

# DC Wrap: Republican strategist Bonjean says next coronavirus relief package could take a while

Posted on Thursday, Jul 30, 2020

***Welcome to our weekly DC Wrap, where we write about Wisconsin's congressional delegation. Sign up here to receive the newsletter directly: <https://forms.gle/YLYZtjWHPSt24HhZ7>***

## ***Quotes of the week***

*"Supporters of this bill are asking hardworking taxpayers in the state of Wisconsin to pay for decades of mismanagement in states like Illinois. I'm not going to let it happen."*

*-U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil on portions of the new coronavirus stimulus bill.*

*"Wisconsin should have a mask mandate now, and we should learn from states like Texas that waited for this pandemic to overwhelm them before making the right decision."*

*-U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan on Gov. Tony Evers inability to force a statewide mask mandate without support from the legislature.*

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

**— Republican strategist Ron Bonjean says he believes House Dems and Senate Republicans will strike a deal on another round of coronavirus relief legislation. But the Wisconsinite added it might take "a lot longer than the patience the American people have right now."**

**>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Bonjean is a Wisconsin native, longtime Capitol Hill staffer and partner at Rokk Solutions, a DC-based public affairs firm. He said negotiations between Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., could drag out for “a week to two weeks, maybe even longer.”

“It’s likely not going to be done this week — that was the goal: by the weekend,” he said in an interview with WisPolitics.com. “And it’s going to drag out for a little while.”

Bonjean also acknowledged President Trump was down against presumptive Dem nominee Joe Biden. But he said the polling numbers “aren’t devastating towards him” and said Congress’ approach to Unemployment Insurance in the next relief package is “really still up in the air.”

See the interview:

**— Dem U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin has “no earthly understanding” why Senate Majority Leader Sen. Mitch McConnell waited until this week to introduce Republicans’ latest COVID-19 relief plan.**

The Madison Dem said the GOP aid package doesn’t adequately address any of the priorities she believes would help people struggling during the pandemic and ensuing economic crisis. But she added she would be open to negotiations.

“As people face a cliff with unemployment, reduced local government revenue and lost health care, none of those issues are adequately addressed in the bill before us,” she said Wednesday during a Milwaukee Press Club-WisPolitics.com virtual event. “I have no earthly understanding why it took Mitch McConnell the week before the cliff to come to the table.”

The GOP proposal, among other things, would reduce a federal extension of unemployment benefits from an additional \$600 per week to \$200 through the end of September. Beginning in October, the combined impact of state unemployment payments and the federal add-on would be 70 percent of lost wages.

The UI extension is set to run out at the end of the month without congressional

intervention. Republicans have argued the extra \$600 could be a disincentive for people to search for work, since a portion of recipients make more on unemployment than they did with a job.

Baldwin countered that suggestion, saying one of the requirements of unemployment benefits is for people to be actively looking for new jobs. Plus, she said, anyone who turns down a job offer also loses unemployment.

See more [here](#).

**— U.S. Attorney Matthew Krueger announced today 25 federal agents will be coming to Milwaukee to combat violent crime, but insisted their work will be nothing like what's happened in Portland, Ore.**

Krueger said the agents — 10 at first on a temporary assignment with the rest coming over the next year to provide a long-term presence — will not focus on protests of civil disturbances. Their focus will be violent crime.

“You will not see federal agents amassing on the streets of Milwaukee,” Krueger said.

Gov. Tony Evers and other Dems yesterday sent a letter to Krueger asking him to clarify what role the agents will play in Milwaukee after the U.S. attorney first announced they were headed to Milwaukee. AG Josh Kaul also raised concerns about the additional agents targeting protesters after scenes in Portland, where federal agents have regularly clashed with demonstrators. The Trump administration has said those agents are in Portland to protect federal property.

Baldwin told a Wednesday WisPolitics.com-Milwaukee Press Club event she now feels more comfortable with federal agents coming to Milwaukee after hearing assurances from DOJ attorneys that the officers wouldn't focus on crowd control efforts.

See more [here](#).

**— Dem U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore condemned Congress' response to the COVID-19 pandemic and said a Joe Biden administration would not have "squandered" opportunities to act.**

The comments came on a call promoting Biden's "Build Back Better" plan.

