

# DC Wrap: Lawmakers react to Foxconn announcement; Sensenbrenner takes on music industry groups

Posted on Thursday, Jul 27, 2017

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 21-27***

You know, that would have been a pretty tough 'no' vote. So I was happy to join Sen. McCain.

— *U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, after voting for a motion to proceed with a debate on repealing the Affordable Care Act. Johnson told reporters after the vote that the "yes" vote from McCain, who returned to the Senate after his brain cancer diagnosis, helped him decide. [See more.](#)*

As you know, Democrats are in the minority in the House, the Senate, we don't have the White House. We have been dealt out of this debate, but so have the American people. There haven't been hearings. It was drafted in secret. And the only way we are going to succeed on the next series of votes to defeat this is if every American speaks out and your stories are told and your voices are heard.

– *U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, speaking with fellow Dems outside the Capitol after the Senate voted 51-50, with Vice President Mike Pence serving the tie-breaking vote, to begin debate on the health care bill Tuesday. [See the video.](#)*

## ***This week's news***

— **House Speaker Paul Ryan said at the White House on Wednesday the \$10 billion manufacturing facility that Foxconn is building in Wisconsin will be an "absolute game changer."**

He also credited Gov. Scott Walker for quarterbacking the effort to bring Foxconn to southeastern Wisconsin and his past work on helping state manufacturers.

“This is the topper of all toppers,” said Ryan, whose 1st congressional district would include the facility.

U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy, R-Wausau, called the announcement “huge” on Twitter, adding that Foxconn chose Wisconsin “because America is competitive again.”

U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Green Bay, said the state is “on its way to becoming a global high-tech manufacturing and technology leader.”

And U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, said it will be “the largest single economic development project in Wisconsin history & will transform our state.”

**— Meanwhile, U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore said in a statement she declined an invitation from Trump to participate in the White House announcement, saying she was instead using the time to take questions from constituents.**

“While I am relieved my state could potentially see an influx of jobs because of this project, my constituents have no interest in me entertaining the president’s desire to be used as a backdrop in his photo op,” Moore said.

Still, the Milwaukee Dem said she felt some “cautious optimism” about the announcement, although she noted some skepticism about whether the jobs would materialize.

Moore cited, for example, Walker’s campaign pledge more than six years ago to create 250,000 private-sector jobs in the state over four years, which is still unmet. She also cautioned that elected officials often promise individuals “job creation is just beyond the horizon, only to discover that such assurances are merely an attempt to win elections.”

See Moore’s statement:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/u-s-rep-moore-issues-statement-on-foxconn-const-ruction-announcement/>

See more on the Foxconn announcement:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/trump-state-gop-leaders-praise-foxconn-plan-to-b>

[uild-10-billion-wi-facility/](#)

**— The House this week overwhelmingly passed a bill slapping new sanctions onto Russia, Iran and North Korea, with all Wisconsin representatives voting for it.**

The bill, which also prohibits President Trump from waiving the sanctions without receiving congressional permission, passed Tuesday on a 419-3 vote, sending the tweaked legislation back to the Senate, after that chamber had originally passed the bill on a 98-2 vote.

U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Green Bay, said in a tweet the vote shows “Congress is pushing back against foreign aggressors via tougher sanctions & taking an overdue step in re-claiming its constitutional role.”

See the House’s roll call vote:

<http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2017/roll413.xml>

**— U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner is battling with two music industry groups over how to ease a copyright process that he says is “convoluted and difficult.”**

Sensenbrenner, R-Menomonee Falls, said in a news release that bars and restaurants struggle when figuring out whether they can legally play a song, opening them up to lawsuits and fees. So he’s introduced a bill to require the Register of Copyrights to set up an informational database of musical works.

But two leading groups — BMI and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers — announced this week they are setting up their own database instead of a government one.

Sensenbrenner said the groups aren’t “serious about establishing a music database” because they didn’t include other competing groups in their initiative, which wouldn’t solve the issue business owners struggle with. He also said there’s mistrust between those businesses and groups like BMI and ASCAP, so an outside database would bring “much-needed transparency.”

