

August 3, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer,

As associations representing businesses of all industries, forms, and sizes in all 50 states, we urge the Senate to take expeditious steps to ensure the timely confirmation of qualified pending nominees to administration positions.

The slow pace of confirmations is depriving agencies across the government of critical leadership and in the case of independent agencies, the quorum necessary to conduct critical business.

The breakdown of the confirmation process results in a breakdown in the efficient and effective functioning of government and ultimately to a drag on the economy. Workers are sidelined as projects await permits from agencies that lack the quorum necessary to issue the permit. Businesses are left waiting for important administrative decisions that simply cannot be made in the absence of Senate-confirmed officials.

Specifically, we are concerned about the new practice in the Senate of subjecting even non-controversial nominees to the time-consuming cloture process, which is creating unnecessary and unprecedented delay in what is already a prolonged process.

Through August 2, of President Trump's 283 executive and judicial nominations, only 67 have been confirmed. Of those 67, only 13 were confirmed by voice vote or unanimous consent, while 37 (55%) were confirmed only after going through the cloture process. By way of comparison, at approximately the same point in President Obama's first term, the Senate had confirmed 206 nominees, 182 by voice vote or unanimous consent. Only eight (4%) of President Obama's nominees were forced to go through the cloture process.

On August 2, over 80 nominees to administration positions have been reported favorably by the committee of jurisdiction but were awaiting Senate confirmation. In some instances nominees have been waiting for confirmation by the full Senate for two months or more despite being approved by committee of jurisdiction unanimously.

By one estimate, at the current rate, it will take 11 years to confirm all of the president's nominees to executive branch positions.

We urge the Senate to immediately resume the prior practices of deferring to the vetting of nominees conducted by the committees of jurisdiction, confirming non-controversial nominees expeditiously by voice vote or unanimous consent, and the spare use of forcing cloture on nominees.

Sincerely,

Aerospace Industries Association
Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute
Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers
America Petroleum and Convenience Store Association
America's SBDCs
American Bakers Association
American Bankers Association
American Beverage Association
American Council of Engineering Companies
American Exploration & Production Council
American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers
American Gaming Association
American Gas Association
American Hotel & Lodging Association
American International Automobile Dealers Association
American Investment Council
American Iron and Steel Institute
American Land Title Association
American Petroleum Institute
American Public Gas Association
American Road and Transportation Builders Association
American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association
American Staffing Association
American Trucking Associations
Asian American Hotel Owners Association
Associated Builders & Contractors
Associated General Contractors of America
Association of American Railroads
Association of Oil Pipe Lines
Auto Care Association
Automatic Merchandising Association
Corn Refiners Association

Council for Responsible Nutrition
Edison Electric Institute
Electronic Transactions Association
Energy Equipment and Infrastructure Alliance
Entertainment Software Association
Federation of American Hospitals
Financial Services Roundtable
Food Marketing Institute
Independent Electrical Contractors
Independent Petroleum Association of America
Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries
Insured Retirement Institute
International Association of Geophysical Contractors
International Franchise Association
International Warehouse Logistics Association
Interstate Natural Gas Association of America
Metals Service Center Institute
Midsize Bank Coalition of America
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association
National Association for Surface Finishing
National Association for the Self-Employed
National Association of Chain Drug Stores
National Association of Chemical Distributors (NACD)
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of Manufacturers
National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies
National Association of Professional Employer Organizations
National Association of the Remodeling Industry
National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors
National Council of Chain Restaurants
National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA)
National Foreign Trade Council
National Grocers Association
National Lumber & Building Material Dealers Association
National Mining Association
National Music Publishers' Association
National Ocean Industries Association
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA)
National Restaurant Association
National Retail Federation
National Roofing Contractors Association
National Small Business Association
National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association
Natural Gas Supply Association

Online Lenders Alliance
Plastics Industry Association
Portland Cement Association
Retail Industry Leaders Association
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council
Southwest Cable Communications Association
The Fertilizer Institute
The Latino Coalition
TRSA – The Linen, Uniform and Facility Services Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Oil & Gas Association
U.S. Travel Association
United States Council for International Business
Western Electrical Contractors Association
Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America