

DC Wrap: Pocan says Dems' new economic agenda will help party pick up votes

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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.

NOTE: *There will be no D.C. Wrap until both chambers are back from the congressional August recess, which lasts until the beginning of September. D.C. Wrap will return after the break. Thank you for reading!*

Quotes of the week, July 28-Aug. 3

Obviously I tell the state lawmakers, 'let's get this done' and by the way it's all contingent, if you look at the actual details, it's contingent upon the kinds of investments that are coming, it's contingent on the jobs, so it's a high reward for us to get this done.

- House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Janesville, urging state lawmakers to act on the deal between Wisconsin and Taiwanese technology company Foxconn, in an interview with Fox 6 after a stop on Wednesday in Mukwonago. State lawmakers indicated this week they had different plans for passing a special session incentives bill, with legislative leaders at odds over whether to do the bill or the budget first. [See more from the interview.](#)

I've learned not to go into high-five sessions until you know what you're high-fiving.

- U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, this week on the Foxconn deal. He warned reporters in a news conference that some could be celebrating the agreement prematurely, as he urged lawmakers to "do their due diligence" to ensure the promised jobs and wages are there before signing off on the agreement. See more from his comments in an item below.

Let's not allow either party the ability to block a president being able to staff his administration. Let's not use Senate floor time that really should be used to debate for example, the debt ceiling, tax reform, how do you fix this mess that is Obamacare, appropriations bills.

- U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, in an interview on his proposal to limit debate to two hours on any presidential nominees who aren't in the cabinet or on the Supreme Court, saying committees should do heavy vetting on nominees and that "precious Senate floor time" should be focused on other issues. [Watch the interview.](#)

This week's news

— U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan on Wednesday said the Dems' new economic agenda will help the party engage with voters and help bring them to the polls in the 2018 midterms.

The Town of Vermont Dem said the agenda, dubbed "A Better Deal" and unveiled last week, would help "articulate a coherent economic message to the American people," something he said the party failed to do in 2016.

"Our presidential campaign was largely 'I'm not him,'" he told reporters at his downtown Madison office, adding the Dems had "severely lacked a very clear, strong economic message that shows we're there for people in the middle class."

But, Pocan said, the new message does that by focusing on how to create "good, family supporting jobs" and addressing issues like the anti-trust law.

And he said talking about those economic issues was a "good first step" for the party in trying to reach out to the Wisconsin voters who didn't show up to back candidate Hillary Clinton last November.

Pocan also addressed comments from the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee chairman this week on whether House Dems would consider a candidate's stance on abortion rights a litmus test next year.

"We can't stop anyone running from office, but I think if we're going to give them support, they should be Democrats in more than just name only," he said.

Pocan said in the Congressional Progressive Caucus, which he heads, there is a “rigorous questionnaire” for candidates looking to gain an endorsement from the caucus. It includes questions on whether a candidate’s pro choice, and also seeks to ensure the candidate doesn’t discriminate based on sexual orientation, among other things, he said.

“I think there are standards for many groups that are endorsing candidates, but as a party you can’t tell someone you can’t run as a Democrat,” he said.

Hear the news conference:

<https://soundcloud.com/wispolitics/us-rep-mark-pocan-news-conference>

— Longtime state GOP leader Steve King said at his Senate nomination hearing Tuesday the Czech Republic has “gone the distance” to help the U.S. defeat ISIS.

But King, President Trump’s nominee to be the U.S. ambassador to the country, also said the Czech Republic should increase how much money it spends toward defense and strengthening the NATO alliance.

King testified Tuesday at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing that was chaired by U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh. Johnson chairs the Subcommittee on European and Regional Security Cooperation.

“Steve’s success in public and private sector is a reflection of his strong interpersonal skills a keen understanding of governance and leadership and his personal integrity,” Johnson said to kick off the hearing.

King, meanwhile, thanked Johnson for his role in the subcommittee and public service, as well as his “shared devotion to the Green Bay Packers.”

