

DC Wrap: Sensenbrenner's office says eminent domain bill that cleared House wouldn't impact Foxconn

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Quotes of the week, July 20-26

I think when you look at President Trump, you have to look at what he does, not what he says.

- U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, on "Upfront with Mike Gousha," a WisPolitics.com partner. He also said it's "a good thing" President Trump is talking to Russian President Vladimir Putin, and that Trump's overall policy toward Russia is positive.

[See a write-up of the interview.](#)

Bottom line with the Progressive Caucus, while the largest values-based caucus in Congress is probably not been seen as having the biggest muscle flexed, right now we're working out, and getting sweaty and doing all the work it takes to be ready for January. So I think this organization should by January be completely ready so that whether we take the majority or not, we are going to be in a very different position than the caucus has ever been before.

- U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, in a [news conference](#) after unveiling the group's People's Budget. The [document](#) calls for making a \$2 trillion investment in infrastructure; raising taxes to 49 percent for those earning more than a billion dollars; and letting states move to single-payer health care systems, among other things.

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This shallow political stunt stands in the way of justice and does nothing more than deepen mistrust and division in this country.

- U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, in a [tweet](#) following news Wednesday night that articles of impeachment had been filed against Deputy AG Rod Rosenstein. No other Wisconsin House members responded to requests for comment sent late last night, but a House GOP aide said the way the situation is “being handled at this point is not privileged. That could change.”

This week's news

— A bill from U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner to limit the state and federal governments' eminent domain power regarding economic development has cleared the House.

Still, Sensenbrenner's office said it doesn't anticipate the “Private Property Rights Protection Act” — if signed into law — would affect Foxconn's current development project in southeastern Wisconsin, but did not elaborate.

The bill would prohibit state and local governments that receive federal economic development funds from using economic development as a justification for taking property from one person and giving to another private entity. It passed the chamber on a voice vote.

According to the legislation, any state or local government that violates this prohibition would be ineligible to receive federal economic development funds for two years. Additionally, the legislation would bar the federal government from exercising eminent domain powers for economic development.

Sensenbrenner said in a [statement](#) that this legislation would restore individual private property rights put in jeopardy by the 2005 Supreme Court decision in *Kelo v. City of New London*, which established that the taking of private property to sell for private development qualified as “public use” under the Fifth Amendment's Takings Clause.

“The framers of the Constitution would be horrified by the paradigm created by Kelo: a government free to seize and transfer private property from individuals with fewer resources to private entities with more,” he said.

The Menomonee Falls Republican emphasized in a [speech on the House floor](#) the need to stop the country’s “long history of eminent domain abuses, particularly in low-income and often predominantly minority neighborhoods.”

“The protection of property rights is one of the most important tenets of our government,” Sensenbrenner said. “The Private Property Rights Protection Act is needed to restore to all Americans the property rights the Supreme Court invalidated.”

— Wisconsin’s U.S. senators are knocking President Trump’s tariffs. But they aren’t taking a firm stance on the administration’s announcement of a \$12 billion emergency relief package for farmers.

The package, announced by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture this week, was developed at Trump’s request in order to stave off the impact of retaliatory tariffs imposed by several countries in response to the administration’s trade policies.

The plan includes measures to make incremental payments to producers of certain food products; buy surplus product; and provide aid in developing new export markets.

After news of the Trump administration’s aid package broke, GOP U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson backed the president’s efforts to address Chinese trade practices but knocked the “self-inflicted damage” the American economy has suffered due to the ongoing trade dispute with several of the country’s trading partners.

“Instead of throwing money at a problem we’ve helped create, the better option is to take action to make it easier for our farmers — and manufacturers — to sell their goods at fair prices to consumers around the world,” Johnson said.

The statement follows comments the Oshkosh Republican made to [Politico](#) Tuesday likening Trump’s trade policies to a “Soviet-type economy.”

A Johnson spokesman, however, didn’t say specifically whether he supports or opposes to \$12 billion relief package.

Dem U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin also joined Johnson in criticizing the effects of the tariffs on Wisconsin's agricultural industry.

Baldwin before the announcement Tuesday wrote a [letter](#) to several administration officials railing against the effects of the tariffs on Wisconsin farmers and calling on the administration to give "immediate support" to farmers affected by retaliatory tariffs and to "include a strategy to maintain the strength of agricultural exports.

But a spokeswoman after the announcement didn't respond to questions on whether the senator supports or opposes the \$12 billion measure.

"Our farmers are struggling and trade wars are not helping, they are hurting our Wisconsin economy. That's why I called on the Trump Administration to use the authority Congress provided to take immediate action to support Wisconsin farmers and to put in place a plan to maintain the strength of agriculture exports," Baldwin said in a statement Tuesday afternoon.

— Baldwin this week also touted the House's passage of her bill aiming to boost palliative and hospice care.

