

Pennsylvania Member of Congress Tracking Report - 01/06/19

Tracking Congress in the Age of Trump

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

Member of Congress	This week's score
PA Senator Bob Casey (D)	32.10%
PA Senator Pat Toomey (R)	88.90%
PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)	0.00%
PA-02 Rep. Brendan Boyle (D)	0.00%
PA-03 Rep. Dwight Evans (D)	0.00%
PA-04 Rep. Madeleine Dean (D)	0.00%
PA-05 Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon (D)	0.00%
PA-06 Rep. Chrissy Houlihan (D)	0.00%
PA-07 Rep. Susan Wild (D)	0.00%
PA-08 Rep. Matt Cartwright (D)	0.00%
PA-09 Rep. Dan Meuser (R)	100.00%
PA-10 Rep. Scott Perry (R)	100.00%
PA-11 Rep. Lloyd Smucker (R)	100.00%
PA-12 Rep. Tom Marino (R)	100.00%
PA-13 Rep. John Joyce (R)	100.00%
PA-14 Rep. Guy Reschenthaler (R)	100.00%
PA-15 Rep. Glenn W. Thompson (R)	100.00%
PA-16 Rep. Mike Kelly (R)	100.00%
PA-17 Rep. Conor Lamb (D)	0.00%
PA-18 Rep. Mike Doyle (D)	0.00%

Nate Silver's [FiveThirtyEight website](#) assesses the voting records of our MoCs to provide this index, by comparing any bills where President Trump has stated a position, and comparing the vote of the legislator to that opinion. On the website, the House scores all start from scratch, whereas the Senate scores are continued from the last Congress. There were only two votes scored this week, both from the House's efforts to end the shutdown.

Words From Our Founders

I use the website www.founders.archives.gov to confirm that any quotes I use for this segment are indeed the words of our nation's founders as verified by scholars, and not just some convenient [internet meme](#) that someone whipped up. When I went to check on the quote I had chosen for this week, I saw this...



Government Shutdown

Due to the shutdown of the Federal Government, National Archives facilities are closed, websites and social media are not being updated or monitored, and activities are canceled, with some exceptions. Check [Archives.gov](https://www.archives.gov) for details.

Don't Show Again Close

Accordingly, in solidarity with the “non-essential” staff in nation’s Archives, our weekly quote section will be on hiatus until the shutdown ends.

Votes of Interest

Election of the Speaker

House Vote

The first vote of a new Congress is to elect the Speaker of the House. Nancy Pelosi won that election, winning 220 votes, while the new Minority Leader, California Republican Rep. Kevin McCarthy, received 192 votes. There had been some question about whether GOP members of the [Problem Solvers Caucus](#) might defect and vote for Pelosi, who agreed to some of their “End the Gridlock” rules package, but that did not come to pass. There were 22 representatives who chose candidates other than the two major party offerings, and only 2 came from Pennsylvania’s congressional delegation. PA-17’s Rep. Conor Lamb, who made [campaign promises](#) to not support Pelosi, chose Rep. Joe Kennedy III instead. PA-10’s Scott Perry, who [reportedly](#) has hopes of leading the Freedom Caucus, chose his fellow caucus member Rep. Jim Jordan despite the [abuse scandal](#) that has followed Jordan for the past year.

McCarthy	R	Fitzpatrick, Brian	PA 1st
Pelosi	D	Boyle, Brendan	PA 2nd
Pelosi	D	Evans, Dwight	PA 3rd
Pelosi	D	Dean, Madeleine	PA 4th
Pelosi	D	Scanlon, Mary	PA 5th
Pelosi	D	Houlahan, Chrissy	PA 6th
Pelosi	D	Wild, Susan	PA 7th
Pelosi	D	Cartwright, Matthew	PA 8th
McCarthy	R	Meuser, Daniel	PA 9th
Jordan	R	Perry, Scott	PA 10th
McCarthy	R	Smucker, Lloyd	PA 11th
McCarthy	R	Marino, Tom	PA 12th
McCarthy	R	Joyce, John	PA 13th
McCarthy	R	Reschenthaler, Guy	PA 14th
McCarthy	R	Thompson, Glenn	PA 15th
McCarthy	R	Kelly, Mike	PA 16th

Kennedy		Lamb, Conor	PA 17th
Pelosi		Doyle, Mike	PA 18th

Adopting the Rules of the House

House Vote

This vote from January 3, 2018 was for the majority of the rules package that will dictate the proceedings in the House for the next two years. Among the key features of this set of rules that differ from the GOP's rule packages of previous congresses are:

- There must be at least one committee hearing prior to a bill coming to the floor (as of 03/01/19)
- Bills must be posted for 72 hours prior to a floor vote
- Once a budget resolution is adopted, the debt ceiling would automatically be raised
- The resident commissioner of Puerto Rico will have limited voting rights
- Members indicted for certain felonies are required to resign from leadership until they are cleared
- All members have to undergo ethics training, annually

Most of PA's representatives voted along party lines. But *Roll Call reports* that this vote marks the first time since 2001 that members of the minority party voted for the rules package. Three GOP representatives from around the country, including PA-01's Brian Fitzpatrick, supported these changes.

