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US Senate confirms Gabbard and Kennedy

Intelligence critic Tulsi Gabbard becomes new director of the 18 US intelligence agencies / Pharmaceutical company critic Robert Kennedy becomes US Secretary of Health and Human Services / Both advocate radical policy change.

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Washington. ([multipolar](#)) Both Tulsi Gabbard, nominated for the post of Director of National Intelligence (DNI), and Robert Kennedy, nominated as US Secretary of Health and Human Services, were confirmed by the United States Senate on Wednesday. The Senate, made up of 53 Republican and 47 Democratic politicians, voted 52 to 48 in favor of Gabbard and 53 to 47 in favor of Kennedy. Both had previously been members of the Democratic Party. The politicians nominated by US President Donald Trump were the subject of extensive public debate and hearings in the relevant Senate committees. With their confirmation by the Senate, Gabbard and Kennedy have cleared the final formal hurdle for their respective inaugurations.

Gabbard, 43, served as an officer in the United States National Guard and was deployed in Iraq from 2004 to 2005. From 2013 to 2021, she was a member of the US House of Representatives for the Democratic Party. In 2020, she applied for the nomination as a candidate for the US presidential election. She [justified](#) her resignation from the Democratic Party in 2022 by stating that the party was led by "elitist warmongers", which increased the risk of nuclear war. She has been a member of the Republican Party since 2024.

In her hearing before the US Senate Intelligence Committee on January 30, Gabbard [said](#) that "flawed, inadequate or weaponized intelligence" had led to "costly failures and the undermining" of US national security. The most obvious example of such a failure, he said, was the invasion of Iraq, which was based on "a total falsification or a total failure of intelligence". This "catastrophic decision" had led to the deaths of "millions of people" in the Middle East, mass migration, the "undermining of the security and stability" of US allies in Europe and the rise of the Islamic State (IS).

Furthermore, Gabbard criticized the politicization of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and the intelligence agencies in order to "undermine Trump's presidency and falsely portray

him as Putin's puppet". She accused her predecessor as head of the US intelligence services, James Clapper, of lying to the Senate Intelligence Committee and "denying the existence of programs" that enabled "the mass collection of phone and internet data" as part of the NSA wiretapping scandal.

Gabbard also doubts that the then Syrian President Bashar al-Assad carried out poison gas attacks on his own people. She [was in contact](#) several times with the missile scientist Theodore A. Postol, who had refuted the accusations against Assad with [his own analyses](#). In 2017, Gabbard, then a member of the House Committee on Defense and Foreign Affairs, traveled to Syria to [talk](#) to Assad personally about ending the civil war.

The 71-year-old lawyer and environmental activist Kennedy, son of the [assassinated](#) former US Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and nephew of the also [assassinated](#) former US President John F. Kennedy, was a member of the Democratic Party until 2024 in the tradition of his family. In 2024, he ran as a candidate for the US presidential election, initially for the Democrats and then as an independent. The [reason](#) he gave for his candidacy was that he felt the American constitution was in danger due to the political decisions made during the coronavirus crisis. Kennedy ended his candidacy in August 2024 and went on to support Trump. At a Republican campaign event shortly before the presidential election, he [justified](#) his resignation from the Democratic Party by saying that it was a party of war, no longer stood up for fundamental rights and freedom of expression and was no longer skeptical of the CIA and Wall Street.

In his [two hearings](#) before the US Senate's Finance and Health Committees, Kennedy was skeptical about US healthcare policy to date. 60 percent of Americans suffer from chronic diseases and one in 36 children suffers from diabetes. Prescribing more and more medication has obviously not improved the situation, he criticized. Kennedy accused Democratic senator and multiple presidential candidate Bernie Sanders of being one of the pharmaceutical industry's biggest profiteers. Following Kennedy's [nomination](#) as the next Secretary of Health and Human Services in November 2024, the share prices of numerous pharmaceutical companies collapsed.