

Senate Confirms Inaugural Head of Trump DOJ Anti-Fraud Division

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Celine Castronuovo – Bloomberg News

Reporter

Summary by Bloomberg AI

- Lawmakers voted to confirm Colin McDonald to lead a new fraud division at the Justice Department amid Democrats' concerns that the unit will target President Donald Trump's perceived political enemies.
- McDonald will become the first assistant attorney general overseeing the National Fraud Enforcement Division after the Senate's vote.
- Democrats have scrutinized McDonald over his role in DOJ's weaponization working group and have demanded answers from DOJ leadership on the division's focus.

Lawmakers voted to confirm Colin McDonald, the White House's pick to lead a new fraud division at the Justice Department, amid Democrats' concerns that the unit will target President Donald Trump's perceived political enemies.

McDonald, a former federal prosecutor in San Diego, will become the first assistant attorney general overseeing the Trump-established National Fraud Enforcement Division after the Senate's 52-47 vote Tuesday. Republicans overwhelmingly backed the nominee as top Democrats continue to demand answers from DOJ leadership on the division's focus.

Trump **nominated** McDonald in January, writing in a Truth Social post that McDonald was a "Highly Respected AMERICA FIRST Federal Prosecutor" who could help advance the administration's goal of uncovering public benefits fraud in states led by Democrats.

McDonald, who became a DOJ political appointee last year as an associate deputy attorney general, told lawmakers at **a February hearing** that he initially planned to investigate abuse of taxpayer-funded programs such as Medicaid and SNAP.

The Senate Judiciary Committee **advanced** his nomination on March 19 in a party-line vote.

Sen. **Dick Durbin** (D-Ill.), the Judiciary Committee's ranking member, had urged his colleagues to refrain from advancing McDonald's nomination until they received additional information from Attorney General Pam Bondi on DOJ's plans for the fraud division. Durbin said Bondi has yet to respond to **a February letter** with questions on the division, including how the team will be staffed and separated from existing fraud enforcement offices.

Democrats have also scrutinized McDonald over his role in DOJ's weaponization working group, which McDonald previously co-led with Trump loyalist Ed Martin. Bondi established the group early in her tenure to review instances of what the Trump administration viewed as President Joe Biden's weaponization of DOJ.

Democrats pressed McDonald on the working group during his February hearing, as well as whether McDonald would carry out any mandates from Trump to investigate his perceived enemies. McDonald repeatedly dodged the questions and said he planned to work with Congress, inspectors general, and others "to build and lead a national fraud enforcement division that restores faith in our taxpayer funded programs."

To contact the reporter on this story: [Celine Castronuovo](#) in Washington at ccastronuovo@bloombergindustry.com