



Carson Vote In Senate Limbo

HUD activities other than those already approved and in the pipeline are on hold awaiting the Senate vote on Dr. Ben Carson's nomination to be HUD secretary. At the moment, the status of Carson's nomination is a mystery.

Carson's nomination was approved by the Senate Banking Committee on Jan. 24, and the speed of the action four days after President Donald Trump's swearing in indicated the Senate floor vote would be routine.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren's (D-MA) backing -- the liberal Democrat on the Banking Committee saying Carson impresses her even though he would not be her choice for the post -- almost assured Carson's speedy approval.

And then suddenly, Carson's name disappeared from the day-to-day discussions of the status of Trump's appointees. Congressional staffers are mum, telling *HAL* they know no more than what appears on the daily Senate calendar.

That calendar has made no mention of Carson since the day of the committee vote. Sources say one complication may be Carson's difficulty over divesting himself of all conflict-of-interest obstacles.

According to the Senate, Carson's nomination was "placed on Senate Executive Calendar. Calendar No. 5. Subject to nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate."

HUD career officials tell *HAL* the lack of action is disquieting. While HUD has an acting secretary and a transition staff in place, important activities are on hold until Carson is confirmed and assumes the post. A HUD official explains HUD doesn't want to execute policy decisions until Carson officially declares his management preferences, policies, and goals.

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