Moore and Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley said the pandemic has revealed how essential at-home caregivers are to the nation's elderly and disabled. They stressed that these workers must receive equal pay and benefits to their counterparts in assisted living facilities.

In Biden's plan, informal at-home caregivers would be eligible for a \$5,000 tax credit, along with 12 weeks of paid vacation or family leave and additional Social Security credits.

See more [here](#).

**— GOP U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman says he voted against a resolution to remove Confederate statues at the nation's Capitol because he doesn't approve of a proposed replacement.**

The House resolution would replace the Old Supreme Court Chamber bust of former Chief Justice Roger Brooke, majority opinion author of the 1857 Dred Scott case saying the Constitution didn't allow African American citizenship, with a bust of U.S. Justice Thurgood Marshall. The resolution would also remove all statues from the Capitol of people who voluntarily served in the Confederate States of America.

Grothman said he did not believe that Marshall, the U.S. Supreme Court's first Black justice, "should be rewarded with a bust in the U.S. Capitol" because of his 1973 Roe v. Wade majority vote legalizing abortion in all 50 states. He also said Marshall's biography, "Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary," claims the justice successfully lobbied the court to legalize late-term abortions.

See more [here](#).

**— The latest TV ad from Joe Biden’s campaign features a Wisconsin woman who knocks President Trump’s response to COVID-19, saying it felt like her grandmother “didn’t matter” to the administration as she died this spring from the disease.**

The campaign is spending more than \$14.5 million this week on TV and digital ads in seven states, including Wisconsin. The campaign didn’t provide details on how much of that would target Wisconsin.

The woman, identified as Jessica from Greenfield, said things “spiraled downwards” quickly for her grandmother Susana Martinez as she passed away April 29.

See more [here](#) and [here](#).

**— U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil, R-Janesville, took to Twitter recently to show his support for law enforcement officers across the state, commending their courage.**

“[Officers] wake up every morning and go to work, not knowing what the day will bring,” he said, “I commend their courage and am grateful for their service. I do not support defunding the police.”

See the video [here](#).

**— After initially proposing the creation of Juneteenth as a national holiday, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson has halted the bill, citing a \$6 billion cost over the next 10 years in lost productivity to business owners.**

“I think we should celebrate the fact that we did remove an ‘original sin’ by emancipating slaves,” Johnson said of Juneteenth, “I simply don’t believe we should make American taxpayers in the private sector pony up [the money] to give federal workers one more paid day off.”

Johnson pointed to the 10 federal work holidays already recognized, along with paid

leave, sick leave, and paid parental leave as reasons to not add Juneteenth. However, he said if one of the current federal holidays was removed, he would support making Juneteenth the tenth.

See more [here](#).

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

Warning from Wisconsin DNR [pic.twitter.com/70MIPAO6f5](https://pic.twitter.com/70MIPAO6f5)

— Bryan Steil (@RepBryanSteil) [July 28, 2020](#)

These attacks will not deter me; they only increase my curiosity. Our investigation will continue. <https://t.co/rKsuTKGX8j>

— Senator Ron Johnson (@SenRonJohnson) [July 28, 2020](#)

Today, we honor the life and legacy of my colleague and friend, Congressman John Lewis. It is now up to all of us to carry on John's spirit, and continue his work to change America and bring liberty and justice for all. [pic.twitter.com/OF9ER0oePY](https://pic.twitter.com/OF9ER0oePY)

— Sen. Tammy Baldwin (@SenatorBaldwin) [July 27, 2020](#)

He left an incredible legacy behind. And we will pick up his work to honor

his name and memory. Rest in power, John Lewis.

<https://t.co/zZGv4ANDAt>

— Rep. Gwen Moore (@RepGwenMoore) [July 27, 2020](#)

<https://twitter.com/JimPressOffice/status/1287558320962715649>

## ***ICYMI***

[Rep. Mark Pocan: Wisconsin's path to recovery: testing, tracing, masking and isolation](#)

[GOP Sen. Ron Johnson is first target of new Democratic congressional 'integrity' group](#)

[Sen. Baldwin on WTMJ: 'We're going to find out very soon' if she's picked as Biden's running mate](#)

[Gallagher encouraged by latest GOP stimulus plan](#)

[Congresswoman Gwen Moore expects speaking role when DNC convenes in Milwaukee](#)

[The Summer of Glenn Grothman](#)