

DC Wrap: House Dems split on defense spending bill vote; House fundraising roundup

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Welcome to our weekly DC Wrap, where we write about what Wisconsin's congressional delegation is up to in Washington. Sign up for our mailing list [here](#) to receive our newsletter directly.

Quotes of the week, July 14-20

I have no problems with what Donald Jr. did, and I don't think any prosecutor would either.

- U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy, R-Wausau, on a meeting President Trump's son had with Russian officials last year after he was told they would have information that could damage the Clinton campaign. See more from the CNN interview:

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/sean-duffy-nothing-wrong-with-donald-trump-jr-meeting-russians/article/2628659>

The last thing we can afford to do right now is to say, 'This is an uphill battle, and the odds are long.' We've got to engage in this fight.

- U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin in an MSNBC interview, saying she hopes the public continues to call their members of Congress about Republican health care legislation. Watch the interview:

<http://www.msnbc.com/brian-williams/watch/senate-dem-we-ve-got-a-big-fight-ahead-of-us-on-health-care-971624515556>

This week's news

— House Speaker Paul Ryan says U.S. Sen. John McCain has “always been a warrior” and that Americans are behind him as he fights his cancer diagnosis.

McCain's office said yesterday doctors found a brain tumor as he was going through

a procedure to remove a blood clot above his left eye.

"I know John is going to fight this with the same sheer force of will that has earned him the admiration of the nation," Ryan said.

U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, also released a statement saying it's "been a great privilege to get to know and become friends with John."

"He is a fighter, and I know he will attack this diagnosis with the strength and perseverance he has demonstrated throughout his life," he said.

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, meanwhile, tweeted: "Anyone who knows @SenJohnMcCain, knows he is a fighter. My heart and my prayers go out to him and his family."

— The three House Dems from Wisconsin split in their votes for the National Defense Authorization Act, which would pump \$696 billion into the defense budget.

The bill, which the House passed on Friday 322-81, has defense funding levels \$93 billion above what President Trump had requested.

U.S. Reps. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, and Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, were the only members of the Wisconsin delegation to oppose it. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Janesville, did not vote on the proposal, as is custom.

A Pocan spokeswoman said he voted against the bill "because it is a reflection of the Republican budget, which spends too much on defense contractors and too little on other budget priorities," as well as some "troubling" language concerning Guantanamo also included in the bill.

Meanwhile, spokesman Eric Harris said Moore voted against NDAA because it authorized spending "tens of billions more than even" what Trump requested, while exceeding the 2011 Budget Control Act by around \$70 billion. That act put a \$549 billion cap on defense spending.

Moore was also against Republicans removing a provision from the bill in committee that blocked the use of any funds for a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. Harris said that was a "matter of concern" for Moore because she recently introduced similar legislation.

U.S. Rep. Ron Kind was the sole Wisconsin Dem to vote for the bill. A spokeswoman said “one of the key reasons” the La Crosse Dem supported it was the NDAA included a proposal from Kind aimed at making it easier for families of deceased veterans to get replacement medals if the originals were lost.

“While Rep. Kind voted for the bill he strongly believes that we need to work to find ways to cut wasteful defense programs and save taxpayer dollars,” spokeswoman Amanda Sherman said.

The U.S. Senate has yet to take up its version of the bill. A spokesman for U.S. Sens. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, said that version “is still in development,” and didn’t comment on the version the House passed.

A spokesman for U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, didn’t respond to a request for comment.

See the roll call vote:

<http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2017/roll378.xml#N>

— U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, a former Marine, said the bill helps ensure “our service members are trained, equipped and ready to fight at a moment’s notice.”

Gallagher, R-Green Bay, said the bill includes funding for three littoral combat ships, built by Marinette Marine in his district, and gets the Navy closer to its goal of having 355 ships.

“As we look ahead toward conference with the Senate, I will continue to fight tooth and nail to give our warfighters exactly what they need to deter threats, support our allies, and above all, keep the American people safe,” he said in a news release.

U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, said he’s spoken to military members who have raised concerns officials don’t have enough money to repair existing infrastructure.

“While the NDAA isn’t perfect, it will work towards fixing these types of problems to make our military more efficient and keep our troops safe,” he said in a news release.

— House Speaker Paul Ryan has a far bigger warchest than his fellow

Wisconsin House members, with U.S. Rep. Ron Kind a distant second.

Ryan reported his re-election campaign had \$3.4 million in receipts between April 1 and June 30, \$1.7 million in disbursements and \$11.15 million cash on hand, according to his report posted at the FEC site. Ryan for Congress is one piece of the speaker's fundraising operation, which is dubbed Team Ryan.

Kind, D-La Crosse, reported \$235,226 raised, \$106,725 in expenses and \$2.6 million cash on hand.