Read King’s testimony:

https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/080117_King_Testimony.pdf

Watch the hearing:

<https://www.foreign.senate.gov/hearings/nominations-080117>

— U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin is applauding leaders of the Senate health committee for scheduling hearings on ways to improve the Affordable Care Act.

Baldwin, D-Madison, is a member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, which will hold hearings starting in September on the steps Congress can take to stabilize the individual marketplace and ensure plans are affordable.

Baldwin, who's introduced a proposal aimed at doing so, said Congress should "look past the partisan debate in Washington" and find common ground on the issue.

Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, is also planning on holding hearings through the committee he chairs.

Johnson said last week that his Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs that his committee will hear testimony to "lay out the realities of our health care system."

"I am committed to working with anyone who is serious about addressing these issues," he said. "Americans deserve far better than their elected officials have delivered to this point."

See Baldwin's release:

<https://www.baldwin.senate.gov/press-releases/help-announcement-stabilize-marketplace>

See Johnson's release:

<https://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=2368F762-F094-44FF-B58D-73060E6F0054>

— Members of the Wisconsin congressional delegation blasted a federal appeals court decision that keeps gray wolves on the endangered species list in Wisconsin.

The decision, from a three-judge panel of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., yesterday, reaffirmed a 2014 lower court ruling that prevented hunting and trapping of the wolves in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

But U.S. Sens. Ron Johnson, Tammy Baldwin and U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy said in separate statements they continue to support legislation to lessen the oversight of the species and turn over control to the states — ultimately allowing them to choose whether to delist the gray wolf.

Johnson, R-Oshkosh, called the decision “outrageous,” adding that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had previously determined the wolves aren’t endangered “regardless of what judges in Washington imagine.”

“Indeed, the wolf population in northern Wisconsin is causing major problems for farmers and ranchers as it continues to grow unchecked,” he said. “Wisconsin should be permitted to manage the wolf population according to science rather than judicial whim.”

Baldwin, D-Madison, also referenced the government officials’ determination that the gray wolf population had recovered, saying people should “acknowledge that reality and return the Gray wolf’s management back to the State.”

And Duffy, R-Wausau, called on the Department of the Interior to appeal the decision, saying it was “outrageous that activist judges in Washington think they know what’s best for Wisconsin’s ecosystem.”

“Just because wolves might not appear as a problem at environmentalist galas in Washington, they are a very real concern to farmers and ranchers in Wisconsin,” he said. “Our farmers deserve to be able to protect their livestock, and they should not suffer because of the decisions made by an overreaching federal government a thousand miles away.”

The Obama administration in 2011 first delisted the gray wolf. In 2014, it returned to the federal endangered species list after a lawsuit.

— U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Menomonee Falls, has brought in two familiar faces to become his new chiefs of staff.

The two co-chiefs of staff for the office are: Loni Hagerup, a longtime Sensenbrenner aide who most recently was deputy chief of staff; and Matt Bisenius, who most recently was director of legislative affairs at the National Propane Gas Association but was Sensenbrenner’s senior legislative assistant before that.

They will take over Bart Forsyth, who’s had several roles while working for Sensenbrenner and is now going to work for PhRMA, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.

“Bart has been a true asset as a trusted advisor, effective facilitator, and respected leader,” Sensenbrenner said in a statement. “I’m thankful for his distinguished

service and wish him continued success as he begins this new chapter.”

His last day was Monday. Hagerup started in the new role on Tuesday, and Bisenius will join the staff on Aug. 14.

See the release:

<https://sensenbrenner.house.gov/press-releases-statements?ID=829F087A-41BB-4368-8676-FEA10FA8A990>

— Sensenbrenner’s Rapid DNA Act passed the Senate unanimously this week.

The bill, which boosts the use of a new technology that allows for faster DNA analysis, already passed the House and now heads to President’s Trump desk for his signature.

“This technology will help quickly identify arrestees and offenders, reduce the overwhelming backlog in forensic DNA analysis, and make crime fighting efforts more efficient while helping to prevent future crimes from occurring,” he said in a news release. “It will also save time and taxpayer dollars. I look forward to President Trump promptly signing it into law.”

