

# DC Wrap: Steil joins Dems to vote in favor of gay marriage protections

Posted on Thursday, Jul 21, 2022

Welcome to our weekly DC Wrap, where we write about Wisconsin's congressional delegation. Sign up here to receive the newsletter directly:

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## Quotes of the week

"Instead of fist-bumping Saudi royals halfway around the world, Joe Biden should fist-bump the overrun Border Patrol agents dealing with his own border crisis. But we all know he's too much of a coward to visit the southern border."

– U.S. Rep. Tom Tiffany, R-Minocqua, blasting President Biden for his visit to Saudi Arabia instead of focusing on border issues.

"If I was the entity on the other side of the aisle, I'd be more concerned when my own members accused it of having cocaine-fueled orgies than worrying about the morality of my marriage."

– U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, slamming Republicans who opposed a bill this week to codify the marriage equality for all genders. See more about the bill below.

## This week's news

**— U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil, of Janesville, was the only Republican House member from Wisconsin who voted to pass legislation that would codify the right to same-sex marriage.**

The Respect for Marriage Act passed yesterday 267-157, with 47 Republicans voting in favor. U.S. Reps. Ron Kind, D-La Crosse, Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, and Gwen Moore, D-Milwaukee all voted to pass the measure.

The bill would repeal the Defense of Marriage Act in the event the U.S. Supreme Court overturns decisions that established the right to same-sex marriage in all 50 states.

Under the Defense of Marriage Act, same-sex married couples couldn't receive many of the same benefits as straight couples under the law. The law is no longer in effect after the Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional.

The legislation would also require that individuals be considered married if the marriage was valid in the state it was performed in — a measure that also aims to protect interracial couples — and add additional legal protections for married couples.

Pocan in a floor speech ahead of the vote said he wants his husband to be able to visit him if he is in the hospital and to share his retirement and social security benefits.

"I want to make sure that my husband is taken care of just like your spouses are taken care of," he said.

U.S. Rep. Tom Tiffany in a statement on his no vote said House Democrats were attempting to distract Americans from inflation, gas prices, and more.

"This legislation is nothing more than a cheap attempt to fearmonger Americans into believing that every Supreme Court decision is under threat," the Minocqua Republican said.

Tiffany noted Justice Samuel Alito said nothing in his majority opinion overturning *Roe v. Wade* should cast doubt on precedents other than abortion.

Dems have voiced concerns over Justice Clarence Thomas' opinion, in which he called to revisit a decision that legalized same-sex marriage across the country.

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin has introduced a companion bill in the Senate.

"If you are a Senator who supports marriage equality then you will support our bipartisan Respect for Marriage Act to protect this freedom and right for same-sex and interracial marriages," the Madison Dem said in a tweet. "Let's stand together and protect the progress we have made."

[See the bill.](#)

[See the House roll call.](#)

[See Baldwin's tweet.](#)

**— The U.S. Senate in a procedural motion voted to move forward on a more than \$50 billion bill to boost domestic semiconductor chip production as House Republicans express reservations.**

The Senate 64-34 approved the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors Act with U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson voting against. U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Madison, has been working on the CHIPS Act. The measure is meant to reduce the nation's reliance on semiconductor imports. While lawmakers work to prepare the final text, Baldwin has been working to fund the measure aimed at increasing American semiconductor research, development and production with \$52 billion.

Johnson told reporters in D.C. the funding amounts to "corporate welfare" and he may try to stall the process with a procedural objection.

U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher spokesman Jordan Dunn told WisPolitics.com the Allouez Republican for months has been requesting more safeguards to ensure recipients don't spend the funds on expanding semiconductor production in China.

"The latest version of "CHIPS Plus" takes important steps forward in this regard, and Rep. Gallagher hopes there will be opportunities to further strengthen these guardrails as the legislation moves forward," he said.

[See the roll call.](#)

**— Johnson this week criticized Biden's nomination of Perkins Coie attorney Sopen Shah to be the next U.S. Attorney in the Western District of Wisconsin as a partisan move after she blasted Johnson in several deleted tweets.**

The Oshkosh Republican and Baldwin in 2021 recommended Shah for the position.

Johnson in a press release said Biden's pick demonstrated her partisanship in deleted tweets where she and others criticized Johnson and other Republicans. Johnson added partisan picks are proving the nation no longer has equal justice and he won't support Shah's nomination.

"With each passing day, it is becoming more obvious that we no longer have equal

justice being administered in America,” Johnson said. “Instead, we have a two-tiered justice system — one that protects Democrats and their elite backers, and one for the rest of America.”

Baldwin told WisPolitics.com Shah is highly qualified for the job and blasted Johnson for disrespecting the process.

“Last year, Senator Johnson and I recommended her to the White House and now he is once again obstructing his own recommendation to the President,” Baldwin said. “Senator Johnson is disrespecting the work of our Nominating Commission and abusing the Senate’s Blue Slip process to play his own personal politics about the 2020 election that Trump lost.”

[See the Johnson release.](#)

[See some of Shah’s deleted tweets provided by Johnson’s office.](#)

[See the joint recommendation statement.](#)

**— Tiffany this week called on Gov. Tony Evers to enact a moratorium on closing coal-fired power plants to avoid blackouts.**

Officials with the Midwest Independent System Operator last month warned of possible blackouts and brownouts over the summer. MISO manages the power grid across the Midwest.

