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Patrick Shanahan To Become Acting Secretary Of Defense After Jim Mattis' Departure

"Patrick has a long list of accomplishments," President Donald Trump tweeted Sunday. "He will be great!"

By Hayley Miller and Igor Bobic



President [Donald Trump](#) on Sunday named Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan as incoming acting defense secretary.

"Patrick has a long list of accomplishments while serving as Deputy," the president tweeted. "He will be





Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

I am pleased to announce that our very talented Deputy Secretary of Defense, Patrick Shanahan, will assume the title of Acting Secretary of Defense starting January 1, 2019. Patrick has a long list of accomplishments while serving as Deputy, & previously Boeing. He will be great!

32.6K 11:46 AM - Dec 23, 2018

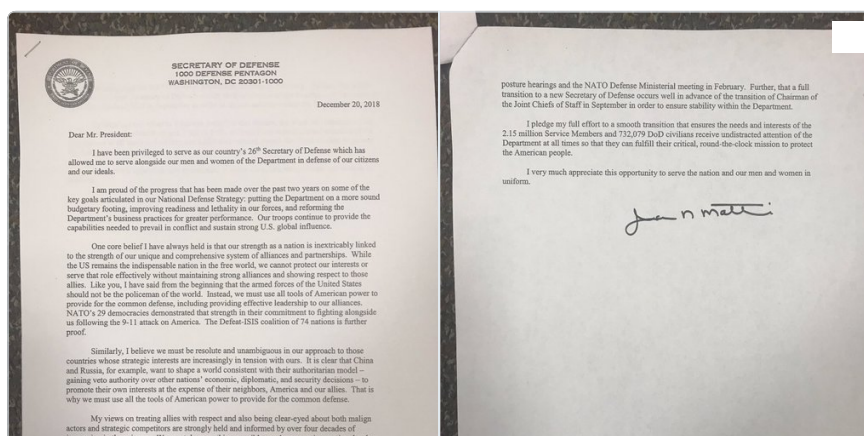
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Defense Secretary [Jim Mattis](#) submitted [his letter of resignation](#) to Trump on Thursday, a day after the president announced he decided to “immediately” withdraw American troops from Syria.

In his blunt letter to the president, Mattis stated his last day would be Feb. 28. But Trump tweeted Sunday that Shanahan would step in as acting defense secretary on Jan. 1, greatly accelerating Mattis’ planned departure.

Mattis, who opposed pulling U.S. troops out of war-torn Syria, wrote in his unusual resignation letter to Trump that because “you have the right to have a Secretary of Defense whose views are better aligned with yours on these and other subjects, I believe it is right for me to step down from my position.”

“My views on treating allies with respect and also being clear-eyed about both malign actors and strategic competitors are strongly held and informed by over four decades of immersion in these issues,” he wrote.



Elizabeth McLaughlin
@Elizabeth_McLau

Defense Secretary James Mattis has resigned. Here's the letter:

14.1K 5:32 PM - Dec 20, 2018



Shanahan, a former Boeing executive, was confirmed by the Senate in 2017 by a 92-7 vote. Then—Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman [John McCain](#) (R-Ariz.), who died this year, threatened to keep his nomination from a vote at one point after over Shanahan's initial failure to voice support for providing military assistance to Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression.

Shanahan dodged specific questions regarding his views on Russia during his confirmation hearing, which mostly centered on his experience at Boeing. But he acknowledged that the U.S. needs to “deal” with Russian aggression in the future.

“I think the Russians are adversarial. I think through the whole of government we need to deal with their aggression — their disruption to our interests. I at this point don't have any specific recommendations,” he said.

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