

DC Wrap: Gallagher says Evers ‘bungled’ vaccine rollout; Fitzgerald named to House Judiciary Committee

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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:

<https://forms.gle/YLYZtjWHPSt24HhZ7>

Quotes of the week

“I’m gonna approach this job the exact same way I approached it the last four years, which is we’re going to go á la carte, policy by policy.”

-U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Allouez in a WMC virtual event after criticizing President Biden’s first few days in office.

“The absence of upward mobility for hard working families demands action, and it is past time to raise the minimum wage.”

-U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, on the Raise the Wage Act

This week’s news

— U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher says Gov. Tony Evers “bungled” the vaccine rollout process.

The Allouez Republican told a Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce virtual briefing yesterday Wisconsinites aren’t getting vaccinated fast enough because “Governor Evers kind of bungled the whole operation, and we have a very confusing process for which subgroups are allowed to get access to the shots initially.”

He added states such as West Virginia as well as North and South Dakota did a better job because they ignored federal guidelines.

See more [here](#).

— But Dem U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan said the low vaccination numbers are caused by a smaller-than-expected stockpile and lack of national planning.

“It’s not unique to Wisconsin, although Wisconsin does have one of the lower vaccination rates of the states right now,” the Madison-area Dem said in a virtual press conference yesterday.

Pocan added he’s looking forward to working with new DHS Secretary Karen Timberlake to improve the vaccine rollout by creating a national plan. He said he hopes the plan will include “additional vaccines coming to Wisconsin and even better measures in place.”

— Pocan also slammed the state Legislature’s recent moves to end Gov. Tony Evers’ executive orders tied to COVID-19.

“I’m fully supportive of what the governor did, and I think any measures by the Legislature aren’t based on science,” he said. “They’re based on science-fiction.”

Referring to a video of himself and state GOP Assembly Speaker Robin Vos promoting the use of masks in public, Pocan said Republicans who want to get rid of Evers’ mask mandate because they believe it’s an overreach of power should introduce laws requiring masks.

“Because that is the scientifically proven thing you can do” to stop the spread of the virus, he said.

— Freshman U.S. Rep. Scott Fitzgerald will sit on the powerful House Judiciary Committee, his office announced.

“I’m honored to be selected to serve on the House Judiciary Committee, the second oldest standing committee in Congress,” the Juneau Republican said in a statement. “I look forward to taking on this new role and I take seriously my new responsibility to conduct effective oversight and important legislative work.”

Fitzgerald's predecessor in the 5th CD, retired U.S. Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, was a long-serving member of that panel. Sensenbrenner, R-Menomonee Falls, chaired the committee from 2001-2007.

Fitzgerald is also set to be a member of the House Education and Labor Committee.

Other committee assignments for the Wisconsin congressional delegation include:

- *U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil, R-Janesville: House Financial Services Committee;
- *U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont: House Appropriations Committee; House Education and Labor Committee;
- *U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, D-La Crosse: House Ways and Means Committee;
- *U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee: House Ways and Means Committee;
- *U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah: House Oversight and Reform Committee; House Education and Labor Committee; House Committee on the Budget;
- *U.S. Rep. Tom Tiffany, R-Minocqua: House Judiciary Committee; House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology Committee;
- *U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Allouez: House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee; House Armed Services Committee;
- *U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison: Senate Appropriations Committee; Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions; Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation;
- *U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson R-Oshkosh: Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee; Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Senate Budget Committee; Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.

See more on the Wisconsin congressional delegation committee assignments in the new WisPolitics.com Directory & Almanac:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/2021-almanac/>

— State Dem Party Chair Ben Wikler is calling GOP U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson's vote against confirming Alejandro Mayorkas as next DHS secretary "indefensible."

The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee voted 7-to-4 in favor of moving forward with the Biden administration's nomination of Mayorkas as cabinet member on Jan. 25. Wikler in a tweet said Johnson's opposition was "disgraceful."

"Mayorkas is not only eminently qualified, endorsed by four former DHS Secretaries, and previously confirmed by the Senate, but Johnson's own former staff secretary urged him to support the nominee. This nay vote is indefensible," Wikler said in a Dem party release.

The Oshkosh Republican said he won't support Mayorkas' nomination over results from a DHS report that suggested he favored certain visa applicants.

"Although I had a good working relationship with Mr. Mayorkas as Deputy Secretary of DHS, and hope to work with him in good faith if he is confirmed as Secretary, I simply cannot support his nomination," he said in a statement.

"In addition, his lack of candor and incomplete response to Senator Grassley's oversight efforts in 2013 and again recently is another red flag," he added.

But in other Senate confirmations on Biden picks, Johnson has voted:

- *for Lloyd James Austin, of Georgia, to be Secretary of Defense;
- *for Janet Louise Yellen, of California, to be Secretary of the Treasury;
- *for Antony John Blinken, of New York, to be Secretary of State;
- *for Avril Haines, of New York, to be Director of National Intelligence.

See the DPW [release](#).

See the Johnson [statement](#).

See the [Tweet](#).

- Johnson joined 44 of his GOP colleagues in a procedural vote declaring it is unconstitutional to put a former president on trial for impeachment.

The motion, which failed 55-45 on Jan. 26, was seen as an early test for the upcoming trial of former President Trump. It requires 67 votes to convict Trump.

