

DC Wrap: Baldwin says U.S. needs to make new NAFTA deal 'better' for Wis.; Gallagher calls on GOP to widen support post-midterms

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Welcome to our weekly DC Wrap, where we write about Wisconsin's congressional delegation. Sign up [here](#) to receive the newsletter directly.

Quotes of the week, Nov. 30-Dec. 6

Throughout his life, George H.W. Bush fought for freedom and prosperity for all Americans. From his service in World War II as a naval aviator to his efforts organizing international disaster relief, the nation and world will never forget his years of public service.

- U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, following the 41st president's passing last week.

This is a lame-duck coup, plain and simple.

- U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, [on Twitter](#) this week following the Legislature's passage of bills aimed to limit Dem Gov.-elect Tony Evers' and AG-elect Josh Kaul's powers.

[See coverage in Quorum Call.](#)

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Look, I get it. No Labels is slick, and I got duped. But no other current or newly elected member of Congress should fall for its shtick.

- U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, in an [editorial](#) in the Huffington Post

this week denouncing No Labels, a group that bills itself as one focused on promoting bipartisanship in D.C. Pocan says he joined the group and the group-sponsored “Problem Solvers Caucus” shortly after being elected to Congress in 2012, but said a number of red flags led him to drift away from the group in the intervening years. Pocan’s column comes after a [report](#) in the Daily Beast showed the group encouraged funders “known for backing hyperpartisan causes” to donate to its super PACs. [Recent reports](#) also show the group had sought to oppose House Dem leader Nancy Pelosi.



This week's news

— U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin says she would support the new trade deal between the United States, Mexico and Canada only if the U.S. can “make it a better deal” for Wisconsin.

The United States-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement was signed by the leaders of the three countries last week. Congress and the legislatures of Canada and Mexico will need to give final approval on the deal.

Baldwin in a [statement](#) addressing the signing said “unfair trade practices” have harmed Wisconsin’s agriculture economy and cost the state “thousands of manufacturing jobs.” She added that the USMCA should confront “Canada’s unfair trade barriers and Mexico’s limits on Wisconsin cheese exports.”

The Madison Dem said Congress needs to ensure the new agreement works for Wisconsin farmers, manufacturers, businesses and workers.

“As Congress works on legislation for this new deal I will be working to ensure that this new deal increases market access for our Wisconsin dairy farmers and cheese makers,” Baldwin said.

Meanwhile, U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan called the deal “NAFTA 2.0” and “incomplete.” The Vermont Dem said in a [statement](#) the new deal will “not stop the damage done by NAFTA.” He listed job outsourcing, wage suppression and

environmental degradation as key issues that need to be addressed in the USMCA.

“We have been clear about these goals from day one, and I will continue to push the Trump Administration in the upcoming months to fulfill their promise of a new trade framework that supports working families,” Pocan said.

— U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher says his party needs to engage the state’s Dem strongholds and “go places Republicans don’t often go” in order to increase a GOP candidate’s statewide viability in future cycles.

The freshman congressman, who just won his second term Nov. 6, said the latest election shows Republicans also need to assess their appeal among suburban college-educated women.

“I think we would be foolish not to reflect on that,” the Green Bay Republican said in a recent interview with WisPolitics.com.

Gallagher, who logged 63.7 percent of the vote over his Dem opponent Beau Liegeois’ 36.3 percent according to unofficial returns, said he thinks it’d “be wise to engage” parts of Madison and Milwaukee, as well as working more broadly to actively expand GOP voters.

Still, he noted that while Dems swept the statewide races, Republicans at the local and congressional district level “did quite well.”

“I think that’s a function of people just responding to the needs of the district, representing the needs of their district and not trying to get caught up in all the national controversies and the various sort of crises of the day,” he said.

As a millennial, the 34-year-old Gallagher said he spends much of his time considering how to “craft a conservative message that’s appealing to the next generation.”

That generation, he said, would likely “be sympathetic to the idea of local solutions to local problems and not having the federal government dictate outcomes for Wisconsin.”

Gallagher also said he’s hopes Democratic control of the House doesn’t mean Congress devolves “into pure partisan tribal warfare” come January.

“It’s not just divided government; it’s also every single Democrat’s going to be running for president,” he said. “So that’ll create a circus of its own.”

But he expressed optimism that both parties would be able to work together in three areas: continuing to “rebuild the military,” investing in infrastructure and price transparency in health care, including rising drug costs.

[See more from the interview in last Friday’s Report.](#)

— U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan says he’s won’t take donations from corporate PACs going forward.

The [announcement](#) means the Town of Vermont is joining 36 new House Dems and five returning members in refusing the funding.

Pocan said rejecting corporate money will show that Washington “should work for average Americans, not big corporate special interests.

A check of Pocan’s [latest campaign finance report](#), filed at the end of October, shows PAC money accounted for nearly \$606,000 of his donations over the current election cycle. But that figure also includes contributions from other candidate committees.

By comparison, he logged nearly \$412,000 in receipts from individuals.

— U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore has introduced a bill aiming to ensure vulnerable populations have the resources they need to maintain basic living standards.

The “Social Security Enhancement and Protection Act” would update the special minimum benefit policy in the Social Security Act to 100 percent of the poverty limit, as well as reinstate the student benefit for children with disabled, diseased or retired parents. The [legislation](#) would also increase an individual’s Social Security benefits 20 years after becoming eligible for retirement.

Moore, D-Milwaukee, said in a [statement](#) that Congress needs to “improve the fiscal outlook of Social Security.” She added that this bill will make the Social Security program more effective by “relying on proven anti-poverty tools” to ensure low-income populations receive the support they need.

“Cash assistance, food stamps, and social services afforded me the tools I needed to lift my family out of impoverishment and to construct the foundation upon which I’ve built my life,” Moore said. “I came to Congress to make sure all Americans have that same chance, and this bill is an important part of that mission.”

— New GOP U.S. Rep.-elect Bryan Steil has named Rich Zipperer as his Wisconsin chief of staff.

Zipperer, a former state lawmaker who went to serve as Gov. Scott Walker’s chief of staff, said he will remain in Wisconsin and work out of Steil’s Janesville office.

“Congressman-elect Steil is a problem solver, and I am excited about this opportunity to work with him to help solve the problems and address the concerns of the people of the 1st District,” Zipperer said.

Zipperer also served as U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner’s deputy chief of staff before joining the Legislature.

Steil also announced Ryan Carney will serve as chief of staff in his Washington, D.C., office. Carney is currently chief of staff for U.S. Rep. Tom MacArthur, R-N.J., who lost his re-election bid this fall.

Walker in March appointed Zipperer to the Public Service Commission, but the Senate didn’t confirm the appointment. His term is now scheduled to end March 1, but without Senate confirmation, Gov.-elect Tony Evers can replace him immediately after taking office.

Zipperer said he will resign Jan. 7, the day Evers takes office. He planned to submit his resignation letter to the gov this week.

[See the release.](#)

Posts of the week

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Bq8OA80labn/>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Bqx3LPHHhU3/>

ICYMI

['I was duped': Congressman urges colleagues to snub 'No Labels' — the 'corporate org working against Democrats'](#)

[GOP Sen. Johnson explains why Senate delayed vote on new ICE director](#)

[Flags ordered to half-staff in honor of 41st President](#)

[Decision nears on the host of the 2020 Democrat National Convention: Here's how Milwaukee shapes up](#)