a former Vice President, President-Elect Biden is likely to look to form a cabinet that understands the norms and rules of Washington and one that can carry the White House messages and priorities to Capitol Hill as well as throughout the stakeholder community. While the role of “insiders” is often derided, Biden’s team will likely place a premium on individuals that have a fundamental understanding of the policies, as well as working knowledge on how to work with Congress. Biden has just two months to make the calls on who will carry-out the day-to-day management of the bureaucracy. While much of the groundwork has been laid to expedite the process, it remains a work in progress.

In any transition, individuals seeking to secure a role is always a given, but the importance of working with a Republican Senate to secure confirmations and subsequent legislative agreements places a heightens premium on the selection of Cabinet nominees that could secure swift Senate approval. If this proves accurate, then former or current Senators would seem to be favorites for key positions. The cabinet is expected to diverse but moderate in its policy perspectives. At the same time, it is highly plausible that the Biden White House will create a climate czar to manage any initiatives to bring the U.S. back into a role domestically and internationally to advance climate resiliency. For now, some of the names being floated include:

- Michelle Flournoy, former Under Secretary of Defense, and Senators Tammy Duckworth and Jack Reed for Secretary of Defense
- Roger Ferguson, Chief Executive Officer, TIAA, Lael Brainard, Federal Reserve Governor for Secretary of Treasury, and Sarah Bloom Raskin, Professor, Duke and former Federal Reserve Governor and Deputy Secretary of Treasury
- Doug Jones, Alabama Senator and former U.S. Attorney, Xavier Becerra, CA Attorney General, and Sally Yates, former Acting Attorney General for Attorney General
- Xavier Becerra, CA Attorney General for Homeland Security
- Eric Garcetti, Mayor, City of Los Angeles, Rep. Earl Blumenauer, and Rahm Emanuel, former Obama Chief of Staff and Mayor of Chicago for Secretary of Transportation
- Meg Whitman, former CEO of eBay and HP, Terry McAuliffe former VA Governor, Mellody Hobson, President of Airel Investments for Secretary of Commerce
- Ernest Moniz, former Secretary of Energy and Arun Majumdar, founding director of ARPA-E for Secretary of Energy
- Tom Udall, former NM Senator, Senator Martin Heinrich, NM Senator, and Rep. Deb Haaland (NM) for Secretary of the Interior
- Julie Su, Secretary of CA Labor and Workforce Development Agency, Bill Spriggs, Chief Economist, AFL-CIO, and Rep. Andy Levin (MI) and Sar Nelson, President, Association of Flight Attendants for Secretary of Labor
- Alvin Brown, former Mayor of Jacksonville, FL, Rep. Karen Bass (CA), Keisha Lance Bottoms, Mayor, Atlanta, Dianne Yentel, President, National Low-Income Housing

Coalition, Maurice Jones, former HUD Deputy Secretary for Housing and Urban Development

- Rep. Jimmie Gomes, CA, for U.S. Trade Representative
- Mary Nichols, CA Air Resources Board and former CA Secretary of Natural Resources, Gov. Jay Inslee (WA) and Heather McTeer Toney, former Regional Administrator for EPA Administrator