

Week ending 05/07/2017 - PA-08 MoCTrack Report

Tracking Congress in the Age of Trump - 05/07/17

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

Senator Bob Casey - **28.2%** (+1.2% from last week)

Representative Brian Fitzpatrick - **75.9%** (-4.9% from last week)

Senator Pat Toomey - **97.4%** (-2.6% from last week)

This is more change than we have seen since we started recording these numbers. The FiveThirtyEight website does list what votes they "score" to get these numbers. Rep. Fitzpatrick's vote against the AHCA and Rep. Toomey's vote against the spending bill caused their numbers to fall, while Casey's vote for that same spending bill caused his number to rise.

MoC Twitter Action

Senator Bob Casey hot topics:

- 1) the American Health Care Act (AHCA) - The Senator blasted out several tweetstorms. One showed how premiums will increase for Pennsylvanians with various pre-existing conditions, another listed the ways that PA will be hurt by the bill, and yet another was a collection of pull-quotes from various medical professional and stakeholder organizations about the potential negative effects of the bill, if passed in its current form. (69 tweets)
- 2) Deported Honduran Mother and 5-year-old child from Berks County - He shared the emotional story of the mother and child who fled gang violence, and how the Trump Administration was doing nothing to stop their deportation, despite neither having been guilty of a crime other than border crossing. He tweeted the entire process of their deportation throughout the day. (41 tweets)
- 3) Mine workers - He noted that the spending bill included text and funds to provide benefits to mine workers and former workers. (6 tweets)

Representative Brian Fitzpatrick hot topics:

- 1) Small Business week - In honor of the week, the Representative tweeted out facts and statistics about small businesses, like the percentage of US workers employed by them. (11 tweets)
- 2) Syrian Civilian Safety Act - A bill on this topic passed in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House and should move into scheduling for a full House vote. (2 tweets)
- 3) Water safety - For some time he has promoted spending to permit more study of potential water contamination left behind by military bases. He tweeted that the spending bill included text and funds related to this topic. (1 tweet)

Senator Pat Toomey hot topics:

- 1) Tax reform - The Senator retweeted a link to a Bloomberg News op-ed he wrote (1 tweet)
- 2) The government spending bill - He voted against the bill, and issued a statement explaining why. He had concerns about the speed of passage, and that there was not enough time to review the 1,000+ pages. (1 tweet)
- 3) Gun reform - He met with a group to discuss "common sense gun legislation" to help make communities safe (1 tweet)

Mr. Toomey also shared an opinion piece about newly introduced legislation that would allow private sector workers to have the same access to comp time/flex time that government workers do. The interesting thing about this tweet is that after a bit of investigation, it seems to be a compliment to Senator Casey, who introduced the referenced legislation... but the tweet did not note that fact.

Votes of Interest

H.R. 244 - The Consolidated Appropriations Act

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr244/text>

This is the spending bill that was discussed so much this past week. It did incorporate some parts of the Trump Budget, but not to the extent that the Administration wanted (example - the Administration wanted the EPA budget cut by +30% - this bill cut the EPA budget by 1%). It does not include any money for the

building of the southern border wall.
Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick - voted yes
Sen. Bob Casey - voted yes
Sen. Pat Toomey - voted no

H.R. 1628 - The American Health Care Act of 2017

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr1628/text>

Please note that the above link is to the bill as it existed as of March 20th. The bill in its current form was passed out of the House so quickly that the updated text has not yet been published to tracking websites. This bill is now heading into the Senate. It has not been assigned to a committee yet, but there is a possibility it will go to the HELP Committee (Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, and Senator Casey is a member of that committee.

Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick - voted no (one of only 20 Republicans who did so)

H.R. 657 - Follow the Rules Act

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr657/text>

This bill was introduced by Rep. Sean Duffy (R-WI), with bipartisan cosponsors. The Whistleblower Protection Act (WPA) generally provides protections for federal employees who make disclosures evidencing illegal or improper government activities. But a court recently found that as currently written, the existing law only protects employees who won't break the law. This bill would change the existing law to extend whistleblower protections for federal employees who refuse to violate rules and regulations. In the current bureaucratic environment where word is leaking from agencies that the Trump Administration is moving to redirect career staffers to make changes, protections like this bill could stymie the Trumpist agenda. This bills passed the House and is moving to the Senate.

Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick - voted yes

Legislation of Interest

H.R. 2368 - To authorize the use of experimental drugs, biological products and devices by patients diagnosed with a terminal illness in accordance with State law

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/hr2368>

This bill was introduced by our own Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and it has bipartisan co-sponsors. The text of the bill is not available yet, but once it is, I have no doubt this bill will be called "The Right to Try Act." Rep. Fitzpatrick has discussed and tweeted about this topic in the past. He wants people with terminal illnesses to have a greater opportunity to volunteer to use experimental treatments.

S. 997 - A bill to permit employees to request, and to ensure employers consider requests for, flexible work terms and conditions

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/s997>

This bill was introduced by our own Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA). I believe this is the bill that Senator Toomey was referencing in his complimentary tweet. I am following this bill mostly because it is one of the only times I have seen any level of amity between our two Senators. It is currently pending in the HELP Committee, where Sen. Casey is a member.

S. Res. 150 - A resolution recognizing threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world and reaffirming freedom of the press as a priority in efforts of the United States Government to promote democracy and good governance

<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/115/sres150/text>

This resolution was introduced by our own, clearly busy Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA) and it has bipartisan co-sponsors, including Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL). If you will please excuse my blatant cheerleading for this one... I can imagine no bigger legislative insult to the Donald Trump, Sean Spicer and Kellyanne Conway and their obnoxious "fake news" tweetings and blatherings than to have the Senate pass this resolution. That it managed to get a Republican co-sponsor with the name recognition of Marco Rubio on the day after its introduction lends me some hope that it might get some traction. It is heading to the

Senate Foreign Relations committee, and we do not have a PA member of that committee. But perhaps we can call Senator Casey to thank him for this one? And maybe even call Senator Toomey and ask if he supports freedom of the press, and when his staffer says "of course," we can follow up with "then he should co-sponsor this resolution, Senator Marco Rubio already has!"