

The Federalist Capers

Okay, nobody break the country, we worked really hard on it.

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FREE

For & Against: The government making deals with individual companies

On November 29, Trump announced a deal with Carrier, an Indiana-based manufacturing company. Carrier will keep a number of jobs in the US that would have been moved to Mexico. (Trump falsely claimed it was 1,100 jobs; the correct number is under 800.) The company received a relatively modest \$7 million in tax breaks as an incentive, but may also have feared unspecified “consequences” threatened by Trump.

For deal-making

Incentivizing companies with tax breaks on an *ad hoc* basis is good policy. Companies will not automatically be rewarded for threatening to move offshore. The President-elect has his own set of standards, not codified in regulations, that he uses to determine when he should get involved.

The lack of a clear policy means that companies can continue to act independently, but places more responsibility on them to be mindful of the long-term impact of their decisions.

Trump, by choosing Carrier, has demonstrated his willingness to get involved at the lowest levels in order to keep jobs in America. While this may irk some conservatives, Trump represents the people and is ready to roll up his sleeves to help them wherever he can.

Against deal-making

Policies rewarding US companies that keep jobs here, and punishing the rest, *may* be a good idea. It’s debatable. But the government striking deals with individual companies *ad hoc* is simply bad strategy.

It’s unfair. Why should Carrier get special treatment? For every worker whose job is saved this way, a thousand more are given false hope and ignored.

It sends the wrong message. It encourages companies to “misbehave” in the hopes of getting deals, presidential attention, and publicity.

It’s cumbersome. Using tax breaks as incentives complicates the tax system even more.

And for a self-proclaimed “conservative” politician, this is a deeply anti-conservative plan: “Big Government” interfering in the free market.



Quote of the month

“I met separately with FBI [Director] James Comey and [Director of National Intelligence] Jim Clapper, and there is strong consensus among us on the scope, nature, and intent of Russian interference in our presidential election.” —CIA Director John Brennan, 12/16/2016. (Trump has called the assessment “ridiculous.”)

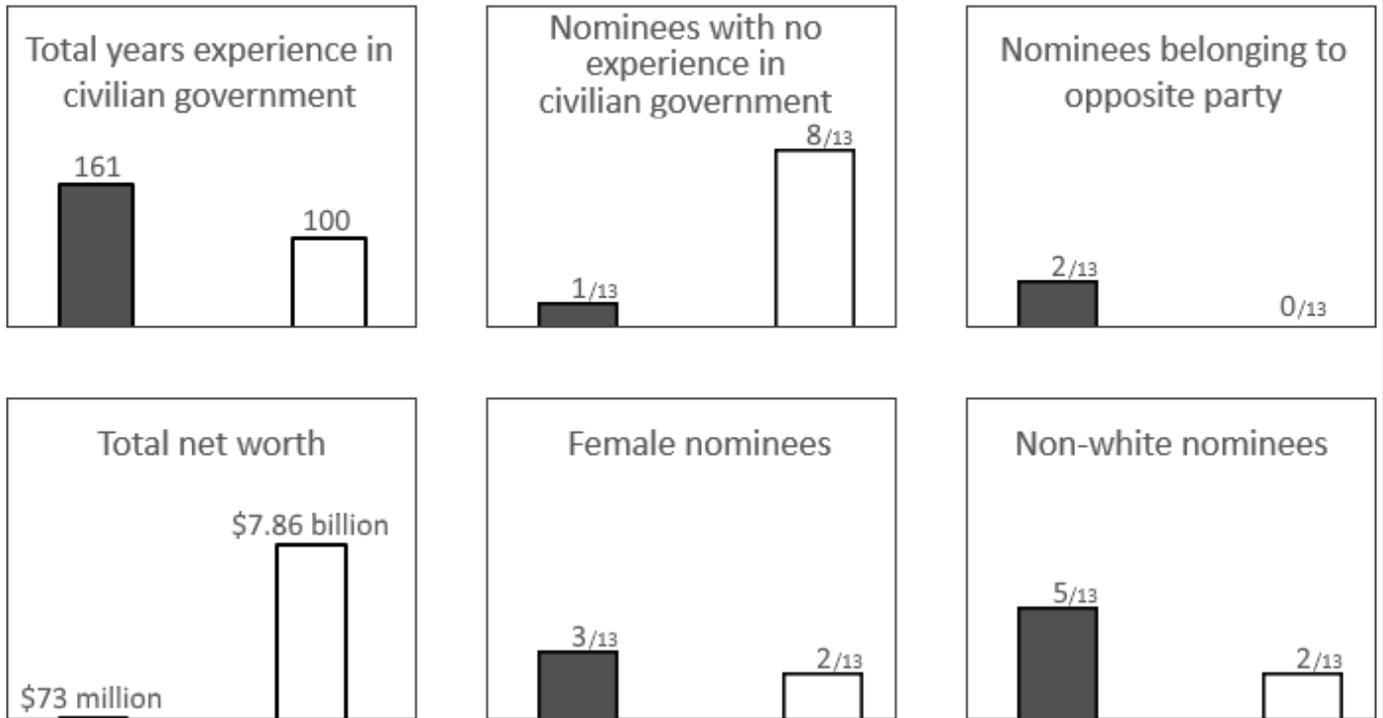
Trump's Cabinet compared with Obama's 2008 Cabinet



Obama's 2008 nominees



Trump's 2016 nominees



- Notes**
1. Data compiled by TFC editors using publicly available information.
 2. As of January 2, Trump has not yet chosen his Agriculture or VA Secretaries, so Obama's have also been omitted for a fair comparison. Thus, both data sets contain 13 nominees out of the full 15 Cabinet positions.
 3. For a fair comparison, Obama's original 2008 nominees are shown. Most, but not all, went on to actually join the Cabinet.
 4. Includes Cabinet positions only. Does not include so-called "Cabinet-level" positions such as Chief of Staff.
 5. Net worth totals are based on best estimates from sources such as *Forbes*.
 6. Because there is no precise definition of "white" as a race, this comparison inherently has an element of subjectivity.

What can I do?

Call your Senators. Trump's Cabinet nominees require Senate confirmation. If any of them concern you, call your Senators and ask them to vote "No."

Not sure who your Senators are? Go to:
WholsMyRepresentative.com

Volunteer. Find something you want to get involved in. Could be your local Democratic Party (or Republican Party, if that's your thing). Could be a group that's nonpolitical, like a food bank or a church. Whatever it is, get out in the community, connect with people, and make your city a better place.

Shop at smile.amazon.com and a small percentage of every purchase goes to a nonprofit of your choice (such as ProPublica). There's no cost to you!

Vote. Register (if you haven't already) at vote.gov. Remember there are elections in 2017. Mostly local stuff, but local stuff matters too!

For more ideas, go to BrianDBuckley.com and click "What can I do?" at the top of the page.

Comments, questions, suggestions, ideas, hateful diatribes? Email: buckley.d.brian@gmail.com

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