

DC Wrap: DNC member Werthmann warns larger conservative majority on U.S. Supreme Court would erode ‘foundations of our country’

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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:

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Quotes of the week

“It is appalling that the Secretary of the State, Mike Pompeo, would politicize his office to the point of using our state Capitol building — in the middle of a pandemic his boss Donald Trump failed to respond to — to give a foreign policy speech that will tell everything but the truth.”

– U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, in a Cap Times editorial.

“I’m glad he traveled to Madison to raise the public’s awareness of this important issue, and hope that any official targeted by the Chinese Communist Party’s influence peddling follows the Roth playbook in pushing back.”

– U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Green Bay, on Pompeo’s visit referring to GOP Senate President Roger Roth. See below for more coverage.

This week’s news

— Wisconsin DNC member Andrew Werthmann warns a U.S. Supreme Court controlled 6-3 by conservatives would “start taking away some of the foundations of our country.”

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Werthmann, who serves as an Eau Claire City Council member, pointed to the landmark Roe v. Wade case allowing the right to an abortion without excessive government restriction, lawsuits challenging the Affordable Care Act and environmental protections.

“All these things could be eroded within a matter of months and years.” he told DC Wrap.

Still, he didn't believe calls by some on the left to expand the number of seats on the high court “make sense right now.” He called on U.S. Senate Republicans to slow down the nomination process, saying Wisconsinites “don't want to see a rushed process for the Supreme Court.”

Werthmann also advised Joe Biden to continue traveling to the state, adding there was interest among some of his DNC colleagues in bringing the party's convention back to Milwaukee in four years.

See the interview:

— President Trump's reelection team is confident its burgeoning ground game in Wisconsin will be able to “chase down” Republicans skeptical of absentee voting and deliver victory come November.

Andrew Iverson, the state director for Trump Victory Wisconsin, told WisPolitics.com the GOP's ground game, which he said recently knocked its millionth door, would prove to be pivotal after the Biden campaign took its voter outreach program online in the wake of the pandemic.

“Both sides are going to flood the TV airwaves,” he said in an interview. “Really what's going to make a difference in a tight state like Wisconsin is personal interaction.”

A Biden campaign spokesperson declined to comment. But a memo from State

Director Danielle Melfi released last week indicated Biden campaign organizers reached out to nearly 1 million voters by phone over two days.

See more [here](#).

— U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson accused State Department officials of “hiding the ball” from congressional investigators probing Joe Biden and his family.

The comments came after the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, which he chairs, released a report concluding it was unclear if Hunter Biden’s lucrative position with a Ukrainian energy company during the Obama administration influenced foreign policy.

A Biden campaign spokesman dismissed the probe as “an attack founded on a long-disproven, hardcore rightwing conspiracy theory” and also slammed Johnson for diverting his panel away from “any oversight of the catastrophically botched federal response to the pandemic.”

The 87-page interim report caps a yearlong investigation led by Johnson’s panel and the Senate Finance Committee into Hunter Biden’s role on the board of Ukrainian natural gas company Burisma while his father served as vice president and led the Obama administration’s anti-corruption push in Ukraine.

See more [here](#).

— Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in a historic Capitol visit warned against “sinister” Chinese disinformation campaigns and attempts to influence state and local governments.

Pompeo spoke on the Senate floor in Madison before a group of around 20 mask-wearing Republican lawmakers spread out through the chamber. It was the first time a sitting secretary of state visited the Capitol.

He said Senate President Roger Roth earlier this year invited him to come speak after the Appleton Republican received a letter from Chinese officials asking him and his fellow lawmakers to pass a resolution approving of China’s handling of the

COVID-19 pandemic.

Roth said the letter made him “mad as hell” because he received the request to praise China’s handling of the coronavirus in April and March, just as businesses began to shut down throughout the state and Gov. Tony Evers issued his stay-at-home order.

“The reality is that most every state Legislature in the country has probably received a letter from the (Chinese Communist Party) much like Sen. Roth’s email as part of a coordinated propaganda campaign,” Pompeo said. “Telling the truth about China isn’t remotely partisan; it’s principled.”

See more [here](#).

— Jill Biden will travel to Wisconsin on Monday, the former vice president’s campaign said.

Details on the trip weren’t immediately available.

— Wisconsin’s U.S. senators are split on whether the vacancy on the Supreme Court left by the death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg should be filled before a new Senate is seated.

Four years ago, Johnson called Supreme Court nominations in an election year “problematic.” But he told WisPolitics.com in a phone interview Saturday he favors filling the vacancy even in a scenario where the vote was during a lame-duck session after President Trump lost reelection and Dems had taken control of the Senate.

Meanwhile, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, who pushed for a vote on Merrick Garland’s nomination to the court in 2016, President Obama’s last year in office, says the Senate should follow the standard Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., imposed four years ago of not filling a vacancy in an election year.

McConnell has committed to a vote, but hasn’t said when.

