

DC Wrap: Kind says he's not re-thinking decision against gov bid; 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.

[Register today](#) for the next WisPolitics.com event in D.C.: A Nov. 16 breakfast with Morning Consult CEO MICHAEL RAMLET, a Middleton, Wis. native whose team is shaking up the national polling industry. The breakfast will take place at the AT&T Forum near Union Station, on the 5th floor. Breakfast and check-in start at 8:30 a.m. with the program going from 9 to 10 a.m.

Quotes of the week, Oct. 13-19

I don't want to be a problem child here, but what I'm offering is a plan B. If they can't get the votes. ... I've got an alternative.

- U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, tells Politico the GOP tax overhaul framework is "going to be very difficult to pass" and that he's working on a separate package.

[See more.](#)

When you've got one senator offering one plan and another offering a completely different plan, that means the ... hard work really hasn't been done to develop that consensus of what needs to be accomplished here.

-U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, D-La Crosse, who told WisPolitics.com in an interview Wednesday that news surrounding Johnson's plan signaled the GOP process around tax reform is "very chaotic" and lacks "a single direction." He added: "At some point everyone needs to get on the same page so we can at least be talking about the details of what direction we're going to go in."

See more on Kind's interview below.



This week's news

— U.S. Rep. Ron Kind says he's not re-thinking his decision to opt out of a gubernatorial bid against Gov. Scott Walker next year.

Kind in March announced he wasn't going to seek the post, and he reaffirmed the decision yesterday, saying his seniority in the House would help him "do a maximal amount of good for the folks here in Wisconsin," particularly as he pursues some of his legislative priorities, including a "more robust" trade agenda.

"It's an all-hands-on-deck moment in Washington given what's taken place there," the La Crosse Dem told WisPolitics.com.

Asked whether he thought any of the candidates currently in the Dem gov field could beat Walker, Kind responded: "Every one of them."

Kind also took a shot at Walker, saying the gov's "taken our state here in a bad direction" because of his "war upon the public education system," his decision to reject the Medicaid expansion and lacking economic potential in the state.

"If you're a business looking from the outside in, you see this chaos going on in Wisconsin," he said. "It's not a very attractive place to hang up your shingle unless you get a \$3 billion incentive package over the next 25 years, which I think needs more scrutiny and more vetting than what took place."

State GOP spokesman Alec Zimmerman shot back, saying Kind "epitomizes Washington dysfunction, so it's no surprise that he would launch baseless attacks on the positive results Gov. Walker has delivered for hard-working families."

"It's easy for Kind to criticize Wisconsin's comeback from the cheap seats, but he dropped out of the governor's race because even he knows that our state is thriving and moving in the right direction under Scott Walker," he said.

— On health care, Kind knocked President Trump for refusing to back a

bipartisan effort to restore federal subsidies to health insurers after Trump said he'd stop the payments last week, saying the rejection leaves "no viable plan B."

A White House spokeswoman Wednesday said while the proposal from Sens. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., and Patty Murray, D-Wash, is a "good step in the right direction," Trump would need it to "go a little bit further to get on board," according to national media reports.

Kind, though, said the response just creates "more confusion, more chaos, more disruption with the Affordable Care Act."

"He's got to realize he's playing with real lives here," he said.

Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, came out in support of the proposal on Tuesday night, although she cautioned more work is needed.

"But this is only a first step towards doing what needs to be done to lower health care costs and make health care more affordable in Wisconsin," Baldwin tweeted Tuesday night.

A spokesman for U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson said the Oshkosh Republican is still reviewing the proposal.

[See Baldwin's tweet.](#)

— Kind also called on Congress to "recognize what's working in health care, fix what isn't and focus on reducing health care costs."

"That should be Congress' sweet spot right now, rather than just endless debate about Obamacare and whether it's working or not," he said.

Asked about U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders' single-payer health care plan, Kind said he didn't think it's "ready for prime time."

Sanders, I-Vt., last month unveiled his "Medicare for All" plan, which has won the support of some in the state congressional delegation, including Baldwin and U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont.

But Kind took a more measured approach, saying there are still questions on how

much it'll cost, who will ultimately pay for it and what happens to the VA health care system, among other things.

Still, he said if Trump "continues to wreak havoc" on the health care system, he expects more people might consider taking a look at alternatives like single-payer.

But in the meantime, Kind said, Dems' "biggest obstacle" to winning people over on single-payer would be the millions who receive health care coverage through their employers.

"I don't hear a lot of discontent out there about those plans," he said of the employer-based system.

— U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy raised about \$538,000 in the most recent quarter, making him the top fundraiser for direct contributions among Wisconsin House members.

The Wausau Republican also spent \$186,404 over the quarter, which ran from July 1 to Sept. 30, finishing with just more than \$2 million in the bank.

House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Janesville, raised about \$2.3 million, though that figure includes nearly \$2 million in transfers from the National Republican Congressional Committee. He finished the period with \$10.4 million in the bank.

In other House fundraising numbers:

*U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont: Raised \$133,572; spent \$105,872; \$527,984 in cash on hand.