The "Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act" would provide additional training for palliative medicine and bolster research in the area.

"It's time for the Senate to take action and get this done so we can help grow and sustain our health care workforce to safeguard and improve the quality of care for the growing number of patients with serious or life-threatening illnesses," she said in a [statement](#).

— U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher has introduced legislation aiming to end the "excessive amount of time" members of Congress spend fundraising for reelection rather than working on behalf of their constituents.

The Green Bay Republican and U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan, D-Minn., introduced last week the "Go to Washington, Go to Work Act" that would prohibit members of Congress and congressional candidates from attending, speaking and participating in political fundraising activities while Congress is in session.

If enacted, the legislation would apply to candidates for Congress and sitting members of the House and Senate, but it would not influence state or other local elected offices.

Gallagher said in a [statement](#) that members of Congress have strayed from the principle that government should be by and for the people and not for government special interests. This deviation, he said, has made the country's problems worse and limited the public's trust in government's ability to fix them.

"The common sense reforms in this bill are critical to helping reduce the influence of money in politics and get Congress working again," he said.

The first-term rep has introduced other initiatives aiming to overhaul congressional practices, including legislation that would limit House representatives to serving no more six terms and senators two.

Gallagher also sponsored the "Do Your Job Act" aimed at increasing congressional productivity by putting limits on congressional recesses and adjournments prior the passage of spending bills.

— U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy and U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson sent a letter to President Trump requesting a prompt response to Gov. Scott Walker's call for federal disaster relief assistance in northwestern Wisconsin.

In the [letter](#) sent this week, the Republican congressmen said they support Walker's aid request following heavy June flooding in Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Clark, Douglas and Iron counties that killed two Wisconsinites and damaged public roads and buildings.

The pair said in the letter that the federal damage assessment of the area revealed the total cost of debris clearance, emergency protective measures and damage to public infrastructure was in excess of \$13.1 million, adding the "severity" and impact of the damage "warrants the use of federal resources to facilitate recovery operations."

"We fully support Governor Walker's request for federal assistance in this difficult time," they said in the letter.

Walker [last Friday](#) sent a letter to Trump asking for a federal disaster declaration for the six counties.

— U.S. Rep. Ron Kind is calling on Gov. Scott Walker to add staffers to the state Elections Commission ahead of the upcoming elections.

The La Crosse Dem wrote in a [letter](#) Wednesday the state “must ensure all efforts are being made to defend our elections from foreign adversaries” following Russian attempts to hack Wisconsin’s election system before the 2016 general election.

The commission previously tried to get approval for three new staffers it said were necessary to ensure election security. But the feds later this spring allocated \$7 million in elections security funding to the state, leading to the commission to withdraw its request. Instead, the commission looked to use part of the grant to hire six new staffers.

But a recent Wisconsin State Journal [report](#) notes the Department of Administration hasn’t yet hired for those positions, according to two commissioners.

In the current state budget, the Legislature had approved adding five additional positions to the commission, but Walker vetoed those.

— Kind has also signed onto a bill to increase access to substance abuse treatment centers.

The bill, called the “Medicaid Coverage for Addiction Recovery Expansion (CARE) Act,” would increase the number of Medicare-funded treatment centers and develop a \$50 million youth inpatient addiction treatment grant program aimed at assisting those under 21.

“The Medicaid CARE Act targets two important tools to combat Wisconsin’s growing drug epidemic: prevention and treatment,” Kind said in a [statement](#).

Posts of the week

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BleDGIVH4rn/?taken-by=repgwenmoore>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Blk6jotjOtf/?taken-by=mikegallagherwi>

ICYMI

[‘UpFront’: Grothman praises Trump’s Russia policy](#)

[Ron Johnson on aid to tariff-hit farmers: ‘Becoming more like a Soviet-type economy here’](#)

[Johnson blasts Trump on trade, calls it 'Soviet' economy](#)

['Like a Soviet-type economy': GOP free traders unload on Trump](#)

[Ron Johnson vows oversight of Trump's family unification effort](#)

[Baldwin joins Johnson in writing Trump letter over tariffs](#)

[Sen. Tammy Baldwin Says Thousands Of Wisconsinites Can't Watch Packers On TV](#)

[Challenger Leah Vukmir cites 22-year-old vote in attack on Tammy Baldwin over pledge, flag anthem](#)

[Area congressman share thoughts on President Trump's comments in Helsinki](#)

[Gary George vs Gwen Moore, and 2 Republicans face off, in congressional primary](#)

[Nancy Pelosi pushes for national health care plan during Milwaukee visit](#)

[GOP Rep. Sean Duffy Attacks American Trading Partners Committing 'Economic Terrorism' Against the U.S.](#)

[Rep. Duffy: Countries Committing 'Economic Terrorism' Against US With Tariffs](#)