

DC Wrap: Pocan visits Palestine and Israeli to witness issues with violence after passing BIF

Posted on Thursday, Nov 11, 2021

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

"These are some of the most significant votes we'll take this Congress...Did COVID suddenly become a threat because it was late on a Friday night?"

- U.S. Rep, Mike Gallagher, R-Allouez, slamming lawmakers for voting by proxy on the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill.

The whole day was a clusterf—, right? At the end of the day what we all want to do is get the president's agenda done, and that's what we're going to do.

- U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, on passing the infrastructure bill through the House.

This week's news

— U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan Pocan visited Palestine to meet with Israeli and Palestinian leaders to discuss the affects of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The Town of Vermont Dem joined several lawmakers on the trip to also look into the impact on civilians of fighting between Israeli forces and Hamas. Pocan's Digital Director and Press Secretary Tracy Moore told WisPolitics.com the group of lawmakers will also discuss the impact of indiscriminate rocket fire on Israeli border communities as well as the humanitarian crisis facing people in Gaza.

Pocan in a tweet said he'd be on the lookout for violence.

“We will be watching to make sure no violence occurs this weekend or anytime,” he said.

See the [tweet](#).

— U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher introduced a measure with support from the entire delegation to recognize Wisconsin’s leadership in creating veteran-to-veteran mentorship programs.

The resolution would recognize programs that help returning service members transition back to civilian life. It would also call on Congress to promote the effectiveness of such programs and encourage other states to replicate Wisconsin’s efforts. Gallagher, a former Marine Capt. who represents the Green Bay area, said building connections between veterans coming home from deployment and those who have already transitioned into civilian life is crucial.

“For veterans, transitioning from active duty to civilian life can be challenging in a variety of ways,” the Allouez Republican said. “I experienced it firsthand when I left the Marine Corps. What I’ve learned is the best resource for a transitioning veteran is a fellow veteran who knows the community, the resources, and has gone through similar challenges.”

See the [release](#).

— Wisconsin’s congressional delegation split along party lines as the House approved a \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill.

The bill, which includes \$550 billion in new infrastructure spending, is now awaiting President Biden’s signature.

See the [roll call](#).

— Democrats as well as labor and agriculture groups in the state are applauding passage of the \$1.2 trillion federal infrastructure bill, arguing the funding will help create jobs and strengthen the state’s economic recovery.

Dem Gov. Tony Evers calls the bill’s passage “a win for Wisconsin.”

“Now, because of President Biden’s efforts to pass this once-in-a-generation

infrastructure plan, we'll be able to build on the progress we've made these past two years and continue our work fixing our state's crumbling roads, investing in lead pipe replacement, and expanding access to broadband across our state," Evers said in a statement.

Wisconsin is expected to receive billions of dollars in federal funding for public transportation, bridge repairs, electric vehicle charging stations, broadband expansion and more through the \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill.

A fact sheet from the White House details state-specific funding to be provided through the legislation, which recently passed the U.S. House and is expected to be signed into law soon by President Biden.

Based on formula funding, the state is expected to receive \$5.2 billion for highway improvements and \$225 million for bridge replacement and repairs over the next five years, the fact sheet shows. Wisconsin has 979 bridges and over 1,949 miles of highways that are in poor condition, per the fact sheet, and drivers are estimated to pay \$547 per year due to driving on roads that need repairs.

The state is also expected to receive \$592 million over five years to expand public transportation. And Wisconsin is expected to get \$79 million over five years to expand its charging network for electric vehicles.

See more [here](#).

See the [fact sheet](#).

— Dem Deb McGrath, a former CIA officer and Army captain, formally announced her campaign for the western Wisconsin congressional seat her father once represented.

McGrath, who also served in the State Department, joins Eau Claire businesswoman Rebecca Cooke, Navy veteran Brett Knudsen and state Sen Brad Pfaff, of Onalaska, in the Dem field for the 3rd CD.

McGrath focused on her experience serving abroad. She told WisPolitics.com in an interview last month she resigned from the Army after five years when she and her husband started a family. She joined the CIA in 2002 and retired in December, becoming a contract employee with the agency's World Factbook, a resource on the world's countries.

See more [here](#).

— Pfaff's campaign says he's raised more than \$220,000 since getting into the race in early October.

Cooke announced shortly after she got in that she had raised \$100,000 within the first few days of her campaign.

Van Orden, meanwhile, has reported raising nearly \$1.8 million through the end of September. That includes more than \$1.1 million raised during the third quarter.

See more [here](#).

