

WisDems: Sen. Johnson playing politics with national security

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(Madison) – Just two weeks after the January 6th attack on the Capitol, Wisconsin Senator Ron Johnson is playing politics and holding up a key national security nominee, Alejandro Mayorkas to be Secretary of Homeland Security. Historically, DHS secretaries are among the first to be confirmed in a new administration, and in 2009 and 2017 they were confirmed along bipartisan lines.

In 2016, Johnson urged Democrats to swiftly confirm President Trump's selection for Homeland Security Secretary because of the importance of the position to national security:

[Senator Johnson in 2016](#): “On a bipartisan basis we realize that the administration needs to start functioning, so **I certainly hope that Democrats don't play games with the national security**, economic security of America by playing games with these nominations”

[Senator Johnson in 2017](#): “I think it's incumbent on this Committee and I think it's incumbent on the United States Senate to recognize how important it is for any president to be able to set-up and establish their National Security team **from day one.**”

Four former DHS Secretaries penned an op-ed, urging the Senate to quickly confirm Mayorkas:

[Washington Post Op-Ed: Michael Chertoff, Jeh Johnson, Janet Napolitano and Tom Ridge](#): “We urge the Senate to promptly consider and confirm Alejandro Mayorkas, President-elect Joe Biden's nominee for homeland security secretary. In the wake of last week's domestic terror attack on the Capitol — the symbol of our nation's

democracy — it is more urgent than ever to have in place an experienced, capable and Senate-confirmed leader. That person is Mayorkas.”

In 2009 and 2017, nominees were confirmed without delay because of the importance of having a robust national security team in place.

[Inauguration Day 2009](#): “After lunch, the Senate got back to business, and by unanimous consent confirmed the appointments of seven cabinet secretaries: Steven Chu, secretary of energy; Arne Duncan, secretary of education; **Janet Napolitano, for homeland security**, Peter Orszag as director of the Office of Management and Budget; Ken Salazar as secretary of the interior; Eric K. Shinseki as secretary of veterans affairs; and Tom Vilsack as secretary of agriculture.”

[Inauguration Day 2017](#): “The Senate confirmed John F. Kelly as secretary of homeland security on Friday, putting the blunt-spoken retired Marine general in charge of securing the nation’s borders, including construction of the controversial southwest border wall that was a centerpiece of President Trump’s campaign.”

The delay has real consequences for Wisconsin. FEMA, which is under the Department of Homeland Security, has been instrumental in disaster relief in Wisconsin including after the devastating floods a year ago and has supplied the state with over [\\$200 million](#) in assistance since 2003:

[FEMA](#): “FEMA announced that federal disaster assistance has been made available to the state of Wisconsin to supplement state and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by severe winter storm and flooding from Jan. 10-12, 2020.”

[Wisconsin Public Radio](#): “The Federal Emergency Management Agency will supplement unemployment insurance benefits in Wisconsin by \$300 a week for six weeks, according to comments from an agency spokesperson.”