

DC Wrap: Senate fails to approve bill to protect the right to abortion access; Lugar Center ranks bipartisanship of congressional members

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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

"Apparently precedent means nothing. Access to safe and legal abortion is under direct attack as an activist Supreme Court appears poised to legislate from the bench and take a constitutionally protected right away from tens of millions of Americans."

- U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, on the Senate floor a day before her bill that would have codified the right to abortion access.

"I've always felt the determination of when society has the responsibility to protect life, including the unborn, should be made through the democratic process in each state. The fact that nine unelected justices made that decision for the entire nation did not settle the issue, it only delayed the necessary societal debate for fifty years. We will now have that debate."

- U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, praising his Senate colleagues for stopping Baldwin's legislation from moving forward.

This week's news

— **The Senate failed 49-51 to clear a procedural vote on a bill that would protect the right to an abortion as the U.S. Supreme Court appears poised to overturn the 1973 the decision guaranteeing that right.**

The only Dem to vote against the bill was Sen. Joe Manchin, W.Va. In order to bypass the filibuster, 60 lawmakers would have had to vote in support of the measure.

Under the bill coauthored by U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, governments could not “prohibit abortion services before or after fetal viability when pregnancy is a risk to the patient’s life or health.”

Governments also could not require patients to disclose their reasons for seeking abortion services or limit a health care provider’s ability to “immediately provide abortion services” when a delay risks the patient’s health, among other things.

Baldwin said the 51 senators who voted no had refused to move forward with legislation that “would protect the constitutional rights and freedoms for a majority of America.”

“I stand with you and we will march forward together in this fight for our rights and freedom,” Baldwin said.

U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson in a press release blasted Dems for supporting the measure.

“Democrat elected officials and the radical left have proven they are the extremists on the profound moral issue of abortion,” The Oshkosh Republican said.

He added he’d be happy to see states decide the issue instead of the federal government.

[See more about the attack on WFA.](#)

— All five of Wisconsin’s Republican congressional members called on Attorney General Merrick Garland to investigate an attack on Wisconsin Family Action’s Madison headquarters over the weekend.

U.S. Rep. Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, led a letter to Garland with: U.S. Reps. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah; Tom Tiffany, R-Minocqua; Bryan Steil, R-Janesville; and Mike Gallagher, R-Allouez. The lawmakers called for Garland to continue the U.S. Department of Justice’s cooperation with state and local law enforcement to ensure other anti-abortion offices are not attacked.

The FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives are also

assisting Madison Police in the investigation.

Madison Police said flames were seen coming out of the office shortly after 6 a.m. Sunday. The Madison Fire Department quickly put out the fire, according to MPD Chief Shon Barnes. Barnes also said the building was hit by two Molotov cocktails and vandalism, though at least one of the devices did not ignite.

Fitzgerald, referring to Garland announcing DOJ would investigate threats made at school board hearings, said the department spent the last year and a half on “resources to target conservatives while taking a hands-off approach to left-wing violence.”

Madison Police haven’t announced any arrests in the case but are looking into reports about a group called Jane’s Revenge that took responsibility for the attack. Robert Evans, a journalist for international news publisher Bellingcat, reported the claim Tuesday after an anonymous tipster brought to his attention a letter that appears to be signed by Jane’s Revenge.

The GOP congressional letter also calls for Garland to answer four questions related to DOJ’s role assisting state and local police on the issue and to “disclose any communications the Department has had with the White House regarding abortionist demonstrations.”

[See the press release and letter.](#)

— A report from the Washington, D.C.-based Lugar Center rated U.S. Rep. Ron Kind the most bipartisan U.S. House member from Wisconsin and U.S. Rep. Tom Tiffany the least bipartisan among Wisconsin members.

The report ranks members from most to least bipartisan. Kind, D-La Crosse, ranked 18th of the 435 members. According to his release, Kind has been among the top 25 most independent members every year since 2013. Tiffany, R-Minocqua, came in 387th place.

