

# DC Wrap: House Republicans balk at Dems over no GOP votes on \$3.5T resolution

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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**

“As the situation on the ground in Afghanistan becomes more dangerous, thousands of Afghans are desperately seeking to leave the country to avoid possible persecution... [T]he United States has a moral obligation to provide assistance to expedite the evacuation of Afghans at risk.”

*– U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, in a letter from 29 Congressional Democrats urging the Biden administration to expedite efforts to evacuate Afghans.*

“We have to understand there is a danger to this country. We have to recognize that so we have to take our time. ...We can't rush through the (refugee) process. We can't play a numbers game.”

*– U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, in a press conference at Fort McCoy, adding the Biden administration's handling of the Afghanistan withdrawal is a “travesty.”*

## **This week's news**

**— House Republicans are slamming Dems for passing the \$3.5 trillion budget resolution without a single GOP vote.**

The \$3.5 trillion budget resolution includes tax cuts for those earning under \$400,000 a year, and Dems plan to pay for at least part of the measure by making sure corporations pay their fair share of taxes. The measure would also focus spending on affordable housing, environmental issues, education and health care. The vote also sets a Sept. 27 date for a final vote on the Senate-passed \$1.2 trillion infrastructure budget bill.

U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, criticized Dems for not trying to gain at least some bipartisan support on such an expensive measure.

“There was initially a group of Democrats who claimed they would stand up for the future of our country and against this reckless spending,” Grothman said. “But, in the end, they caved to peer pressure and did as Speaker Pelosi instructed by voting to advance this framework.”

The \$3.5 trillion resolution would set aside:

- \*\$1.8 trillion to the Finance Committee;
- \*\$726 billion to the HELP Committee;
- \*\$332 billion to the Banking Committee; and
- \*\$198 billion to the Energy Committee.

According to U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, the passage of this bill was pivotal and will shape the country’s economy for years to come.

Pocan, in a press release this week, said: “This investment in America will make our country safer, healthier, greener, and better for all.”

Pocan praised increased investments in both the care economy and fighting climate change, free pre-K education and community college, and expanding the child tax credit as some of the ways this bill will help Americans.

Wisconsin’s Republican delegation, however, doesn’t agree with Pocan’s assessment. U.S. Rep. Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, called the bill reckless and an unprecedented spending spree.

“To put things in perspective for Wisconsinites, this reconciliation would burden hardworking Wisconsin taxpayers with an additional \$310 billion in debt, reverse tax relief the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act provided Wisconsin families, and eliminate right to work protections our state enjoys,” he said.

U.S. Rep Bryan Steil, R-Janesville, echoed a similar sentiment. According to Steil, “continued out-of-control spending in Washington will have serious consequences.”

The budget resolution will now go through the reconciliation process in the Senate, where it will only need 51 votes to pass.

See a Dem fact sheet on the \$3.5 trillion [resolution](#).

**— U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin alongside Dem colleague Amy Klobuchar in Madison said they feel confident the John Lewis Voting Rights Act will clear the Senate despite GOP opposition.**

Klobuchar, of Minnesota, said that would happen either by gaining the 10 GOP votes needed to surmount filibuster rules or through a procedural change. She also said Senate leaders would consider procedural changes to get the measure through their chamber. Baldwin and Klobuchar added they have been working with moderate Dem Sen. Joe Manchin, of West Virginia, to make sure their party members all vote in favor.

Though she can't say for certain what Manchin will do, Baldwin said Manchin has had time to see Senate Republicans be unwilling to cross the aisle on several votes now. She also noted Manchin has voted in favor of moving the bill forward in every procedural vote this year.

Klobuchar also suggested Manchin may be open to changing filibuster rules, but would likely not favor abolishing the filibuster altogether. She said she has posed the idea of bringing back rules requiring lawmakers to physically stand and speak during the entire time they wish to filibuster, as lawmakers had to do previously .

**— The pair also touted the For the People Act as a way to federally enact some of the longstanding voting laws in both of their home states.**

Baldwin and Klobuchar said same-day voter registration, absentee voting rights and other provisions included in the measure should become law, at least for federal elections, in order to prevent many states from enacting legislation they say restricts voting rights.