See the release:

<https://sensenbrenner.house.gov/press-releases-statements?ID=5652A0C7-CD25-4FE1-A34F-5D37F07A55EE>

— U.S. Reps. Sean Duffy and Glenn Grothman have introduced a resolution to honor Hmong freedom fighters who helped the U.S. fight in southeast Asia.

See a video of the two discussing the resolution:

<https://grothman.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=365>

— Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, is highlighting an amendment he made to a defense appropriations bill transferring \$30 million in funding to the agency’s joint light tactical vehicle program.

The JLTVs, made by Oshkosh Corp., will “save lives and improve our troops’ effectiveness on the field,” he said.

See the

release: <https://grothman.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=364>

— U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher's first bill to pass the House would set up a National Global War on Terrorism Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Gallagher, R-Green Bay, is a freshman and former Marine. He said he hopes the Senate passes the bill so that President Trump signs it into law and the memorial "will one day stand alongside others as an enduring reminder of the cost of liberty."

"We are one step closer to securing our brave warfighters' rightful place in our nation's capital," he said. "The Global War on Terrorism Memorial is for the over 6,800 men and women who have died fighting, those who continue fighting, and those who are still joining the fight against terrorism."

See the release:

<https://gallagher.house.gov/media/press-releases/congressman-gallagher-s-first-bill-passes-house>

— A Gallagher amendment that passed the House last week is aimed at prioritizing security research at the Department of Energy.

Gallagher said his amendment ensures that type of research gets priority rather than "Washington, D.C. bureaucrats."

"As our nation looks to modernize our grid, improve our domestic energy supply, and reduce national security risks, energy storage technologies must become more affordable and reliable," he said.

See the release:

<https://gallagher.house.gov/media/press-releases/house-passes-rep-gallagher-s-energy-innovation-amendment>

— U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson and the ranking member of his committee are applauding the reauthorization of the agency that helps federal whistleblowers.

Johnson, R-Oshkosh, chairs the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, whose ranking member is U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, a Missouri Dem.

“This bill will help the Office of Special Counsel right the wrongs committed against federal whistleblowers, and it will ensure that federal agencies are taking steps to correct and prevent whistleblower retaliation,” Johnson said in a news release.

See the release:

<https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/media/majority-media/johnson-mccaskill-grassley-applaud-passage-of-osc-reauthorization->

— Johnson is praising a decision from the Food and Drug Administration to delay an Obama administration e-cigarette regulation until 2022.

Johnson said he’s glad FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb “listened to industry and consumer concerns in loosening the FDA’s regulatory grip over e-cigarette manufacturers. “

See the

release: <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/media/majority-media/johnson-applauds-fda-decision-to-further-delay-implementation-of-harmful-e-cigarette-rule>

— U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan joined nearly 20 other colleagues this week in penning a letter to President Trump and urging him to back Mississippi auto workers as they prepare for a vote to unionize a Nissan plant on Thursday and Friday.

“President Trump came to power promising people good jobs,” Pocan said after the letter’s release. “Now is his chance to truly stand up to a foreign company bullying Americans into accepting lower wages and unsafe working conditions.”

See the release:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/u-s-rep-pocan-members-of-congress-urge-trump-to-stand-with-americans-against-nissans-anti-worker-campaign/>

— U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, introduced bipartisan legislation this week backing community banks that she says would help level the playing field.

The legislation, from Baldwin and two other senators, would exempt community banks from having to abide by requirements aimed at larger institutions and give community banks the ability to lend more money to customers, she said.

“It is unreasonable to require small community banks to meet the same capital requirements as large international banks,” Baldwin said. “This bipartisan, commonsense reform will give Wisconsin community banks the relief they need and free up access to credit for Wisconsinites looking to start a small business or own their first home.”

See more:

<https://www.baldwin.senate.gov/press-releases/support-community-banks>

— Baldwin this week also joined other Senate Dems in unveiling “A Better Deal On Trade and Jobs,” which she says would prevent trade deals from “hurting our workers.”

