

Week ending 04/30/2017 - PA-08 MoCTrack Report

Tracking Congress in the Age of Trump - 04/30/17

The lower the number, the more the legislator is in opposition to the Trump agenda.

Senator Bob Casey - **27%** (+1.3% from last week)

Representative Brian Fitzpatrick - **80.8%** (+0.8% from last week)

Senator Pat Toomey - **100%** (no change from last week)

MoC Twitter Action

The Members of Congress are back in DC, and they were all busy on Twitter.

Senator Bob Casey hot topics:

- 1) Aging Committee - The Senator participated in a hearing about social isolation and its effects on the elderly. (6 tweets)
- 2) Environment/Climate Change - In support of the people who marched this past weekend, the Senator tweeted out a series of images and statistics related to the human effects on the climate and how it is projected to deteriorate. (6 tweets)
- 3) Trump's first 100 days - In his words, the Senator tweeted about "100 days of broken promises". (5 tweets)

Representative Brian Fitzpatrick hot topics:

- 1) INTERDICT Act - The Representative was a co-sponsor of this bill, designed to help Customs intercept fentanyl, synthetic opioids and other drugs at the border and he tweeted about it almost every day last week. (7 tweets)
- 2) Gerrymandering - He co-sponsored a resolution that, if passed, would have the House support ending partisan redistricting. (2 tweets)
- 3) Safe disposal of unused or expired prescriptions - An event was held last week, and the Representative sent out a pair of reminders. (2 tweets)

Senator Pat Toomey hot topics:

- 1) Trump tax plan - The Senator wrote about his anticipation for the coming plan early in the week, then released a statement about the plan, and finally promoted two appearances on Squawk box about it. (4 tweets)
- 2) VA Accountability Office - He tweeted his support of the new office, created by President Trump via an Executive Order. (1 tweet)

All other tweets were thanks, local issues or self promotion.

Legislation of Interest

I hope to have an expanded version of this section next week, but since I was out of town, I am still catching up on all the bills that were introduced this past week. Instead, I will focus on the two bills that Representative Brian Fitzpatrick co-sponsored and heavily promoted this week.

H.R. 2142 - The INTERDICT (International Narcotics Trafficking Emergency Response by Detecting Incoming Contraband with Technology) Act

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr2142/text>

This bill was introduced by Rep. Niki Tsongas (D-MA) and Rep. Fitzpatrick is the only co-sponsor. It would provide funding to Customs and Border Enforcement so that they could expand the use chemical screening devices (and appropriate scientific personnel) to intercept fentanyl, synthetic opioids and other drugs entering the country. This bill is currently pending in the House Homeland Security Committee where Rep. Fitzpatrick is a member.

H.Res 283 - Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that congressional redistricting should be reformed to remove political gerrymandering

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hres283/text>

This resolution was introduced by Rep. Alan Lowenthal (D-CA) and Rep. Fitzpatrick is the only co-sponsor. Just a reminder, but resolutions are much like position statements - they do not have the force of law, but instead "express the sense of the House" if they are passed. So, while it is useful that members of the two parties are trying to get their fellow Representatives to say that "gerrymandering" or partisan redistricting, where lawmakers choose their constituents instead of citizens choosing their representatives, is bad... it is more of a symbol than constructive action. On the other hand, there is not much else they can do, because the power to change the processes related to elections, and thus redistricting, lies in the control of individual states, not the federal government. This resolution is pending in the House Judiciary Committee, and Rep. Fitzpatrick is NOT a member. Republican Rep. Tom Marino of PA-10 is one of the members, so if you have any friends or family in Williamsport, the Poconos, or other parts of this coincidentally gerrymandered district, maybe let them know about it?