

Trump Names Fox News Host, Veteran Pete Hegseth as Defense Secretary

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Fox News contributor Pete Hegseth arrives at Trump Tower in New York City on Nov. 29, 2016. Spencer Platt/Getty Images



By Tom Ozimek

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President-elect Donald Trump has announced the nomination of Army combat veteran and longtime Fox News host Pete Hegseth as Secretary of Defense, highlighting Hegseth's military background and expressing confidence in his commitment to an America First agenda.



Pete has spent his entire life as a Warrior for the Troops, and for the country," Trump said in a [statement](#) on social media. "Pete is tough, smart and a true believer in America First. With Pete at the helm,



America's enemies are on notice - Our Military will be Great Again, and America will Never Back Down."



Hegseth, a former Army National Guard captain who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, has earned two Bronze Stars and a Combat



Infantryman's Badge. A Princeton and Harvard graduate, Hegseth spent eight years as a Fox News host and wrote the bestseller "The War on Warriors," a critique of left-wing policies undermining the military.

In announcing the nomination, Trump praised Hegseth's commitment to veterans and his advocacy for a strong, merit-based military aligned with his "peace through strength" mandate.

If confirmed by the Senate, Hegseth would assume the role of Pentagon chief at a time of multiple global crises, including the war in Ukraine, tensions in the Middle East, and a growing alliance between Russia and North Korea.

During Trump's first term, five individuals cycled through the role of Pentagon chief, each either resigning, being dismissed, or serving briefly as an interim replacement. Some repeatedly sought to counter Trump's directives, from banning transgender troops and withdrawing forces from conflict zones, to deploying military personnel at the border and during domestic unrest.

House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) praised Trump's choice of Hegseth for Secretary of Defense, saying that he "brings a lot to the table."

"He's got experience and I think he'll be reform-minded in the areas that need reform," Johnson told The Associated Press.

By contrast, Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), the top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, said he expects Hegseth's nomination to face Senate opposition, citing limited policymaking experience for the role.

"There is reason for concern that this is not a person who is a serious enough policymaker, serious enough policy implementer, to do a successful job," Smith said, adding that there is "no question" that Hegseth's combat experience is a plus.

Hegseth's selection for the role of Secretary of Defense was made as the contours of a second Trump administration continue to take shape at a rapid pace after his election win last week.

Earlier on Tuesday, Trump **announced** that John Ratcliffe, who served as the director of national intelligence during Trump's first term, is his pick for the position of the director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The president-elect also **announced** that Rep. Mike Waltz (R-Fla.), a vocal critic of communist China, would serve as his national security adviser.

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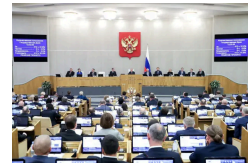
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