Five Republicans joined all 48 Dems and two independents in opposing the motion. The Republicans who broke ranks were: Susan Collins, of Maine; Lisa Murkowski, of Alaska; Mitt Romney, of Utah; Ben Sasse, of Nebraska; and Pat Toomey, of Pennsylvania.

See the [roll call](#).

— The 500 Wisconsin National Guard troops providing security in DC have returned home.

Guard spokesman Maj. Joe Trovato said there is no further request for the services of the troops, who came back Jan. 22 and 23.

See more [here](#).

— U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin praised President Biden's recent "Buy American" executive order to push people to buy more American made goods.

She said, in a Jan. 25 statement, the order works to "ensure that our future is made in America by all of America's workers."

"It's a new day, and I look forward to working with the Biden administration on his Build Back Better agenda and to make sure we are doing right by American workers," she said.

She also denounced the Trump administration for a lack of investment in the future of American workers and manufacturers.

— The Madison Dem also said it's crucial for the Senate to work on President Biden's cabinet confirmations before proceeding to former

President Trump's impeachment trial.

"We need a functioning federal government to respond to the multiple crises we face as a nation," the Madison Democrat told the statewide "UpFront" program, produced in partnership with WisPolitics.com.

Senate leadership says Trump's trial would start the week of Feb. 8.

Host Adrienne Pedersen asked Baldwin to respond to comments from U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, that the impeachment trial of a former president is unconstitutional.

"It is not unconstitutional," she said, noting the 14th Amendment has a clause that could bar Trump from running or holding federal office again in the future if he is convicted.

See more [here](#).

— Baldwin also said the fight against COVID-19 will get better with Biden in the White House.

"I think that we will see a lot more assistance provided to the local levels to get this done, and I think we'll see dramatic changes because of that," she said.

Baldwin said Trump had an "utter failure to really stand up and use the tools available to protect the people of the United States."

See more [here](#).

Posts of the week

Tom Vilsack knows Wisconsin farmers and they know him. He is ready to get to work at [@USDA](#) on day one and I'm looking forward to partnering with him to do right by Wisconsin rural communities and our agriculture economy. pic.twitter.com/kujWrpLgld

— Sen. Tammy Baldwin (@SenatorBaldwin) [January 25, 2021](#)

Let's go Pack! [#TBvsGB](#) [#GoPackGo](#) pic.twitter.com/htjXTtYdHV

— Senator Ron Johnson (@SenRonJohnson) [January 24, 2021](#)

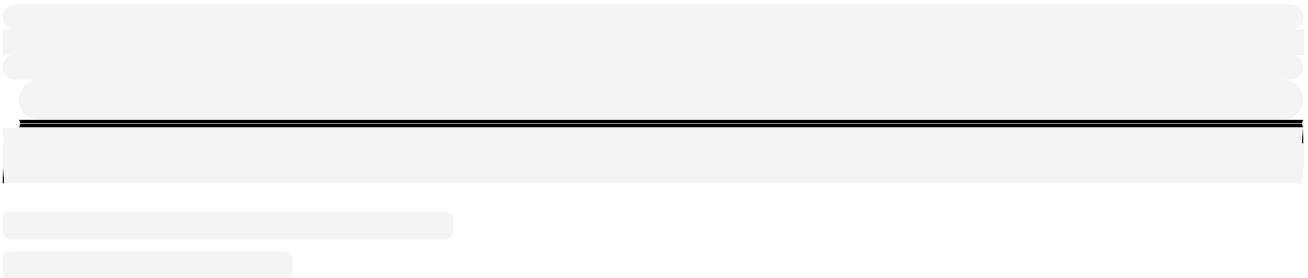
76 years ago, Auschwitz was liberated.

Today on [#HolocaustRemembranceDay](#) we must never forget the millions of innocent lives lost. [#NeverAgain](#) pic.twitter.com/NhHzZRjuyh

— Bryan Steil (@RepBryanSteil) [January 27, 2021](#)



[View this post on Instagram](#)



A post shared by US Rep. Gwen Moore (@repgwenmoore)

I was excited to attend the [#Lomira](#) Chamber of Commerce banquet last

weekend and hear from local business owners and workers about how Congress can help [#WI](#) continue to thrive. pic.twitter.com/JZOZSzXF7E

— Rep. Glenn Grothman (@RepGrothman) [January 28, 2021](#)

Today we lost a hero to WI and the nation, Hank Aaron. I've never met a better ambassador for the game of baseball & for the goal of equal opportunity for all our citizens. Hank will always be for me a dear friend & the true MLB home run record holder. Praying for his loved ones.

pic.twitter.com/ISU8ViGrmM

— Archive: Rep. Ron Kind (@RepRonKind) [January 22, 2021](#)

ICYMI

[Steil says Biden's order stalling construction on Keystone Pipeline cost Wisconsinites their jobs](#)

[Former Wisconsin GOP congressional candidate apologizes to Jewish people over tweet](#)

[Ron Johnson joins most of his GOP colleagues in opposing impeachment trial in Senate test vote](#)

[Wisconsin GOP Representatives Voice Opposition To Cancellation Of Keystone XL Pipeline](#)

[Baldwin, Johnson support raising minimum wage, disagree on how much](#)

[Sen. Tammy Baldwin: 'Crucial' to work on nominations](#)

[Wisconsin Congressman Ron Kind talks about creating more jobs and rebuilding](#)

[Grothman's Effort to Allow National Guard to Tour the Capitol Successful](#)