See a round-up of fundraising from House members:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/ryan-has-biggest-warchest-among-wis-delegation-kind-ranks-second/>

— Former U.S. Rep. Mark Green, the president's pick to lead the U.S. Agency for International Development, has started emptying out his state campaign account more than a decade after losing his bid for gov.

Green, R-Green Bay, made \$70,000 in charitable contributions this spring, including \$50,000 to the World Orphan Fund. He also gave \$10,000 to the International Conservation Caucus Foundation and \$5,000 each to the Joseph P. Mettner Foundation and World Teach.

Green also paid \$5,000 in consulting fees to the Arena Strategy Group and covered \$469 in travel expenses.

That left Green with \$22,198 in the account at the end of June.

The White House formally announced Green's nomination in May. The report shows Green made his first charitable contribution April 10 and his last May 18.

See the report:

<http://cfis.wi.gov/ReportsOutputFiles/0102847JulyContinuing20177998e7112017122437PMGAB2Report.pdf>

— U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan has a new spokesman in his D.C. office.

Ron Boehmer will be taking over as the Town of Vermont Dem's communications director, replacing David Kolovson, who's moving to Texas.

Boehmer most recently served as communications director for U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., and has also previously worked for Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley.

— U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson says he's introducing a bill to help combat the national opioid epidemic in memory of his nephew, Archie, who died from a fentanyl overdose last year.

Johnson, R-Oshkosh, said on the Senate floor last week his bill would close a loophole that makes it hard to prosecute crimes dealing with fentanyl-like substances. That loophole, Johnson said, lets people change one part of the fentanyl compound to avoid legal issues and then sell those substances throughout the world.

"The fentanyl analogues on the street today serve no known medical purpose and are contributing to the alarming overdose rates throughout the country," Johnson said.

See more:

<https://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=B764D928-A1E2-45FF-9764-72B57AD8A74D>

— Johnson's committee this week focused on findings that the U.S. Postal Service let letter carriers take unpaid leaves to work on union efforts to elect Democrats.

Outside investigators found systemic and longstanding violations of the Hatch Act, which prohibits employees from working on political activities during government time.

Johnson thanked the Wisconsin letter carrier, Timm Kopp, who first flagged the violations for his office for having the "courage of bringing this issue to light" and thanked USPS officials for working to ensure that will no longer happen.

"There were some systemic problems here that people were basically unaware of," Johnson said at the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, the Missouri Dem who's the committee's ranking member, said the findings will help guide other agencies ensure their policies align

with federal law.

Watch the hearing:

<http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/hearings/the-postal-services-actions-during-the-2016-campaign-season-implications-for-the-hatch-act>

— Voting closes July 23 for the Independent Journal Review’s “Cutest Dogs On The Hill” poll, which includes two dogs with Wisconsin ties.

The spokespeople for U.S. Reps. Jim Sensenbrenner and Glenn Grothman have their dogs featured in the poll. Maddie is Nicole Tieman’s dog, while Todd is Bernadette Green’s dog.

Vote in the poll:

<https://cutestdogsonthehill.com/>

— U.S. Reps. Mark Pocan and Gwen Moore this week joined other House Dems in demanding that the Financial Accounting Standards Board force multinational corporations to disclose country-by-country financial reporting.

The move, the 16 Dems argued in a letter to the board’s chair, would “address the threat posed by offshore profit shifting to investors and the public.” They asked that income, assets, number of employees and taxes paid annually be among the information the corporations would be required to disclose on a country-by-country basis.

“These standards will implement critical safeguards and mitigate risk for investors and provide policymakers and the public with important data relevant to our national well-being,” they wrote. “Companies already use this information internally and report much of it to the IRS, mitigating any alleged compliance burdens associated with such a directive.”

— U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin called on President Trump this week to demand action on her Buy America legislation.

The White House has declared this week “Made in America Week,” prompting the renewed push from the Madison Dem.

In a letter to Trump on Monday, Baldwin asked Trump to call on Senate Republicans to take up her bill, given his previously voiced support for the legislation while he was in Wisconsin in April.

“Americans are tired of the status quo in Washington,” she wrote. “We look forward to working with you to ensure that our nation’s drinking water infrastructure is built with American materials by moving this legislation through the Senate.”

See the letter:

<https://www.baldwin.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Made%20in%20America%20Week%20Letter%20to%20President%20Trump.pdf>

— Baldwin has received two different awards for her conservation work, her office said.

Those include the Lake Michigan Stakeholder’s Lake Michigan Champions of Conservation award and Wisconsin Environment’s Environmental Champion Award.

— Baldwin and Johnson on Monday announced a commission to help them recommend candidates to the president for U.S. marshal.

The two already have a Federal Nominating Commission in place, helping them suggest candidates for vacancies in the judiciary and U.S. attorney spots. But the new commission will cover the U.S. marshal appointments for Wisconsin’s two districts.

