

# THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

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## [President Obama Announces Two Key Nominations for National Security Team – Former Senator Chuck Hagel as Secretary of Defense and John Brennan as CIA Director](#)

On Monday, the President announced the nomination of former Senator Chuck Hagel to serve as Secretary of Defense and the nomination of John Brennan, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, to serve as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

During his announcement, President Obama hailed Senator Hagel as an “American patriot” and “the leader that our troops deserve.” He said:

“Chuck Hagel’s leadership of our military would be historic. He’d be the first person of enlisted rank to serve as Secretary of Defense, one of the few secretaries who have been wounded in war, and the first Vietnam veteran to lead the department. As I saw during our visits together to Afghanistan and Iraq, in Chuck Hagel our troops see a decorated combat veteran of character and strength. They see one of their own.”



The President also praised John Brennan’s leadership as a key national security adviser and a 25-year veteran of the CIA, saying:

“Having held senior management, analytic, and operational positions at the agency, John is committed to investing in the range of intelligence capabilities we need -- technical and human. He literally built -- and then led -- the National Counterterrorism Center. And he knows the risks that our intelligence professionals face every day. John has lost colleagues and friends -- heroes whose stars now grace that memorial wall at Langley.”

You can watch President Obama’s announcement [here](#).

## [The President Nominates Jack Lew to Serve as Treasury Secretary](#)

On Thursday, President Obama nominated Jack Lew – who currently serves as White House chief of staff – to serve as Treasury Secretary.

In addition to thanking current Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner for helping to grow the economy and guide our nation through a range of fiscal challenges, President Obama emphasized Lew's economic expertise, his distinguished record in both the private and public sectors, and his commitment to bipartisanship. The President said:

"Jack has the distinction of having worked -- and succeeded -- in some of the toughest jobs in Washington and the private sector. As a congressional staffer in the 1980s, he helped negotiate the deal between President Reagan and Tip O'Neill to save Social Security. Under President Clinton, he presided over three budget surpluses in a row. So for all the talk out there about deficit reduction, making sure our books are balanced, this is the guy who did it -- three times. He helped oversee one of our nation's finest universities and one of our largest investment banks.



"In my administration, he has managed operations for the State Department and the budget for the entire executive branch. And over the past year, I've sought Jack's advice on virtually every decision that I've made, from economic policy to foreign policy.

"One reason Jack has been so effective in this town is because he is a low-key guy who prefers to surround himself with policy experts rather than television cameras. And over the years, he's built a reputation as a master of policy who can work with members of both parties and forge principled compromises."

Watch the President's full remarks [here](#).

## Issues in the News

### **Talking Points on Nomination of Chuck Hagel (1/7/13)**

- It is the belief of President Obama that Chuck Hagel possesses unique qualifications to serve as Secretary of Defense. He has the experience to do the job – not only is he a decorated war hero, but during his two terms in the Senate, he served on the Foreign Relations Committee and the Intelligence Committee. He went against his own party on Iraq – displaying both sound judgment and independence – and President Obama sees him as well-positioned to follow through on the President's promise to bring the Afghanistan war to an end, which is a top priority.
- Senator Hagel would become the first enlisted soldier to serve as Secretary of Defense. Throughout his life, he has been committed to America's service members, military families and veterans, and as Secretary he would put their concerns first. It's the position of the White House that this experience and dedication to our troops will make his selection a popular one among rank-and-file military, as well as a powerful champion for military families – a longstanding priority for both President Obama and the First Lady.
- We believe Senator Hagel's confirmation will be successful. We've seen some heat surrounding his nomination, but there has not been a significant amount of stated opposition – primarily just a number of Senators claiming they have questions for his hearing. In the words of Max Cleland, a decorated veteran: **at the end of the day, are Senators really going to look a veteran hero – with 2 purple hearts who still carries around shrapnel in his chest – in the eye and say they aren't going to support him?**
- There is the possibility that much of the GOP's concern about Hagel is over his decision to go against his party by opposing the Iraq war. While some Republicans are still upset about that, it is doubtful that it will ultimately pose a major problem to his nomination.

- The facts are clear: Senator Hagel exemplifies the proud legacy of a steady, bipartisan foreign policy in America. Our national security should not be a partisan issue. And that perspective has guided Chuck Hagel in the Senate just as it does today. That's why he has earned the respect of both Republicans and Democrats.