“With their announcement today, they are grasping at straws; trying to maintain power over a failing process that only serves their interests, not those of the American consumer,” he said.

The groups said in a news release Wednesday that they're joining forces to "deliver an authoritative view" of who owns the vast majority of songs licensed in the U.S., as well as indicate if other performing rights organizations have an interest in a song.

BMI spokeswoman Liz Fischer said the two organizations license around 90 percent of the music in the U.S. and that they hope other groups will join later.

"We believe a marketplace solution is the right solution, created by the experts who know the data best," she said in response to Sensenbrenner's comments.

ASCAP spokeswoman Lauren Iossa, meanwhile, called the partnership a "massive step forward" that businesses support.

"We support the ability for licensees to have efficient access to correct and complete copyrighted works ownership information, but we do not believe building a new government-run centralized system is the best approach," she said.

See the BMI and ASCAP announcement:

<https://www.bmi.com/news/entry/bmi-ascap-announce-creation-of-new-musical-works-database>

See Sensenbrenner's latest release on the issue:

<https://sensenbrenner.house.gov/press-releases-statements?ID=B0DE914E-C610-4973-B259-ACE65218FB47>

**— Businessman and former Marine Kevin Nicholson announced Wednesday he will run for the U.S. Senate, the first Republican candidate to officially launch a bid to challenge Dem Tammy Baldwin.**

A three-minute announcement video Nicholson released this morning called him a "conservative warrior with the guts to fight Washington" and a conservative outsider. It highlighted his combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the Bronze Star he was awarded.

Nicholson also calls Baldwin a "disaster on national security," dead wrong on the economy, liberal, divisive, "honestly just embarrassing" and "everything wrong about Washington."

Baldwin's campaign hit back at Nicholson as an "opportunist" and questioned his

support from Illinois businessman Richard Uihlein, who has pumped \$3.5 million into a super PAC to support the Republican's candidacy.

See more:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/nicholson-formally-launches-bid-for-u-s-senate/>

**— Baldwin spent \$1.1 million during the second quarter of 2017 as she collected \$2.5 million, according to her most recent campaign finance filing.**

Baldwin's campaign previously announced the Madison Dem had raised \$2.5 million and had \$3.9 million in the bank. The report filed with the FEC details her spending, which the campaign had not earlier released.

See the full report:

<http://docquery.fec.gov/pdf/048/201707180200200048/201707180200200048.pdf>

**— U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson's fundraising picked up in the second quarter of the year even as he continued to say he will not serve beyond this term.**

Johnson, R-Oshkosh, collected \$483,941 between April 1 and June 30, spent \$103,210 and had \$476,091 in the bank. During the first quarter of the year, Johnson raised \$147,883. He said at the GOP state convention in May he would continue to fundraise to help pay off debt and to fund political travel, but again said he would not seek re-election in 2022.

Johnson listed \$35,249 in fundraising expenses, including \$7,627 for the 2016 general election.

See his report:

<http://docquery.fec.gov/pdf/321/201707200200231321/201707200200231321.pdf>

**— Two dogs with Wisconsin ties were made the top 25 "Cutest Dogs On The Hill" list in the Independent Journal Review's poll this week.**

The eighth-place finisher was spokeswoman Nicole Tieman's dog, Maddie, in U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner's office. And ranking fifth was Todd, the dog of Bernadette Green, U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman's communications director.

See the full list:

<http://ijr.com/2017/07/928122-top-25-cutest-dogs-capitol-hill/>

— **Sensenbrenner’s legislative assistant, Erik Kinney, made it on the Hill’s “50 Most Beautiful” list this year.**

Kinney, 27, is from Brookfield.

See the profile the Hill wrote:

<http://thehill.com/50-most-beautiful/2017/343808-erik-kinney>

— **Wisconsin congressional Dems are urging state elections officials not to turn voting data over to the feds, after a judge Monday night gave the commission the go-ahead to collect it.**

The Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity had previously asked states to submit publicly available data on their voters that includes their names, birthdays and last four digits of their Social Security numbers.

