

# DC Wrap: March 10-16

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*This is the fourth sample of a weekly DC Wrap product from WisPolitics.com. Let us know your feedback: [info@wispolitics.com](mailto:info@wispolitics.com)*

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

**— House Speaker Paul Ryan's continuing his media blitz today to push his caucus' health care bill.**

The bill picked up a few more opponents this week as [a long-awaited CBO score projected 24 million people would lose coverage by 2026](#). But Ryan, R-Janesville, says the CBO didn't consider the other two parts of Republicans' three-pronged approach. He also points to CBO projections that it would reduce premiums after 2020 and cut the deficit by \$337 billion by 2026.

This morning, he'll do his weekly press briefing. And in the afternoon, he'll talk to NBC's Chuck Todd and then CNN's Wolf Blitzer.

His office this week [flagged other interviews](#) Ryan's done in recent days, including with CBS' John Dickerson; Fox News' Bret Baier, Sean Hannity and Tucker Carlson; and conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt.

The bill has faced pushback from conservatives who say it doesn't go far enough and moderates who flagged this week's CBO projections as concerning. The bill cleared two House committees last week.

**— The bill is up today before the House Budget Committee, and U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman says he'll vote to move it out of committee.**

Grothman spokeswoman Bernadette Green said the Glenbeulah Republican will vote for the bill "with the understanding that there will be changes made before the bill hits the House floor for a vote."

**— U.S. Sens. Tammy Baldwin and Ron Johnson joined on a letter to 18 federal agencies telling them it's in their best interest to "openly**

**recognize and wholeheartedly support the duty and value of whistleblowers.”**

The letter, led by U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, noted whistleblowers can face intimidation and retaliation from agency leaders when reporting misconduct. So the Senate Whistleblower Protection Caucus asked agency leaders to promote “an open culture for employees to make disclosures” and take “swift action” against any employee who violates a whistleblower’s rights.

The letter said whistleblowers are crucial for Congress to carry out its oversight duties and noted the country’s Founding Fathers recognized their value.

“We enthusiastically echo these historical precedents in our support for individuals who shine a light on waste, fraud, and abuse. ... Whistleblowers are assets, and they can help us enhance government efficiency and transparency and save taxpayers billions of dollars,” they wrote.

See the letter and Baldwin

release: <https://www.baldwin.senate.gov/press-releases/whistleblowers-protection-letters>

**— Gov. Scott Walker this week voiced support for the U.S. Senate’s passage of a bill that would give states more flexibility in administering drug tests for recipients of unemployment benefits.**

The Senate this week passed 51-48 House Joint Resolution 42. U.S. Sens. Tammy Baldwin and Ron Johnson split on the vote, with Baldwin opposed and Johnson supporting it.

Walker, meanwhile, said its passage “will empower the people of our state to move from government dependence to true independence.”

“Here in Wisconsin, we want everyone who wants a job to find a job. We frequently hear from employers that they have available jobs but need their workers to be drug-free,” he said. “That’s why we want to expand drug testing for those seeking public assistance.”

Under the current law, states can only drug test unemployment benefit recipients if they were previously fired for drug use, or if they applied for an occupation outlined in a federal labor department list that requires regular drug tests.

The rule passed the House last month 236-189, with Dem U.S. Reps. Gwen Moore, Ron Kind and Mark Pocan voting against it and GOP U.S. Reps. Mike Gallagher, Sean Duffy, Glenn Grothman and Jim Sensenbrenner backing it.

The bill now heads to President Trump's desk.

See the Senate roll call

vote: [https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll\\_call\\_lists/roll\\_call\\_vote\\_cfm.cfm?congress=115&session=1&vote=00087](https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_lists/roll_call_vote_cfm.cfm?congress=115&session=1&vote=00087)

**— U.S. Sens. Tammy Baldwin and Ron Johnson split on two presidential nominations this week: former U.S. Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., to be director of national intelligence, and health care consultant Seema Verma to be the administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.**

Johnson voted with the majority to approve Coats' nomination 85-12, and again in approving Verma's nomination 55-43.

**— U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman wants to suspend foreign aid to countries that refuse to accept criminals who are sent back to their countries after committing crimes.**

Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, said those countries are "actively putting Americans at risk by refusing to accept their criminal aliens."

See the

release: <http://grothman.house.gov/news/documentsingle.aspx?DocumentID=277>

**— Fox News contributor and conservative activist Rachel Campos-Duffy will be the keynote speaker for the Wisconsin Women in Government annual scholarship gala May 9.**

She addressed the Republican National Convention last summer with her husband, GOP U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy, and has been a recurring guest on NBC's "Today Show" and ABC's "The View."

See

more: <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=tgzykslab&oeidk=a07edxbq9sb6f36fa00&oseq=>

**— U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy says one of his top priorities this session is reauthorizing the National Flood Insurance Program that helps property owners in devastated areas.**

Duffy, R-Wausau, is the chair of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing & Insurance and held a hearing March 9 with top FEMA official Roy E. Wright. Duffy said people he met while visiting areas hit by Hurricane Katrina told him lapsing the program “would be irresponsible.”

But they’ve also told him the program could be strengthened, partly by encouraging private competition and addressing the program’s \$24.6 billion debt.

“This is absolutely unsustainable,” he said.

See the release and Duffy’s opening remarks: <https://duffy.house.gov/press-release/congressman-sean-duffy-holds-hearing-on-flood-insurance-reform>

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

On March 11, WWII hero and Fond du Lac native James "Maggie" Megellas turned 100. Today, we had a belated celebration with him in DC.

<pic.twitter.com/ydVX9oJtVn>

— Rep. Glenn Grothman (@RepGrothman) [March 15, 2017](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/repmarkpocan/photos/a.439828962763516.1073741825.436881033058309/1323861421026928/?type=3&theater>

<https://twitter.com/MikeforWI/status/842037233070821380>

## ***ICYMI***

Congressional Dems, Ryan respond to CBO score on House health care bill

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/cbo-predicts-house-health-care-bill-would-lead-to->

[24-million-losing-coverage-lower-premiums-drop-in-deficit/](#)

PPP poll: Ryan's constituents oppose GOP health care bill

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/ppp-poll-ryans-constituents-oppose-gop-health-care-bill/>

Kind passing on 2018 gov bid, will instead seek re-election to Congress

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/kind-passing-on-2018-gov-bid-and-will-instead-seek-re-election-in-congress/>

Grothman seeks answers on bad IRS customer service, tax credit fraud

<http://watchdog.org/290628/irs-glenn-grothman-tax-credit/>

Baldwin speaks to MSNBC about the GOP health care bill

<https://www.facebook.com/senatortammybaldwin/videos/10155132468822140/>

Sen. Tammy Baldwin opposes GOP health care plan at friendly town hall in Milwaukee

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2017/03/12/sen-tammy-baldwin-oppose-s-gop-health-care-plan-friendly-town-hall-milwaukee/99097962/>

Pocan: More to come on Russia

[http://www.wiscnews.com/baraboonewsrepublic/news/local/article\\_4bd9d24e-35f8-55f1-b8ef-3d262d10ba17.html](http://www.wiscnews.com/baraboonewsrepublic/news/local/article_4bd9d24e-35f8-55f1-b8ef-3d262d10ba17.html)

Jim Sensenbrenner: Make Mexican cartels pay for the wall

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/jim-sensenbrenner-make-mexican-cartels-pay-for-the-wall/article/2617335>