It would also put in place stronger “Buy America” requirements for taxpayer-funded projects, an issue Baldwin has been outspoken on.

“Wisconsin families depend on our manufacturing jobs and I believe that if we give our workers and a level playing field, we will compete and win,” she said [at a news conference](#).

Posts of the week

Thank you, [@SteveScalise](#). Looking forward to seeing you back in the House soon! <pic.twitter.com/jKdXjwsHyd>

— Rep. Gallagher Press Office (@RepGallagher) [July 28, 2017](#)

[#TBT](#) So happy to have celebrated [#NelsonMandela](#)'s birthday w/ young leaders from [@YALINetwork](#) [@WashFellowship](#). Such inspiring individuals! <pic.twitter.com/GIVqlp8jaj>

— Rep. Gwen Moore (@RepGwenMoore) [July 27, 2017](#)

ICYMI

House approves Rep. Mike Gallagher's bill for War on Terrorism Memorial

<http://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/story/news/2017/07/28/house-approves-rep-mike-gallaghers-bill-war-terrorism-memorial/517966001/>

Gallagher calls for shift in health care debate

<http://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/story/news/2017/07/30/gallagher-health-care-reform/519768001/>

Pocan To Lawmakers: Take A Close Look At Foxconn Deal

<https://www.wpr.org/pocan-lawmakers-take-close-look-foxconn-deal>

Progressive Caucus chair Mark Pocan on 'A Better Deal,' Democratic 'litmus tests'

http://host.madison.com/ct/news/local/govt-and-politics/election-matters/progressive-caucus-chair-mark-pocan-on-a-better-deal-democratic/article_ed2abcc1-dde7-54b4-b445-936f556daed3.html

Wis. legislators thank Hmong freedom fighters

<http://www.wsaw.com/content/news/Wis-legislators-thank-Hmong-freedom-fighters-437406453.html>

Energy Storage Research Gets Funding Boost in House-Passed Spending Bill

<https://morningconsult.com/2017/07/27/energy-storage-research-poised-funding-boost-house-spending-bill/>

Rep. Ron Kind calls for ACA reform after Senate's repeal attempts fail

http://chippewa.com/dunnconnect/news/local/rep-ron-kind-calls-for-aca-reform-after-senate-s/article_f9334b06-9a8b-54fb-bfda-27e91326888b.html

Ron Kind, Tim Kabat buoy Authenticom, employees in antitrust suit

http://lacrossetribune.com/news/local/ron-kind-tim-kabat-buoy-authenticom-employees-in-antitrust-suit/article_bd3e0c03-9475-54e1-9a84-58e7bd085ea4.html

New Sensenbrenner Bill Calling For Transparency In Music Is Surprisingly Opaque

<http://www.npr.org/sections/therecord/2017/08/01/54065528/new-bill-calling-for-transparency-in-music-is-surprisingly-opaque>

A US Congressman Just Called ASCAP+BMI's Shared Database a Scam

<https://www.digitalmusicnews.com/2017/07/27/mic-coalition-ascap-bmi/>

Rep. Kind Calls For Bipartisan Approach To Health Care

<https://www.wpr.org/rep-kind-calls-bipartisan-approach-health-care>

Ron Kind Secures Opioid Program Funding

<http://wxpr.org/post/ron-kind-secures-opioid-program-funding>

PolitiFact: Gwen Moore says Dontre Hamilton shot by police 14 times for resting in a park

<http://www.sheboyganpress.com/story/news/2017/08/01/politifact-gwen-moore-says-dontre-hamilton-shot-police-14-times-resting-park/525489001/>

Democratic Rep. Gwen Moore rejected invitation to Foxconn announcement

<http://fox6now.com/2017/07/26/democratic-rep-gwen-moore-rejected-invitation-to-foxconn-announcement/>

Reps. Royce, Moore sponsor bill to require GSE's to increase credit risk transfers

<https://financialregnews.com/reps-royce-moore-sponsor-bill-require-gses-increase-credit-risk-transfers/>