"We are not done with this fight," Baldwin said. "The freedom to vote is fundamental to all of our freedoms."

The bill aims to bolster a key part of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 after it was weakened by two Supreme Court decisions. The bill passed 219-212 along party lines. It would reinstate the 1965 provision struck down in 2013 requiring states to seek Department of Justice approval to change voting procedures. Dems say the measure would protect minority populations from 17 Republican-led state legislatures' new voting restrictions.

“The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy,” said U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, who voted in favor of the bill. “Since the Supreme Court’s 2013 *Shelby v. Holder* decision and a subsequent 2021 decision gutted this keystone law, GOP state legislators have pushed forward measures that builds barriers to the ballot box, disproportionately hurting Americans of color, including here in Wisconsin.”

See more [here](#).

**— U.S. Rep. Ron Kind praised the voting rights measure as a way to uphold the late U.S. Rep. John Lewis’ legacy.**

The La Crosse Dem said the bill would restore voting rights for many people who had their rights revoked as part of a Supreme Court decision in 2013. He added voting rights are “fundamental to our democracy and must be protected.”

“This legislation upholds the legacy of my dear friend John Lewis, who fought to make sure all Americans have equal access to the ballot box, and moves us one step closer to restoring the Voting Rights Act to its full strength.”

See the [release](#).

**— Steil voted against the bill, which he called a “federal power-grab.”**

Steil on the House floor said the legislation would gut voter ID laws across the country and make it harder for states to maintain accurate voter rolls. He added that the Voting Rights Act’s preclearance provision was necessary in 1965 to confront blatant attempts to prevent people of color from voting, but questioned what it would achieve now.

“We’ve made great progress since 1965,” Steil said on the House floor. “Instead of a federal overreach, let’s get to work and make it easier to vote and harder to cheat.”

See more [here](#).

**— Fitzgerald, who also voted against the bill, echoed Steil’s concerns about strengthening the 1965 preclearance provision.**

“Is that a can of worms that this body really wants to open up?” Fitzgerald questioned.

Fitzgerald also said the bill could exacerbate existing distrust some voters have in elections. He added that decentralized voting systems are more effective and encouraged his Democratic colleagues to meet with local clerks and state legislatures.

“State legislatures are taking a real beating here today,” Fitzgerald, a former state senator, said on the House floor. “We are now taking the power away from the people and placing it right here in Washington, D.C.”

See more [here](#).

**— Congressional Republicans continue to criticize the Biden administration for its handling of the Afghanistan withdrawal and evacuation of Afghan refugees.**

Steil said Tuesday he left a classified Biden administration briefing on the crisis with more questions than answers.

“The Biden Administration has failed to protect our fellow Americans and has failed to instill confidence in America’s image abroad,” Steil said in a statement. “This was not an intelligence failure, rather this was a disastrous political decision.”

See more [here](#).

**— U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan said what’s happening in Afghanistan is the result of failures 20 years ago, while Republican U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher put the blame squarely on the Biden administration.**

Both Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, and Gallagher, R-Green Bay, appeared in separate interviews Sunday on “UpFront,” produced in partnership with WisPolitics.com.

Pocan said part of the original mission two decades ago was “botched,” and the fault goes back over four administrations, with intelligence failures and “overly rosy” projections from the Department of Defense.

See more [here](#).

**— The two congressmen also addressed the matter of Afghan refugees expected to arrive at Fort McCoy.**

“My own view is that if you fought with us in Afghanistan, if you risked your lives and we made promises to you, we should do everything possible to make you eligible for the (Special Immigrant Visa) process,” Gallagher said, adding that the SIV process has “very high-level vetting requirements.”

Pocan said the United States has an obligation to help Afghans who risked their lives to help America, and their families.

See more [here](#).

**— Afghan refugees arriving at Fort McCoy are being rigorously vetted by intelligence agencies ahead of their arrival in Wisconsin, White House officials say.**

The officials on a press call said refugees and others arriving at Fort McCoy will undergo stringent checks before coming to Wisconsin, such as biometric and biographic screenings to validate their identities. Officials also said they will undergo health checks such as COVID-19 testing as those fleeing Afghanistan arrive at the Army base in Monroe County.