But earlier this month, the commission asked states to hold off on their responses until a federal ruling on a lawsuit filed by the Electronic Privacy Information Center was decided. EPIC had asked a judge to block the feds from collecting the information during the suit. But a federal judge in D.C. last night declined to block the commission from collecting the data.

Still, U.S. Reps. Gwen Moore, Mark Pocan and Ron Kind in a letter to the Wisconsin Elections Commission asked state officials to “disregard” the federal request, saying that compiling the voter data in one area “creates an undue risk to the privacy rights of Wisconsin voters.”

Wisconsin Elections Commission officials had previously said they would turn over some of the requested voter data if the feds agreed to pay \$12,500.

See the letter from Moore, Pocan and Kind:

<https://gwenmoore.house.gov/press-releases/wisconsin-house-democrats-urge-state-officials-to-reject-presidential-voter-fraud-commissions-request-for-sensitive-information/>

— **U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan said Wednesday it’s “outrageous and shameful” that President Trump decided to once again prohibit transgender people from serving in the U.S. military.**

Trump wrote on Twitter he made the decision to ban them from serving “in any capacity” after talking to generals and military experts.

“Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail,” he wrote.

But Pocan said the claim on medical costs is false and that his “decision is based in discrimination and an effort to reverse progress” the Obama administration made by ending that ban. Trump, he said, is telling “more than a million Americans that they are not equaled or valued.”

“Transgender Americans deserve respect and the opportunity to serve our nation in the military,” he said. “With more than 15,000 transgender Americans serving in the military today, President Trump should immediately reverse course on his decision and he should stop using shocking policy shifts on Twitter to distract Americans from his failing health care plan.”

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, meanwhile, thanked transgender Americans for their service in the military because their service “strengthens our military and our nation.”

“A ban against any patriotic American who wants to serve our country is wrong,” she said on Twitter.

**— Pocan this week also joined fellow congressional Dems in unveiling their new national economic agenda.**

Dubbed “A Better Deal,” it looks to boost wages and job-training opportunities.

Pocan, representing the Progressive Caucus, stressed this week that the agenda represents the “core issues” across the entire Democratic caucus.

“We are all on the same page, and if you look at the Republican Party, not only are they not on the same page, but they’re not reading out of the same book, and whatever books they’re reading from aren’t even in the same language,” he said.

See the release:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/u-s-rep-pocan-joins-house-democrats-in-launching-a-better-deal-agenda/>

**— U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher wants to add sanctions for Hezbollah for using civilians as “human shields.”**

Gallagher, R-Green Bay, called the group an “Iranian proxy dedicated to destroying Israel and combating American interests in the Middle East.”

“The SHIELDS Act is a bipartisan effort to diminish Hezbollah’s military capabilities and malign influence in the Middle East while advancing U.S. interests,” he said.

See the release:

<https://gallagher.house.gov/media/press-releases/gallagher-suozzi-introduce-bill-sanction-hizballah-use-human-shields>

**— Gallagher this month was also recognized as a recipient of the conservative Maverick PAC’s “Future 40” award.**

That award recognizes young leaders in both the public and private sector. Recipients were honored at the annual Mavericks Conference in Washington, D.C. July 13-15.

See more:

<http://www.maverickpac.com/future40/>

**— Sensenbrenner is looking to help the U.S. fill a shortage in nurses by giving more temporary work visas to those trained in other countries.**

Sensenbrenner’s bill would increase the cap on visas for foreign-trained nurses from 3,000 to 8,000.

“During a tumultuous time in health care, nurses provide the constant support and quality care that our nation’s patients need,” he said. “In order to ensure hospitals can continue to keep us and our families safe and healthy, we need to be willing to provide them with the necessary tools.”