*U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, D-La Crosse: Raised \$315,472; spent \$122,229; \$2.8 million in cash on hand.

*U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee: Raised \$81,363; spent \$125,045; \$38,093 in cash on hand.

*U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Menomonee Falls: Raised \$62,386; spent \$31,762; \$509,897 cash on hand.

*U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah: Raised \$131,686; spent \$54,181; \$324,849 in cash on hand.

*U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Green Bay: Raised \$371,946; spent \$165,422; \$711,724 in cash on hand.

— U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson met this week with President Trump's pick to lead the Department of Homeland Security, Kirstjen Nielsen.

Johnson, R-Oshkosh, chairs the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, which will vote on Nielsen's nomination. Johnson said in a news release that he and Nielsen discussed cybersecurity, natural disasters, border security and counterterrorism.

See the release:

<https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/media/majority-media/national-security-tops-johnson-discussion-with-dhs-secretary-nominee-kirstjen-nielsen>

— U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner is on track to hold 113 town hall meetings this year, his office says.

Sensenbrenner, R-Menomonee Falls, is hosting several town hall meetings this week, with 26 scheduled between Sept. 14 and Sept. 21. He's hosting his 100th town hall today in Menomonee Falls.

See a list of Sensenbrenner's town halls:

<https://sensenbrenner.house.gov/office-hours-town-hall-meetings>

— U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, applauded the opening of a new Planned Parenthood facility in her district, especially in light of ongoing GOP efforts to "control our reproductive freedom."

The Milwaukee clinic, which provides abortion services, opened last week and was paid for by donors. It replaces a former Milwaukee Planned Parenthood clinic that'll instead be used as administrative offices.

Moore this week said the announcement was "especially significant as women across the country continue to have their reproductive rights targeted by the White House and the GOP."

That, she said, includes the U.S. House's recent passage of a bill that would ban abortion after 20 weeks as well as the Trump administration's new rules that would allow any employer with a religious or moral objection to the Affordable Care Act's

contraception mandate to stop offering birth control coverage.

“Not only will their new facility serve as a place for patients to receive family planning services, wellness screenings, and sex education, but it also serves as symbol of resilience,” Moore said.

See the statement:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/u-s-rep-gwen-moore-statement-on-the-opening-of-planned-parenthood-wisconsins-new-milwaukee-facility/>

— U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher this week co-hosted a cybersecurity summit with Silicon Valley experts aimed at finding ways to combat cyber threats.

Gallagher, R-Green Bay, who’s a member of the House Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Subcommittee, held the event with U.S. Rep. Ro Khanna, D-California, and the Stanford Cyber Initiative. He said after the meeting that cross-industry collaborations are “approach we must take to advance our cyber defenses and become the world’s undisputed cyber superpower.”

See more:

<https://gallagher.house.gov/media/press-releases/gallagher-hosts-cybersecurity-symposium-silicon-valley-experts-0>

Posts of the week

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BaXsGxll96Y/?taken-by=mikegallagherwi>

Excited volunteer to help elect my friend @RepCoryMason to Racine mayor today! <pic.twitter.com/81VshZDFyl>

— Mark Pocan (@MarkPocan) [October 17, 2017](#)

ICYMI

Ryan backs Trump’s ACA subsidy cuts, calls for ‘comprehensive’ solution

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2017/ryan-backs-trumps-action-to-cut-aca-subsidies-cal>

[Is-for-comprehensive-solution/](#)

Steve Bannon injects himself into Wisconsin GOP Senate race vs. Tammy Baldwin
<http://www.twincities.com/2017/10/17/steve-bannon-injects-himself-into-wisconsin-gop-senate-race-vs-tammy-baldwin/>

Ron Johnson seeks deal on Obamacare insurer payments
<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/ron-johnson-seeks-deal-on-obamacare-insurer-payments/article/2637489>

Sen. Tammy Baldwin raises \$2.4 million in 3 months
<http://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2017/10/12/baldwin-raises-2-4-million-3-months-senate-race/757058001/>

Baldwin, McCain band together to take on drug costs
<http://www.wkow.com/story/36620838/2017/10/Tuesday/baldwin-mccain-band-together-to-take-on-drug-costs>

Rep. Ron Kind announces plan for Mississippi River
<http://www.weau.com/content/news/Rep-Ron-Kind-announces-plan-for-Mississippi-River-451339683.html>

Rep. Pocan: Tax bill 'the biggest lie'
http://www.beloitdailynews.com/front_page_slider/20171017/rep_pocan_tax_bill_the_biggest_lie

Gwen Moore: Planned Parenthood's new Water St. Center a welcome addition
http://www.wisconsinjournal.com/views/gwen-moore-planned-parenthood-s-new-water-st-center-a/article_1599ba00-b2a0-11e7-bfab-0386687568d6.html

Sean Duffy: GOP 'Will Get Absolutely Destroyed' if Tax Reform Fails
<http://www.lifezet.com/polizette/sean-duffy-gop-will-get-absolutely-destroyed-if-tax-reform-fails/>