See how the rest of Wisconsin’s representatives ranked:

*U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Allouez, ranked 81st;

*U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee, ranked 217th;

*U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil, R-Janesville, ranked 229th;

* U.S. Rep. Glenn Grothman, R-Glenbeulah, ranked 245th;

*U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, ranked 306th; and

*U.S. Rep. Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, ranked 387th.

The rankings don't include U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and representatives who have held office for less than six months.

[See Lugar Center U.S. House report.](#)

[See Kind's release.](#)

— On the U.S. Senate side, the Lugar Center report ranked U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson among the least bipartisan senators with the Oshkosh Republican ranked 94th out of 98 senators.

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin fell closer to the middle in 39th place. The report doesn't include Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and senators who served less than six months.

[See the Lugar Center U.S. Senate report.](#)

— Wisconsin's senators split on a vote that confirmed Michigan State Economics Professor Lisa Cook as the first Black governor on the Federal Reserve Board.

Baldwin voted for confirmation while Johnson voted against confirming her to the board that plays an important role in setting the central bank's monetary policies. Vice President Kamala Harris cast the tie-breaker in the 51-50 vote Tuesday night.

Baldwin told WisPolitics.com she was happy to vote in favor of the confirmation.

"Dr. Cook is a highly qualified economist who has an understanding that workers create economic growth for our country," she said. "I was proud to vote for her confirmation and stand on the side of history that is 109 years in the making."

Cook also served on the White House Council of Economic Advisers in the Obama

administration.

[See the roll call.](#)

— Tiffany was the only member of Wisconsin’s House delegation to vote against a \$40 billion aid package for Ukraine.

The bill, which cleared the chamber 368-57, next heads to the Senate. Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., has promised quick action on the legislation.

Tiffany was one of just 10 votes against a different Ukraine aid package last month. Like then, he said he opposed last night’s vote because the U.S. government shouldn’t be spending “billions for an overseas conflict when working-class Americans are struggling to find baby formula at their local grocery store and their paychecks are being wiped out by record gas prices and the worst inflation in 40 years.”

Dems dropped a proposal from the package to include \$10 billion in additional COVID-19 relief funding to help win over Republicans.

[See more here.](#)

[See the roll call.](#)

[See Tiffany’s statement.](#)

[See Kind’s statement.](#)

— U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore introduced a bill aimed at breaking down barriers to human trafficking research and data sharing to improve efforts to stop the criminal activity.

The Milwaukee Dem in a press release said a lack of basic data and information about human trafficking is preventing law enforcement and researchers from accessing all possible tools to combat human trafficking. She also said she looks forward to bringing legislation to the House floor that would help those fighting human trafficking stay ahead of traffickers.

“Human trafficking is happening communities across the country including Milwaukee targeting some of the most vulnerable people in our society, including,

women, children, and undocumented immigrants,” she said.

The bill also includes provisions to protect victims and survivors’ privacy, confidentiality and security.

[See the release.](#)

— U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher introduced a bill that would bar President Biden from suspending repayment of federal student loans except under certain circumstances.

The Allouez Republican in a press release said he introduced the Stop Reckless Student Loan Actions Act to stop what he called Biden’s abuse of executive power. The legislation would allow the president to temporarily suspend repayment for low- and middle-income borrowers during national emergencies while barring the president from outright cancelling outstanding debts.

“The idea that the President can wave a wand and cancel student debt is constitutional craziness,” Gallagher said. “To do so would exacerbate the price of higher education, disproportionately benefit the most affluent Americans, and unfairly punish each parent who sacrificed and saved for their kids’ education, not to mention those who’ve already paid off their loans.”

[See the release.](#)

- Dem Dick Ausman announced his bid for Tiffany’s 7th CD seat.

Ausman joins two other candidates vying for the Minocqua Republican’s seat: Republican Dave Kunelius; and Federalist George Kellogg.