“President Trump was elected for a term that runs into January. Republicans have control of the Senate until the end of this Congress. We should fulfill that constitutional duty,” Johnson said in a phone interview.

See more [here](#).

— In national polling completed days before Ginsburg’s death, two-thirds of adults said the Senate should hold hearings on a nominee if a vacancy occurred in 2020.

The Marquette University Law School Poll also found three-fourths of those surveyed believed it was wrong not to hold hearings on the nomination of Merrick Garland to the court four years ago.

See more [here](#).

— Wisconsin’s five GOP congressmen were among the 57 Republicans who voted against a bipartisan spending deal as the House voted overwhelmingly to extend federal government funding through mid-December.

Rep. Mike Gallagher in a statement said by extending government funding through a short-term spending legislation known as a continuing resolution, Congress “opted to punt our problems to December.”

“This is bad process, bad policy, and a betrayal of our core duty to the American people,” the Green Bay Republican said.

See more [here](#).

— Dem presidential candidate Joe Biden in his Wisconsin Sept. 21 visit said President Trump choked when it came to his responsibility to face the COVID-19 pandemic.

Biden accused the president of always attempting to change the subject whenever reporters ask him about COVID-19. Biden also noted recordings from author Bob Woodward where Trump himself admitted he knew how dangerous the virus was in its early days while still publicly playing it down.

“Due to Donald Trump’s lies and incompetence in the past six months we’ve seen one of the greatest losses of American life in history, in history,” Biden said during a half-hour speech inside the Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry in Manitowoc. “He said he didn’t want to start a panic. Trump panicked. The virus was too big for him.”

As the country reached over 200,000 COVID-19 deaths on Sept. 21, Biden warned viewers against becoming numb to the data. He said those numbers mean there are now empty chairs at dining room tables across the country “where just days or weeks or months ago loved ones sat and laughed and talked.”

See more [here](#).

— Ahead of the event, former 7th CD U.S. Rep. Sean Duffy slammed Biden’s economic record and praised Trump for making Wisconsin’s manufacturing industry “alive and well.”

The Wausau Republican, alongside Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce President Kurt Bauer, touted the president’s deregulatory efforts and warned a Biden victory could mean the state would have to suffer a “radical environmental agenda” and additional job losses to China that would bring down the economy.

See more [here](#).

— After his speech at a Manitowoc foundry, Dem presidential candidate Joe Biden told supporters outside the factory how he sometimes rooted for the Green Bay Packers as a boy in an attempt to get out of school early.

According to a pool report, Biden’s motorcade stopped shortly after leaving the factory to greet a small group of people outside the building.

See more [here](#).

— U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil asked U.S. Attorney General William Barr to investigate alleged out-of-state activists spurring Kenosha riots.

“Thanks to our federal and local law enforcement agents, the U.S. Marshals and Kenosha Police Department successfully stopped out-of-state protestors whose van was filled with fireworks, helmets, and gas masks,” Steil said in a release.

Roger Polack, the Dem running against Steil in the upcoming election, called Steil a liar and said federal investigations in Kenosha are already underway.

“Steil knows that the protestors whose van was stopped by US Marshalls, which he cites and insinuates that an attack was thwarted, were there to serve food to protestors and were released by Kenosha police,” Polack said in a press release response to Steil’s statement.

Neither release described the van they were referring to, but the Kenosha Police Department said U.S. Marshals assisted in detaining the occupants of a U-Haul van parked near Civic Center Park on Aug. 27. The department said in a release officers found food and supplies, as well as “materials that are consistent with rioting” inside the van.

See the Steil [release](#).

See the Polack [release](#).

See the Kenosha Police Department [release](#).

Posts of the week

https://www.instagram.com/p/CFTahIFHL_a/

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

6 weeks from today is election day...Make sure you're registered to vote

TODAY by visiting <https://t.co/vBK3QWt7zb>. pic.twitter.com/Dgds6DPiaO

— Tom Tiffany (@TomTiffanyWI) [September 22, 2020](#)

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CFSUtxpH7E5/>

Tonight, we lost a trailblazer, a tireless advocate for equality, & a true champion for justice. America is better because of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, & her impact will be felt for generations to come. Mine & Tawni's prayers are with her family, and may she rest in peace.

<https://t.co/HOvHEU0ZSn>

— Archive: Rep. Ron Kind (@RepRonKind) [September 19, 2020](#)

ICYMI

[Pompeo Warns About Chinese Influence in Wisconsin Visit](#)

[First-Time Voters In Wisconsin Weigh In On Election Issues](#)

[Congressional candidate Zunker says Trump rally is dangerous due to COVID cases](#)

[US congressman introduces bill to scrap 'one China' policy,' normalize ties with Taiwan](#)

[Biden tries to keep Wisconsin voters' attention on Trump's pandemic response](#)

[American Suburbs Are Tilting for Biden. But Not Milwaukee's.](#)