

U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee
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Ashcroft Voted for Clinton Cabinet Nominees 100 % of the Time!!
Senate Passed 100 Percent of Clinton's Cabinet Nominees
With 97-Percent GOP Support

John Ashcroft must be laughing to himself. He knows that if the shoe were on the other foot, he would never confirm an attorney general who had views so antithetical to his own. Maybe he'd find something in the Bible or, as he did with the judicial nomination of Ronnie White, distort the record, but he would be true to his beliefs. His opponents should be true to theirs.

[Richard Cohen, opinion column, *Washington Post*, 1/18/01]

Sometimes professional opinion makers are simply unwilling to let facts get in the way of their desire to make a political point. If Richard Cohen had bothered to consult the record, he'd know that John Ashcroft, during his six years in the Senate, voted for the President's cabinet choice 100 percent of the time. Furthermore, over the eight years of the Clinton presidency, Senate Republicans gave President Clinton his Cabinet nominee 100 percent of the time – with a party support average of 97 percent! Check the record:

- During Clinton's eight years in office, Republicans allowed passage of his cabinet nominees by unanimous consent most of the time. In 1993, his first year in office, the Senate confirmed his entire cabinet slate – save one – between January 20 and January 21.
- Only one 1993 cabinet nominee was even required to undergo a roll call vote: Janet Reno, the President's third selection for Attorney General (recall that prior to any Senate floor action, Zoe Baird withdrew for problems related to illegal domestic help; Kimba Wood followed suit.)
- One hundred percent of Senate Republicans voted for Janet Reno (John Ashcroft was not yet in the Senate).
- In 1994, Clinton's second year in office, only one vote was required on a cabinet nominee: William J. Perry, who was nominated to replace Les Aspin whose resignation had been announced by the President in December 1993.

- One hundred percent of Senate Republicans voted for William J. Perry (Senator Ashcroft was not yet in the Senate).
- In 1995, Republicans took over the Senate (and Senator Ashcroft began his term). During that year and the subsequent five years of Clinton's tenure, the Senate cast 10 additional votes on cabinet nominees.
- One hundred percent of Republicans voted for the President's nominee on six of those ten roll call votes (Rubin for Treasury; Glickman for Agriculture; Albright for State; Cohen for Defense; Cuomo for HUD; and Slater for Transportation).
- Of the other four roll call votes for cabinet nominees, here's the level of Republican support provided:
 - Ninety-eight percent of Republicans (including Senator Ashcroft) voted for the Peña nomination for Energy Secretary.
 - Ninety-six percent of Republicans (including Senator Ashcroft) voted for the Daley nomination for Secretary of Commerce.
 - Ninety-six percent of Republicans (including Senator Ashcroft) voted for the Summers nomination for Treasury Secretary.
 - Seventy-six percent of Republicans (including Senator Ashcroft) voted for the Herman nomination for Labor Secretary.
- In short, John Ashcroft supported 100 percent (10 of 10 roll call votes, and 3 unanimous consent votes) of the President's cabinet nominees during his six years in the U.S. Senate.
- Again, we'll repeat it for good measure, 100 percent of President Clinton's cabinet nominees [excluding, of course, those withdrawn] were confirmed by the Senate with overwhelming support from both sides of the aisle.
- No cabinet nominee underwent a filibuster.

Now, here's a quote about the nomination process worth repeating:

“. . . We must always take our advice and consent responsibilities seriously because they are among the most sacred. But, I think most senators will agree that the standard we apply in the case of executive branch appointments is not as stringent as that for judicial nominees. The president should get to pick his own team. Unless the nominee is incompetent or some other major ethical or investigative problem arises in the course of our carrying out our duties, then the president gets the benefit of the doubt...”

Senators on both sides of the aisle have made similar assertions, but this time it was Senator Leahy, defending assistant attorney general nominee Walter Dellinger in 1993 [Dellinger, like his cabinet compatriots, was confirmed by the Senate]. Leahy is senior Democrat on the Judiciary Committee.

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For a related look at Senator Ashcroft's voting record, see RPC's "John Ashcroft: The Most Experienced Attorney General Nominee – in U.S. History," 1/18/01