“Our counterterrorism officials are working around the clock to vet all Afghans before they’re allowed into the United States,” officials said.

See more [here](#).

**— Gov. Tony Evers announced \$250 million in new ARPA grant funding, including \$50 million for health care infrastructure projects.**

The other \$200 million will go to the Neighborhood Investment Fund grant program, which will support local and tribal government projects such as workforce centers, entrepreneurship programs, affordable housing, transportation and child care.

Meanwhile, the Healthcare Infrastructure Capital Investment Grants will go to projects that “support increasing access to health care for low income, uninsured, and underserved communities,” as well pandemic preparedness efforts. Local and tribal governments as well as health care nonprofits are eligible for these grants.

See more [here](#).

**— Competing redistricting suits were filed as the conservative Wisconsin**

**Institute for Law & Liberty asked the state Supreme Court to step in and several nonpartisan groups went to federal court.**

Meanwhile in federal court, Black Leaders Organizing for Communities, Voces de la Frontera, the Wisconsin League of Women Voters and several voters argue the “Legislature’s recent preference for litigation over legislation” underscores the likelihood of an impasse.

See more [here](#).

**— Former state and national GOP Chair Reince Priebus says Wisconsin’s Legislature has approved \$680,000 for the review of the 2020 election led by former Supreme Court Justice Michael Gableman — and more outside money is on the way.**

He also told Steve Bannon’s radio show yesterday that subpoenas in the probe will go out in the next week or so.

In a statement, Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, R-Rochester, didn’t address the costs of the probe or the possibility of subpoenas. Vos earlier signed a contract with Gableman that would pay him \$44,000 over a four-month period.

See more [here](#).

**— House Majority Forward, an affiliate of Dems’ super PAC focused on House races, has launched a new TV ad that praises U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, for supporting President Biden’s agenda.**

House Majority Forward said it is spending \$120,000 on the ad, which will air this week on broadcast TV. The group said it’s part of a \$2.5 million campaign airing in 23 House districts.

The narrator says Moore is “getting it done” by creating good-paying jobs, working to repair infrastructure, providing loans to help businesses and creating a tax cut for middle-class families.

See more [here](#).

## **Posts of the week**

Happy Birthday [@NatIParkService](#)! Today we celebrate our NPS employees and volunteers who work hard every day to preserve our national parks and make sure all visitors can experience our country's greatest natural wonders. <https://t.co/FiIGa38mBu>

— Archive: Rep. Ron Kind (@RepRonKind) [August 25, 2021](#)

<https://twitter.com/GrothmanforWI/status/1429873643866279936?s=20>

I encourage high school students interested in a Service Academy Nomination to join staff from my office and the [#WI](#) Congressional delegation for Academy Day on Sept. 18! Come meet with representatives from the academies and speak with staff members about the nomination process. <pic.twitter.com/9HvotgEvLQ>

— Rep. Scott Fitzgerald (@RepFitzgerald) [August 23, 2021](#)

Cheering on all the Wisconsin athletes competing in the Paralympics! Bring home the gold for [#TeamUSA](#). <https://t.co/Uzj8K5AdwN>

— Rep. Mark Pocan (@RepMarkPocan) [August 25, 2021](#)

Did you know this year marks the 100th year of the Kenosha County Fair? Stopped by over the weekend. <pic.twitter.com/NO6CcGx8m1>

— Bryan Steil (@BryanSteil) [August 22, 2021](#)

Thanks to the Herricks family for having me on the farm today!  
[#DairyPride pic.twitter.com/DyZk14Ksgh](https://twitter.com/DyZk14Ksgh)

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

## **ICYMI**

[‘I am deeply disturbed’: Rep. Tom Tiffany slams Biden plans to accept Afghan refugees](#)

[This bill aims to keep Social Security beneficiaries out of poverty. Here’s where efforts to improve the program stand](#)

[‘We can’t bomb our way out of a pandemic,’ says Pentagon critic Mark Pocan](#)

[‘You are not a horse. You are not a cow’: FDA issues blunt warning on taking ivermectin, drug promoted by Ron Johnson to treat COVID-19](#)