Meanwhile Public Service Commission Commissioner Ellen Nowak said blackouts and brownouts are highly unlikely unless a combination of severe issues occur.

Tiffany in a letter to Evers said Wisconsinites are already feeling the pain at the pump and when they pay their electricity bill.

“The fact that Wisconsinites are now facing the prospect of third-world-style rolling blackouts thanks to government policies that favor unreliable, intermittent power sources only adds insult to injury,” Tiffany said.

[See the release.](#)

**— Johnson finished June with \$3.6 million in his personal campaign account, more than his top four Dem rivals’ cash on hand combined.**

Johnson reported to the FEC he raised almost \$6.2 million through his personal account, including nearly \$1.8 million transferred from other committees. He spent more than \$6.2 million over the three-month period.

His fundraising hit \$7 million with his leadership PAC factored in.

U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin, who's up for reelection in 2024, finished June with more than \$2.5 million in the bank.

The Madison Dem reported \$665,871 in receipts and \$605,974 in expenses over the three-month period.

[See Johnson's report.](#)

[See Baldwin's report.](#)

**— Republican 3rd CD candidate Derrick Van Orden outraised his Dem opponents with \$807,607 in his bid for retiring U.S. Rep. Ron Kind's 3rd CD seat.**

Van Orden spent \$700,218 and has \$1.9 million in the bank, more than three times his Dem opponents' cash on hand combined.

The former Navy SEAL also listed \$355,648 in debts and obligations, including \$35,555 accumulated during the second quarter.

A spokesman for the Van Orden campaign declined to comment on why the debts had not been paid, instead touting Van Orden's fundraising numbers.

Meanwhile in the Dem field, former CIA officer and Army Capt. Deb McGrath raised the most at \$192,623. McGrath spent \$275,775 and reported \$152,569 cash on hand. McGrath also donated \$13,570 to her own campaign.

Eau Claire businesswoman Rebecca Cooke raised \$152,569. She spent \$116,467 and had \$186,738 in her warchest.

Sen. Brad Pfaff, D-Onalaska, listed \$129,499 in total receipts and spent \$148,764. That leaves him with \$249,405 cash on hand — the most among Dems in the race. Donations to Pfaff include \$1,000 from Kind, who has endorsed his campaign, and \$500 from Kind's wife, Tawni.

La Crosse Ald. Mark Neumann's report shows he raised \$17,524 over the past six months. He spent \$28,616 and had \$2,301 in his warchest. Neumann also reported debts of \$11,696.

[See Van Orden's report.](#)

[See McGrath's report.](#)

[See Cooke's report.](#)

[See Pfaff's report.](#)

[See Neumann's report.](#)

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

At last night's vigil, we gathered to remember the community members lost to COVID-19. It's so important for us to come together during this time of crisis and honor their precious memories. I will always be here for our community and our residents. [pic.twitter.com/YiFwqDrKy9](https://pic.twitter.com/YiFwqDrKy9)

— Rep. Gwen Moore (@RepGwenMoore) [July 18, 2022](#)

Our Border Patrol officers are overwhelmed and struggling to keep up with the record breaking number of migrants crossing our southern border.

We admire your dedication to keeping American families safe. Thank you for your commitment to protecting our nation's security.  
[pic.twitter.com/rNI6M14gE8](https://pic.twitter.com/rNI6M14gE8)

— Senator Ron Johnson (@SenRonJohnson) [July 18, 2022](#)

The Appropriations Committee has a way of making order out of chaos. Special thanks to @RepKClark for helping me explain that chaos during this week's [#MagicMonday!](https://twitter.com/6AuKegkbVZ) [pic.twitter.com/6AuKegkbVZ](https://pic.twitter.com/6AuKegkbVZ)

— Rep. Mark Pocan (@RepMarkPocan) [July 18, 2022](https://twitter.com/RepMarkPocan/status/1550000000000000000)

The ribs, live music, and rides at the Ribfest in Elkhorn can't be beat! [pic.twitter.com/vqf7ThICIW](https://pic.twitter.com/vqf7ThICIW)

— Bryan Steil (@RepBryanSteil) [July 18, 2022](https://twitter.com/RepBryanSteil/status/1550000000000000000)

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— Rep. Gwen Moore (@RepGwenMoore) [July 18, 2022](https://twitter.com/RepGwenMoore/status/1550000000000000000)

As an advocate for individuals with disabilities, I was thrilled to meet with the folks from the Disability Service Providers Network and hear about their efforts to support communities and families across Wisconsin. [pic.twitter.com/yQh95DeC6u](https://pic.twitter.com/yQh95DeC6u)

— Rep. Glenn Grothman (@RepGrothman) [July 20, 2022](https://twitter.com/RepGrothman/status/1550000000000000000)

## ***ICYMI***

[Congressman Grothman Reports June Had the Worst Southern Border Numbers on Record](#)

['Chips-plus' bill passage could slip to next week in Senate](#)

[Efforts renewed to rename post office for heroes](#)

[A Tammy Baldwin Initiative Has Provided a Makeover and Big Improvements to a Hotline for Americans Facing a Crisis](#)

[WI Sen. Baldwin to play key role in marriage equality bill](#)

[FDA commissioner announces review of food and tobacco programs amid criticism](#)

[Outside a gas station, Republican U.S. Rep. Bryan Steil hopes to win over a Democratic city](#)