See more on the commission:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/baldwin-johnson-form-commission-for-u-s-marshal-candidate-recommendations/>

— U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner is renewing his push to fully restore the Voting Rights Act following a Supreme Court decision.

Sensenbrenner, R-Menomonee Falls, wants Congress to approve a new formula for the preclearance system, which gives additional federal scrutiny to voting law changes in areas with a history of discrimination.

The Supreme Court in 2013 decided the system was constitutional but that it should not be based off the formula from 1965 when the law was first passed, effectively

nixing the preclearance system until Congress comes up with a new formula.

After a failed push last session, Sensenbrenner is reintroducing his bill to set up a new formula that would subject states to that additional review if they've had five voting violations in 15 years. Those violations, determined by DOJ, include reducing the hours that polls are open without giving people enough notice, according to Sensenbrenner's office.

See the release:

<https://sensenbrenner.house.gov/press-releases-statements?ID=2BA9CA56-689B-47CD-B43C-FEB8EE1864E9>

— U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, says an ozone regulation bill he voted for would help Sheboygan County manufacturers grow.

The bill would delay until 2025 ozone standards put in place by the Environmental Protection Agency under the Obama administration. The bill passed the House 229-199 vote, with the state's congressional delegation voting along party lines.

Grothman says the rules would limit Sheboygan County's growth because it gets ozone blown in from other states neighboring Lake Michigan, affecting its overall air quality readings. Grothman pointed to a Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty report that took a look at the issue.

See more:

<https://grothman.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=356>

Posts of the week

Yesterday, we celebrated [#NationalIceCreamDay](#), but did you know that [@UWMadison](#) has their own [#MadelnWI](#) ice cream? [#MadelnAmerica](#) pic.twitter.com/Tx3JqcjsTB

— Sen. Tammy Baldwin (@SenatorBaldwin) [July 17, 2017](#)

[@RCamposDuffy](#) and I with six assistant chefs this morning on [@foxandfriends](#)' Cooking With Friends! Making [#Wisconsin](#) pancakes!
pic.twitter.com/90U9z4AABj

— Sean Duffy (@SeanDuffyWI) [July 17, 2017](#)

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BWsPeu4jo3D/?taken-by=repglenngrothman>

ICYMI

Johnson says 'very ill advised' comments from McConnell put health care bill at risk
<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/johnson-says-very-ill-advised-comments-from-mcconnell-put-health-care-bill-at-risk/>

Tammy Baldwin among Lake Michigan Champions of Conservation
<http://www.htrnews.com/story/news/2017/07/18/tammy-baldwin-among-manitowoc-lake-michigan-champions-conservation/487999001/>

Ron Johnson, Tammy Baldwin, announce nominating commission for two U.S. marshal positions
<http://www.jsonline.com/story/news/2017/07/17/ron-johnson-tammy-baldwin-announce-nominating-commission-two-u-s-marshal-positions/485912001/>

Baldwin introduces legislation to require LGBT inclusion in federal surveys
http://www.wisconsinjournal.com/news/baldwin-introduces-legislation-to-require-lgbt-inclusion-in-federal-surveys/article_f1b9cbde-6bd2-11e7-aef1-8beb67d27701.html

Baldwin, Johnson react after collapse of health care proposal
<http://www.wsaw.com/content/news/Baldwin-Johnson-react-after-collapse-of-health-care-proposal-435307683.html>

GOP Sen. Ron Johnson Slams McConnell's 'Breach of Trust' on Medicaid
<https://newsline.com/gop-sen-ron-johnson-slams-mcconnells-breach-of-trust-on-medicaid/>

Ron Johnson blames Senate leadership for Obamacare repeal failure
<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/ron-johnson-blames-senate-leadership-for-obamacare-repeal-failure>

[macare-repeal-failure/article/2628998](http://www.wispolitics.com/macare-repeal-failure/article/2628998)

Sen. Ron Johnson: 'I don't think anybody should be meeting with foreign agents'
http://host.madison.com/ct/news/local/govt-and-politics/sen-ron-johnson-i-don-t-think-anybody-should-be/article_4268595a-1b06-5ef4-9bf9-5f3c2f8d291c.html

Grothman: Nobody On Capitol Hill Is Talking About Trump Jr. Russia Story
<https://www.wpr.org/grothman-nobody-capitol-hill-talking-about-trump-jr-russia-story>

Wisconsin congressman Mike Gallagher proposes trauma awareness month
<http://www.postcrescent.com/story/kidsincrisis/2017/07/14/wisconsin-congressman-mike-gallagher-proposes-trauma-awareness-month/479138001/>

GOP Rep. Sean Duffy: 'Get Rid of the Filibuster Rule'
<http://www.newsmax.com/Politics/GOP-sean-duffy-rid-filibuster/2017/07/17/id/802075/>