Ausman in a release said he decided to run due to his “frustration” with Tiffany, who he said “prioritizes corporations, millionaires, and special interests while folks at home are left to pay the price.”

[See the release.](#)

— Dem U.S. Senate candidate Tom Nelson announced the first TV ad of his campaign, knocking taxpayer subsidies that helped build the Milwaukee Bucks’ arena.

The spot doesn't mention Alex Lasry or Mandela Barnes by name. Still, Lasry's father is a billionaire hedge fund manager and co-owner of the Bucks, while Barnes voted for the subsidy package when he was a member of the state Assembly.

Nelson's campaign said the ad will run on TNT as the cable network broadcasts games four and five of the Eastern Conference semifinals. The campaign said it was a four-figure buy.

[See the ad.](#)

[See the release.](#)

— The liberal not-for-profit group Majority Forward launched a statewide ad criticizing U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson for “phony baloney policies” on trade relations with China.

The buy is part of a \$2.7 million ad campaign and will be featured on broadcast, cable, satellite and digital platforms.

The ad shows a man shopping in a grocery store as prices steadily increase.

“Senator Ron Johnson voted against cracking down on China with higher tariffs and tougher trade deals and even voted against punishing China for manipulating its currency,” a voiceover says. “No wonder everything keeps going up and up and up. Senator Johnson — stop making it easier on China and tougher on us.”

[See the ad.](#)

[See the Majority Forward Release.](#)

Posts of the week

Congratulations Alexandra from Wind Point on winning the 2022 Congressional Art Competition! [#WI01 pic.twitter.com/r4MSYvLBJM](#)

— Bryan Steil (@RepBryanSteil) [May 9, 2022](#)

Poor Dems. First they attack my pro growth and pro Wisconsin tax cuts and ridiculously blame me for inflation.

Then they send in [@POTUS](#) who can't get my name right.

Dems can't get anything right, and we're all suffering because of it.

— Senator Ron Johnson (@SenRonJohnson) [May 10, 2022](#)

Drumroll, please... I'm excited to announce the winners of my office's annual Congressional Art Competition!

Thank you to all the talented young artists who submitted original works, and congratulations to this year's winners. [pic.twitter.com/C7ij2jWbs](#)

— Rep. Mark Pocan (@RepMarkPocan) [May 10, 2022](#)

I had a great visit to the Sheboygan Water Utility with Mayor [@RyanSorensonWI](#) and other local officials to highlight the \$2 million in federal funding I delivered to provide safe drinking water to Sheboygan, Sheboygan Falls and Kohler. [pic.twitter.com/M742PpClZn](#)

— Sen. Tammy Baldwin (@SenatorBaldwin) [May 9, 2022](#)

Last week, Rep. Gallagher spent part of his day at his favorite place: Kwik Trip. He was grateful for the opportunity to learn the ins and outs of the convenience store industry, and even got a chance to work the register as well. [pic.twitter.com/lt15N5KWMr](#)

— Rep. Gallagher Press Office (@RepGallagher) [May 9, 2022](#)

Working in a bipartisan manner is essential to moving our nation forward and tackling the issues facing all Americans.

I'm proud that the nonpartisan Lugar Center just ranked me as one of the Top 20 most bipartisan members of the House and the #1 most bipartisan from Wisconsin. pic.twitter.com/rnK7kuNVDz

— Archive: Rep. Ron Kind (@RepRonKind) [May 10, 2022](#)

ICYMI

[Sen. Tammy Baldwin visits Algoma to tout \\$19 million allocation for 110-year-old pier repair](#)

[Congressional candidate Derrick Van Orden fined for having a loaded gun in an airport. He calls the incident a mistake.](#)

[PolitiFact Wisconsin: Has inflation gone up every month under President Biden?](#)

[U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson says COVID-19 conference call comments taken out of context](#)

[360: Should student loan debt be erased? President Biden is considering the idea](#)