



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on March 1, 2020

Trump Renominates John Ratcliffe for Director of National Intelligence

On Friday, President Trump [decided to renominate Representative John Ratcliffe](#) (R-Texas) for the office of director of national intelligence, tweeting:

I am pleased to announce the nomination of Congressman John Ratcliffe to be Director of National Intelligence (DNI). Would have completed the process earlier, but John wanted to wait until after the IG Report was finished. John is an outstanding man of great talent!



The president agreed to withdraw his nomination of Ratcliffe last summer partly because of charges levied against Ratcliffe at the time, including that he embellished his legal resume and that he lacked sufficient experience to take on the top intelligence job in the federal government.

The potential firestorm gave the president a way to allow Ratcliffe to decline gracefully. President Trump said at the time, “I could see that the press was treating him, I thought, very unfairly. I asked him, ‘Do you want to go through this for two or three months, or would you want me to maybe do something else?’” Ratcliffe agreed to decline, and Trump tweeted:

Our great Republican Congressman John Ratcliffe is being treated very unfairly by the LameStream Media. Rather than going through months of slander and libel, I explained to John how miserable it would be for him and his family to deal with these people....

John has therefore decided to stay in Congress where he has done such an outstanding job representing the people of Texas [4th District], and our Country.

The DNI position was created following 9/11, allowing the director to serve as head of the 17-member U.S. intelligence community, to direct and oversee the government’s National Intelligence Program and to serve as an advisor to the president about intelligence matters related to national security. The law says that “under ordinary circumstances it is desirable” that either the director or the principal deputy director “be an active-duty commissioned officer in the armed forces, or have training or experience in military intelligence activities and requirements.” At the time, Ratcliffe had no military experience, no intelligence training, and his experience as a member of the House Judiciary Committee was short, having been elected to Congress the first time in 2014. In January 2019, he joined the House Intelligence Committee.

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But during his time in Congress, he notched a cumulative rating of [69 out of 100 on The New American’s Freedom Index](#), while the Heritage Foundation ranked him in 2016 as the most conservative Texas legislator in Congress and the second-most conservative legislator in the country.

At the time of his first run for Congress, Ratcliffe had the support of the Tea Party Express, the Senate



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Conservatives Fund, the Club for Growth, the National Rifle Association, former congressional office holders Ron Paul and Michelle Bachmann, and former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee. He won reelection to his third term with 76 percent of the vote.

A bulldog when it came to national intelligence, Ratcliffe supported the president's criticism of investigations into alleged Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, contending that "it does appear that there were crimes committed during the Obama administration." He stated that he had "seen no evidence" that Russian interference in the election helped Trump get elected. He described court-appointed surveillance of the Trump campaign as spying, and claimed that the "Russia collusion" probe was tainted by a criminal conspiracy.

He enhanced his reputation as a bulldog during the Trump impeachment fight. Noted the *New York Times*, "He was a vocal figure in House hearings during the impeachment fight, brooking no criticism of the president and forcefully arguing for an investigation into the anonymous whistle-blower whose complaint about the president's actions toward Ukraine helped prompt the inquiry." He confirmed the president's initial impressions when he served on a team of House lawmakers who helped defend the president during his impeachment "trial."

He confronted Robert Mueller forcefully as well, declaring that "you managed to violate every principle and the most sacred of traditions about prosecutors." He charged that the report was not written by Mueller but written instead by "Hillary Clinton's de facto legal team."

As the impeachment trial was getting underway, Ratcliffe said, "I took an oath to defend the Constitution. This impeachment is an assault on due process. It's an assault on the separation of powers. It's unconstitutional. I'm grateful for the opportunity to make that clear to every American during the Senate trial."

When Democrat Senator Mark Warner of Virginia learned of Trump's second effort to nominate Ratcliffe as DNI, he said, "It's hard for me to see how anything new has happened" since the president's first attempt.

What has happened, Senator Warner, is that Ratcliffe has vastly more experience about how the U.S. intelligence community tried to impeach the president and remove him from office. He knows more about the underhanded tactics employed. Best of all, the IG report he was waiting for has proven him right. From that report's Executive Summary, one reads this:

Our review found that FBI personnel fell far short of the requirement in FBI policy that they ensure that all factual statements in a FISA application are "scrupulously accurate."

We identified multiple instances in which factual assertions relied upon in the first FISA application were inaccurate, incomplete, or unsupported by appropriate documentation, based upon information the FBI had in its possession at the time the application was filed.

We found that the problems we identified were primarily caused by the Crossfire Hurricane team failing to share all relevant information with OI and, consequently, the information was not considered by the Department decision makers who ultimately decided to support the applications.

Enough has changed since Trump's first try that the chances for Senate confirmation of John Ratcliffe for the office of director of national intelligence have vastly improved. This will put a Trump loyalist of unquestioned integrity and grit into a critical intelligence position.

Photo: AP Images



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