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# Tillerson confirmed, sworn in as secretary of state

Oversees career diplomats angry at Trump's immigration and refugee order



FILE - In this Jan. 11, 2017, file photo, Secretary of State-nominee Rex Tillerson testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington. Trump's nomination of Tillerson for secretary of state is headed toward Senate confirmation after several Democrats crossed party lines to ... [more >](#)

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By [Guy Taylor](#) - The Washington Times - Wednesday, February 1, 2017

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**Rex Tillerson** didn't have the easiest ride to confirmation, but it will likely be smoother than his arrival at the [State Department](#), where the nation's new top diplomat confronts a complex slate of foreign policy challenges — in addition to a tricky management challenge overseeing a pool of career diplomats angry over President **Trump's** executive order on immigration policy and refugees.

The Senate voted 56-43 to confirm **Mr. Tillerson** as the nation's 69th secretary of state on Wednesday, with Republicans picking up three Democratic votes to pierce the minority's hoped-for united front against the former **ExxonMobil** CEO. The 43 negative votes are believed to be the most ever against a secretary of state nominee.

**Mr. Tillerson**, who lunched with the president just hours before the Senate vote, was sworn in Wednesday evening at a White House ceremony with President **Trump** and Vice President Mike Pence. **Mr. Trump**, in brief remarks, praised **Mr. Tillerson's** background and experience, saying, "Your whole life has prepared you for this moment."

Noting the outpouring of encouragement and advice he received from friends and strangers since his surprise selection, **Mr. Tillerson** vowed to "always represent the interests of all the American people at all times."

The 64-year-old Texan will take the helm in Foggy Bottom at a moment of uncertainty and antipathy among many world leaders over **Mr. Trump's** controversial executive order and his "America First" approach, which has added to the already turbulent landscape of foreign policy challenges — from the North Korean nuclear threat to Syria's civil war, a clash with Mexico over trade and border issues, Russian meddling in Ukraine and the fight against the Islamic State.

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