

Week ending 02/26/2017 - PA-08 MoCTrack Report #1

MoC Twitter action

Senator Bob Casey - he tweets all day long. His hot topics are:

- 1) his support of the Community Economic Assistance Act (11 tweets)
- 2) his objections to the repeal of the ACA (10 tweets)
- 3) his concerns about the Russia scandal, and his support of a special prosecutor (7 tweets)

Also, I would note that Casey spends a lot of time retweeting Donald Trump tweets, and then posting his objections to whatever statements the President has made. He did this on a variety of topics, but did it at least 10 times.

Representative Brian Fitzpatrick - does not tweet often, but maintains a daily presence. His hot topics are:

- 1) the opioid epidemic and his attempts to combat it (6 tweets)
- 2) his support of a water safety bill (2 tweets)
- 3) his support of tax code reform (2 tweets)

Fitzpatrick makes a point of sending out lots of local, congratulatory tweets as well. I do not count these in hot topics.

Senator Pat Toomey - he rarely tweets. Both of his tweets this week referenced Tuesdays with Toomey. He posted images from his meetings with the Harrisburg and Pittsburg groups.

Legislation of Interest

With Congress in recess, there was not much movement, so I will focus on a few bills that came up in the previous week. I make a point of focusing the majority of my tracking on bills that are in the Committees in which our MoCs are members.

H.J. Res. 75 - The War Powers Amendment of 2017

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hjres75/text>

This was introduced by Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) on 02/15/17. It was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and Brian Fitzpatrick is a member. It is a very long bill, but it can be best summed up by a quote from the beginning where the author states he wants to change the existing War Powers Act "to fulfill the intent of the framers of the Constitution of the United States and ensure that the collective judgment of both the Congress and the President..." are needed to commit US troops and funding to war efforts. Right now the Congress has been avoiding their responsibility under the Constitution to declare war, and have left it to the President to commit forces. This would strengthen the role of the Congress and take back Constitutionally mandated tasks that they have ceded to the Executive.

H.R. 1059 - "To provide for Congressional oversight of actions to waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions with respect to the Russian Federation"

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr1059/text>

This was introduced by Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) on 02/15/17. It was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and Brian Fitzpatrick is a member. In light of Michael Flynn's actions in relation to the Russian Ambassador and the inappropriate discussion of sanctions by Trump's team during the Obama administration, something along the lines of this bill would prohibit the President from removing the sanctions on Russia without the approval of Congress.

H.R. 387 - The Email Privacy Act

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr387/text>

This act passed the House via a voice vote (passed unanimously at that) and is awaiting scheduling in the Senate. Right now, despite the provisions of the 4th amendment against search and seizure, if any part of law enforcement wants access to any private person's email that is over 180 days old, they simply have to provide a subpoena to the Internet Service Provider to get those emails. In that way, old emails are treated under the law kind of like garbage bags that one has put outside their house - police don't need a warrant to search that stuff. This Act would fix that, and require law enforcement to get a warrant to acquire emails older than 180 days from a service provider. (Emails under 180 days currently require a warrant for law enforcement review.)

S. 365/S. 370/S. 387 - Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Accountability Act of 2017 et al.

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s365/text>

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s370/text>

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s387/text>

These are some of the many bills designed to neuter or repeal the Bureau for Consumer Financial Protection. They have been referred to the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, of which Pat Toomey is a member. Considering the services that this organization provides (from their website - "We aim to make consumer financial markets work for consumers, responsible providers, and the economy as a whole. We protect consumers from unfair, deceptive, or abusive practices and take action against companies that break the law. We arm people with the information, steps, and tools that they need to make smart financial decisions."), the dismantling of this office would harm everyone except corporations.

S. 408 - the Presidential Trade Transparency Act of 2017

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s408/text>

This was introduced by Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) and sent to the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee on 02/16/17, of which Pat Toomey is a member. It is an attempt to allow the public to assess the level of financial conflicts of interest that the president might be subject to.