— McGrath also announced she raised more than \$100,000 in the first 24 hours after launching her bid for the 3rd CD.

It's the latest hint of fundraising by the Dem field. Meanwhile, Eau Claire businesswoman Rebecca Cooke last month announced she raised more than \$100,000 within the first few days of launching her bid last month.

See the [release](#).

— The NRCC has elevated 3rd CD GOP candidate Derrick Van Orden to the top level of its "Young Guns" program for House candidates.

Van Orden narrowly lost to U.S. Rep. Ron Kind, D-La Crosse, last fall and was immediately a priority for House GOP leaders after he announced a second bid for the western Wisconsin seat.

The National Republican Congressional Committee last month announced Van Orden was one of 32 candidates who were in the "On the Radar" level.

See more [here](#).

— Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority CEO and Executive Director Joaquín Altoro is joining the Biden administration as administrator of the Rural Housing Service within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development.

Gov. Tony Evers said the change is effective immediately and a transition team has

been established at the agency to ensure continuity of operations until a replacement is appointed.

Evers appointed Altoro to the post in June 2019 after a 30-year banking career. That included serving as Town Bank's vice president of commercial banking.

See more [here](#).

— The state DOJ is urging the U.S. Supreme Court to reject an appeal from the MacIver Institute over Dem Gov. Tony Evers' decision to exclude the conservative think tank's reporters from exclusive media briefings.

In a filing yesterday, the Department of Justice argued MacIver didn't meet the gov's viewpoint neutral criteria for determining which media outlets should have access to certain events.

What's more, the filing argued MacIver is a think tank engaged in policy advocacy and lobbying and thus "not principally a news organization and therefore was not entitled to attend the Governor's limited-access press events."

See more [here](#).

— The state Dem Party, which held a series of virtual fundraisers last year with actors, has one planned Sunday with comedians to help raise money to target U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh.

Among those scheduled to participate in the live streamed event are Margaret Cho and Seth MacFarlane, creator of animated TV show "Family Guy."

See [details](#).

Posts of the week

Korean War Veteran Bob Boulder from Burlington is Wisconsin First District's 2021 Veteran of the Year! Bob has dedicated his life to serving our country and continues to serve our veteran community.

Congratulations to each of our nominees. Thank you for your service!

pic.twitter.com/ijcjW9rDgY

— Bryan Steil (@RepBryanSteil) [November 10, 2021](#)

Happy 246th Birthday to Marines everywhere, including our son Matt.

We are grateful for their commitment to protecting our nation. [#SemperFi](#)
pic.twitter.com/i6fEbeRurR

— Archive: Rep. Ron Kind (@RepRonKind) [November 10, 2021](#)

Did someone say it's infrastructure week? The bipartisan infrastructure legislation that I supported delivers results for Wisconsin and you're damn right we're gonna fix the roads. pic.twitter.com/3GaXkhvzXW

— Sen. Tammy Baldwin (@SenatorBaldwin) [November 10, 2021](#)

Such an honor to present this Police Purple Heart to Ian Seaholm who served with the police force in my hometown of Oshkosh for 13 years.

We thank Ian and his family for his service. pic.twitter.com/fSd40GKhj6

— Senator Ron Johnson (@SenRonJohnson) [November 10, 2021](#)

I was so excited to join the [@Bucks](#) in celebrating their NBA championship at the White House!

Milwaukee is so proud. pic.twitter.com/44EaZ1ZUzS

— Rep. Gwen Moore (@RepGwenMoore) [November 10, 2021](#)

Each year, I recommend motivated young students to each of the US Service Academies that require a Congressional rec. On Saturday, I and the [#WI06](#) Service Academy Nomination Advisory Board greatly enjoyed speaking with the young people who will go on to serve our country.

pic.twitter.com/KKUHjg3aaG

— Rep. Glenn Grothman (@RepGrothman) [November 9, 2021](#)

ICYMI

[Central Wisconsin's Central Role in Wisconsin's Redistricting Calculations](#)

[Nov 6 in history: Tammy Baldwin becomes 1st openly gay politician to be elected to the US Senate and more](#)

[Ron Johnson calls for having Republican lawmakers take over federal elections in Wisconsin](#)

[Rebecca Cooke looking to take over Ron Kind's 3rd Congressional seat](#)

[Biden says final passage of \\$1 trillion infrastructure plan is a big step forward](#)

[Local Congressmen provide differing views on infrastructure bill](#)

[Steil, GOP colleagues concerned about Biden, Iran nuclear negotiations](#)