

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 Drilling Contractors  
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