



POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS MEMO

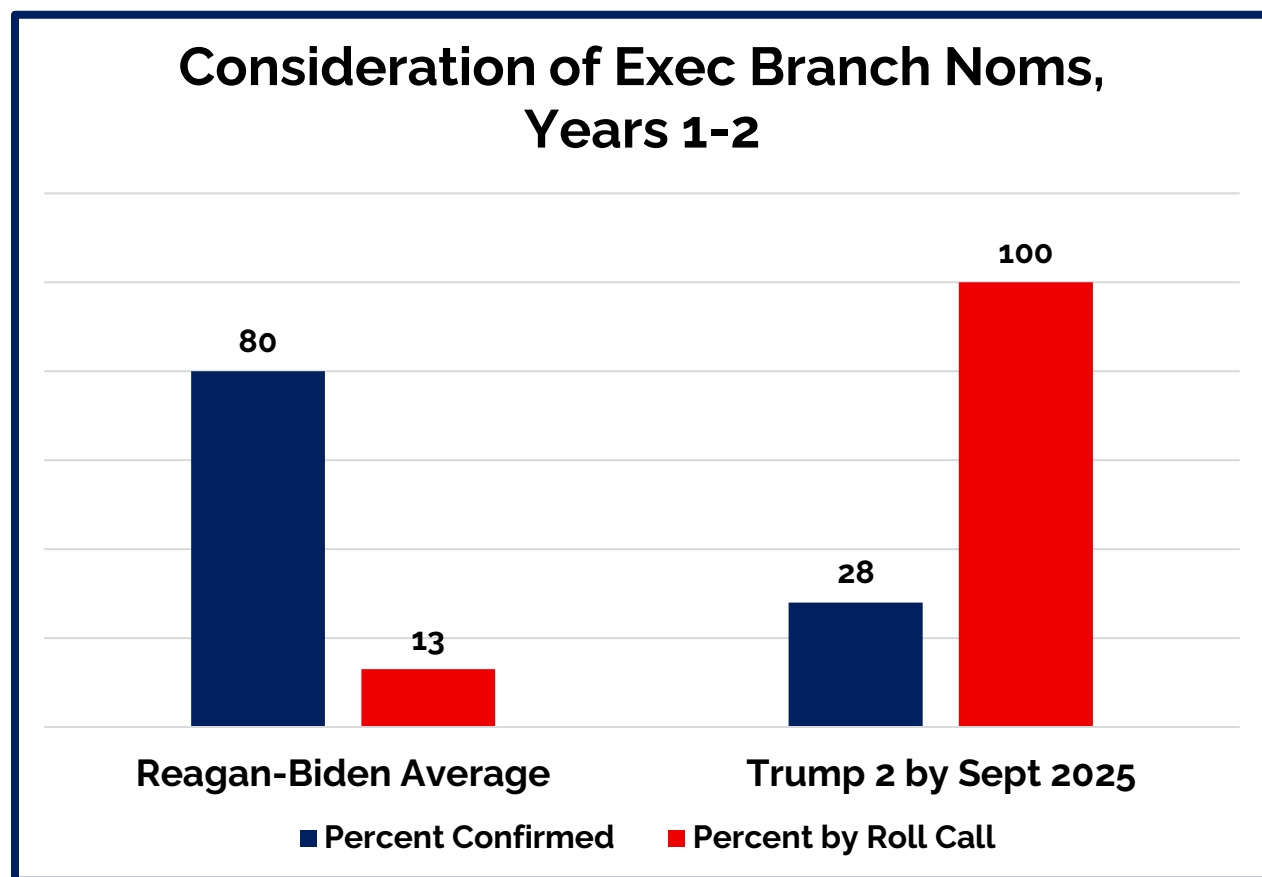
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DATA AS OF MAY 4, YEAR 2, FOR EACH PRESIDENT

**ADVANCING AMERICAN
FREEDOM FOUNDATION**

Background: [Article II](#) of the Constitution gives the President authority to nominate and, with Senate consent, to appoint “Officers of the United States.” Nominations are referred to the relevant Senate committee and, if approved, listed on the [Executive Calendar](#). The Majority Leader decides which nominations to put before the Senate for consideration.

Confirmation Norms: The Senate traditionally confirmed the vast majority of a president’s executive branch nominees quickly and without a time-consuming recorded vote. Senate Democrats rejected these norms when President Donald Trump took office last year and, by September, the confirmation process for executive branch nominees had become cumbersome and inefficient.



En Bloc Consideration. No matter which party was in the majority, the Senate routinely confirmed executive branch nominees “en bloc,” that is, in groups rather than one-by-one. This occurred informally by unanimous consent but Senate Democrats began objecting. Majority Leader John Thune used the so-called “nuclear option,” a parliamentary step that changes how certain Senate rules apply, to break the impasse. Here’s how it happened:

- **9/8/25:** Thune introduced a resolution allowing *en bloc* consideration of 48 listed executive branch nominees.
- **9/11/25:** The Senate voted 52-47 to invoke cloture, or end debate, on the resolution, fewer than the 60 votes Rule 22 requires on any pending “matter.”
- **9/11/25:** Thune made a point of order that cloture on a resolution like this one, to allow consideration of most executive branch nominees *en bloc*, be a simple majority, the presiding officer ruled against the point of order, and the Senate voted to reject that ruling.
- **9/15/25:** The Senate voted 51-44 to pass the Thune resolution.
- **9/18/25:** The Senate voted 51-47 to confirm the 48 listed nominees.

Since then, Thune has introduced three similar resolutions, listing a total of 254 additional nominees. The Senate will pass the third on May 11, which will more than double the percentage of Trump’s executive branch nominees confirmed by the Senate (from 28 percent in September to 59 percent today) but Trump still lags behind his predecessors.