See more:

<https://sensenbrenner.house.gov/press-releases-statements?ID=4D94A30D-3DAF-43B9-85D5-C437E0548885>

**— U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman wants Congress to get rid of funding for the area studies programs at universities, such as the Institute for Regional**

## **and International Studies at UW-Madison.**

Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, led a letter to House appropriators calling those centers “a one-sided sounding board for professors’ anti-American and anti-Semitic political agendas.” The centers get their funding through Title VI of the Higher Education Act, and President Trump proposed eliminating that provision in his budget.

The letter says the \$72 million that went into those centers in FY 17 should instead go toward reducing the deficit or toward the National Security Education Program, which has close ties to defense agencies.

See the release:

<https://grothman.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=358>

## ***Posts of the week***

Todd's always 1st in our office, but we'll take a top 5 in [@TheIJR's](#) Cutest Dog on The Hill. Check out the winners! <https://t.co/dVingqhvtU>  
[pic.twitter.com/yY0wrX5t5A](https://t.co/dVingqhvtU)

— Glenn Grothman (@GrothmanforWI) [July 26, 2017](#)

The world's largest airshow starts today [@EAA](#). Welcome to Oshkosh!  
[#OSH17](#) [pic.twitter.com/yK0C7AZTXU](https://t.co/yK0C7AZTXU)

— Senator Ron Johnson (@SenRonJohnson) [July 24, 2017](#)

## ***ICYMI***

Ryan: Firing Mueller is not ‘in the president’s interest whatsoever’

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/ryan-firing-mueller-is-not-in-the-presidents-interest-whatsoever/>

Ryan says 'stay tuned' for Foxconn news, talks taxes at MillerCoors

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/ryan-says-stay-tuned-for-foxconn-news-talks-taxes-at-millercoors/>

Johnson says 'mess of Obamacare' would've stayed without his vote today

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/johnson-casts-deciding-vote-to-proceed-with-aca-repeal-debate/>

Johnson casts key health care vote

<http://www.duluthnewtribune.com/news/4302916-johnson-casts-key-health-care-vote>

Ron Johnson: Vote to debate Obamacare repeal will 'keep the process going'

[http://host.madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/ron-johnson-vote-to-debate-obamacare-repeal-will-keep-the/article\\_f5371776-5c1b-5020-9f19-ec074d6f3f07.html](http://host.madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/ron-johnson-vote-to-debate-obamacare-repeal-will-keep-the/article_f5371776-5c1b-5020-9f19-ec074d6f3f07.html)

Ron Johnson casts key vote as Senate agrees to take up Obamacare repeal legislation

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2017/07/25/ron-johnson-casts-key-vote-senate-agrees-to-take-up-obamacare-repeal-legislation/509727001/>

Wisconsin senators react to health care vote

<http://www.waow.com/story/35969844/wisconsin-senators-react-to-health-care-vote>

Republicans considering run against Tammy Baldwin back effort to reverse Obamacare

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2017/07/25/republicans-considering-run-against-tammy-baldwin-back-effort-reverse-obamacare/509314001/>

FOX 11 Investigates GOP targeting Sen. Baldwin's seat

<http://fox11online.com/news/fox-11-investigates/fox11-investigates-gop-targeting-sen-baldwins-seat>

Wisconsin Democrats urge the state to reject any data request from Trump voter fraud panel

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2017/07/25/wisconsin-democrats-urge-state-reject-any-data-request-trump-voter-fraud-panel/508422001/>

Wisconsin's Democratic members of Congress urge state not to comply with Trump voter data request

[http://host.madison.com/ct/news/local/govt-and-politics/election-matters/wisconsin-democratic-members-of-congress-urge-state-not-to/article\\_1185064e-7222-519d-aca7-4df614893171.html](http://host.madison.com/ct/news/local/govt-and-politics/election-matters/wisconsin-democratic-members-of-congress-urge-state-not-to/article_1185064e-7222-519d-aca7-4df614893171.html)

Rep. Duffy demands both Trump's and Clinton's contacts with Russians

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/jul/24/sean-duffy-says-hed-like-to-see-both-trumps-and-cl/>