### **Talking Points on Nomination of John Brennan (1/7/13)**

- Between his career of service and his phenomenal record, John Brennan is prepared to become an exceptional CIA director. In addition to serving at the CIA for decades, he has been leading the charge in the fight against al Qaeda since 9/11. And throughout the last four years, Brennan has had a role in nearly all major issues of national security. Upon his arrival at the Agency, he'll be able to hit the ground running.
- POTUS: President Obama has put his full trust and confidence in John Brennan. Brennan has seen the President every day for the past four years and has been standing at his side through some of his most difficult decisions – including the President's call to launch the bin Laden raid. Brennan is as close to the President as anyone on his national security team.
- Record: Brennan has done an extraordinary job as President Obama's top counter-terrorism advisor. Over the course of his four-year tenure, we've dismantled al Qaeda's leadership and Osama bin Laden has been eliminated. In places like Somalia, he has spearheaded efforts to take the fight to al Qaeda's partners. Brennan has also helped chart the course through the challenges of this Arab Spring, which includes the transition in Yemen. He's boosted our homeland security, making improvements to aviation screening and terrorist watch lists along with helping to direct our response to a range of challenges – from threats to our cyber security to natural disasters like tornadoes and Hurricane Sandy.
- CIA: Brennan possesses a very thorough understanding of the CIA's collection, covert action, and analytic missions. During his decades of service at the Agency, he served both in the field and at headquarters – as Deputy Executive Director, station chief in Saudi Arabia, and PDB briefer at the White House. He has incredible appreciation for the individuals who serve in the CIA and for the work they do – frequently in the shadows – to ensure our nation's safety.
- Intelligence community: Brennan has worked in close coordination with other intelligence agencies. He will follow through on making the investments we need in a range of critical intelligence capabilities – both human and technical. He has also been a trailblazer with respect to information-sharing and integration across the intelligence community. Following 9/11, he created and then headed the National Counterterrorism Center to enhance coordination.
- Rule of law: Brennan has advocated for improved transparency in our counter-terrorism policy, as well as adhering to the rule of law. He has repeatedly stressed the need for robust oversight and review of our counter-terrorism activities, and within the government, he has headed efforts to make sure that we actually carry out those ideals.
- Bipartisan: Brennan has held senior roles in both Republican and Democratic Administrations. In addition to having no party affiliation, he has worked closely with members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, as well as Republican Governors such as Chris Christie through his disaster relief efforts. Brennan's full focus has been on working 24/7 to protect our nation.
- Personal story: Brennan hails from a working class New Jersey family. He is the Jesuit-educated child of an Irish immigrant who was motivated to join the CIA after seeing an ad in the newspaper. Brennan's nomination is an example of the American story at its best.

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### **Talking Points: The President Nominates Jack Lew to Serve as Treasury Secretary (1/10/13)**

Jack Lew has an impressive record spanning over 30 years in both the private and public sectors, and as an economic expert, he is the right choice at this time to become U.S. Treasury Secretary. His comprehensive understanding of economic issues at the domestic and international level will make it possible for him to hit the ground running when it comes to dealing with our economic challenges here in America and overseas. Jack's service

in Congress and in the executive branch has demonstrated his effectiveness as a champion for the middle class, and he will help hammer out bipartisan compromises to carry out economic policies that have proven they work.

During his time as White House Chief of Staff, Jack headed President Obama's team in handling some of the most difficult economic issues facing America in decades – at both the domestic and global level. That list of challenges ranged from making our recovery stronger following the greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression, to tackling major fiscal issues and coordinating with our international partners as it relates to the debt crisis facing Europe.

Additionally, Jack headed the Office of Management and Budget for two different Presidents. While serving in his first term at OMB, he played an important role in the team that worked out a historic and bipartisan compromise with Congress to ensure our federal budget was balanced. These successful efforts resulted in a budget surplus for four straight years, not to mention millions of new American jobs were created.

Upon his return to OMB under President Obama, Jack spearheaded the talks concerning the Budget Control Act, bipartisan legislation that put discretionary spending on pace to fall to levels that were historically low. With Jack at the helm, OMB took charge in producing the framework for President Obama's plan for fiscal responsibility, as well as his

And under Jack's leadership, OMB led the process that produced the framework for the President's take on fiscal responsibility, as well as his balanced plan to make significant deficit reduction over the long term a reality.

While serving as the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, Jack handled the daily operations of the department, in addition to being responsible for State's portfolio on global economic policy and visiting foreign countries to advance America's interests and priorities abroad.

Furthermore, Jack boasts a distinguished record as the head of principal institutions in both the public and private sector, and he will be bringing with him his strong relationships in the business community. Jack was an integral member of the senior internal management team at Citi – a key international financial institution – serving first as Managing Director and COO of Citi Global Wealth Management, followed by time as Managing Director and COO of Citi Alternative Investments. During his time as COO of New York University, he handled finance, budget and operations, and he also served as a professor of public administration.

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