



Secretary DeVos' Glaring Absence from Capitol Hill is a Problem

The Absence of Secretary DeVos from Capitol Hill Inhibits Congressional Oversight

Education Secretary Betsy DeVos was sworn into office on February 7, 2017. She has been on the job for over 16 months now, and she has yet to appear before the House Education and Workforce Committee. A recent article published by Education Week highlighted this fact and further confirmed that [she has not appeared before either of the authorizing committees](#) in the House or Senate since assuming office. Secretary DeVos' four immediate predecessors all appeared before both committees at least once, and in some cases multiple times, within their first 15 months of office. Here is a timeline of recent secretaries' appearances before Congress in their first 15 months in office:

- **Secretary Betsy DeVos, President Trump's Education Secretary**
 - Confirmed February 2017
 - **Zero appearances before the Committee, 16 months into tenure and counting**
 - Testified before Congress 4 times, including confirmation hearing
- **Secretary John B. King Jr., President Obama's Second Education Secretary**
 - Confirmed March 2016
 - First [appeared before the Committee on June 23, 2016](#), 3 months into tenure
 - Appeared before the Committee 3 times
 - Testified before Congress 6 times, either as Secretary or Acting Secretary.
- **Secretary Arne Duncan, President Obama's First Education Secretary**
 - Confirmed January 2009
 - First [appeared before the Committee on May 20, 2009](#), 4 months into tenure
 - Appeared before the Committee 3 times
 - Testified before Congress 9 times
- **Secretary Margaret Spellings, President George W. Bush's Second Education Secretary**
 - Confirmed January 2005
 - First [appeared before the Committee on September 29, 2005](#), 8 months into tenure
 - Testified before Congress 9 times
- **Secretary Rod Page, President George W. Bush's First Education Secretary**
 - Confirmed in January 2001.
 - First [appeared before the Committee on March 7, 2001](#), 2 months into tenure
 - Testified before Congress 9 times

Earlier this year, Ranking Member Bobby Scott sent a letter to Chairwoman Foxx requesting that [Members be allowed to question cabinet secretaries](#) on their budget requests for the full amount of time allotted by House Rules. Congress cannot perform its oversight responsibilities when the administration refuses to appear before authorizing committees.