To mark the occasion, Fitzpatrick issued a [press release](#), which stated:

Today, I upheld my commitment to the principles set by the Problem Solvers Caucus and I voted to support the House rules package. Under the new rules, bills with broad bipartisan support will be considered quickly and more transparently. I am hopeful these new rules create a more effective and bipartisan institution.

Yea		Fitzpatrick, Brian	PA 1st
Yea		Boyle, Brendan	PA 2nd
Yea		Evans, Dwight	PA 3rd
Yea		Dean, Madeleine	PA 4th
Yea		Scanlon, Mary	PA 5th
Yea		Houlahan, Chrissy	PA 6th
Yea		Wild, Susan	PA 7th
Yea		Cartwright, Matthew	PA 8th
Nay		Meuser, Daniel	PA 9th
Nay		Perry, Scott	PA 10th
No Vote		Smucker, Lloyd	PA 11th
Nay		Marino, Tom	PA 12th
Nay		Joyce, John	PA 13th

Nay	R	<u>Reschenthaler, Guy</u>	PA 14th
Nay	R	<u>Thompson, Glenn</u>	PA 15th
Nay	R	<u>Kelly, Mike</u>	PA 16th
Yea	D	<u>Lamb, Conor</u>	PA 17th
Yea	D	<u>Doyle, Mike</u>	PA 18th

An Attempt to Reopen the Department of Homeland Security

House Vote

This vote to reopen the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is one half of a pair of bills to end the partial government shutdown. It offers short term funding, through February 8, 2019, and would provide time for a longer-term package to be negotiated without the unpaid government staffers being held hostage during the talks. This bill passed the House on January 3, 2019, in a 239-192 vote. Five Republicans broke ranks and voted with Democrats for this bill, including PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick.

Aye	R	<u>Fitzpatrick, Brian</u>	PA 1st
Aye	D	<u>Boyle, Brendan</u>	PA 2nd
Aye	D	<u>Evans, Dwight</u>	PA 3rd
Aye	D	<u>Dean, Madeleine</u>	PA 4th
Aye	D	<u>Scanlon, Mary</u>	PA 5th
Aye	D	<u>Houlahan, Chrissy</u>	PA 6th
Aye	D	<u>Wild, Susan</u>	PA 7th
Aye	D	<u>Cartwright, Matthew</u>	PA 8th
No	R	<u>Meuser, Daniel</u>	PA 9th
No	R	<u>Perry, Scott</u>	PA 10th
No Vote	R	<u>Smucker, Lloyd</u>	PA 11th
No	R	<u>Marino, Tom</u>	PA 12th
No	R	<u>Joyce, John</u>	PA 13th
No	R	<u>Reschenthaler, Guy</u>	PA 14th
No	R	<u>Thompson, Glenn</u>	PA 15th
No	R	<u>Kelly, Mike</u>	PA 16th

Aye	D	Lamb, Conor	PA 17th
Aye	D	Doyle, Mike	PA 18th

Trying to End the Shutdown...without wall funding

House Vote

This is the companion bill to the DHS funding vote described above, except this package funds the other federal agencies affected by the shutdown (ones not nearly as controversial as DHS) through September 30, 2019. This bill does not contain any funding for President Trump's wall on the southern border. This bill passed the house on January 3, 2018, with a vote of 241-190. For this vote, seven Republicans joined Democrats. But the Pennsylvania MoCs vote the same as they did on the prior bill (as a space saving measure, we're not going to put in another copy of that list of votes - just scroll up).

The issue now, of course, is the Senate. Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said the following, as [reported](#) by *The Hill*, "Leader [Mitch] McConnell (R-Ky.) should put them on the floor, where I believe they will receive strong bipartisan majorities. It's going to be very hard for a lot of Republicans to vote no on the same bills they supported just a few months ago." But as of 01/06/19, there was no indication Senate Majority Leader McConnell would bring this package up for a vote.

MoC Twitter Action

Senator Bob Casey hot topics: The senator opened the week expressing his concern about the departure of Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis. He then celebrated the opening of the 116th Congress by sharing videos from the swearing in ceremony. But the majority of his content this week centered on the shutdown stalemate, and Senate Majority Leader McConnell's unwillingness to bring House efforts to reopen government agencies to the floor for a vote. He did this, in part by citing previous votes for the exact legislation under consideration, noting that some came out of committee in the Senate with unanimous support, and passed the full Senate easily. He closed the week with thoughts on the wall, and included some [quotes](#) from former Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Gil Kerlikowske, who said that a full border wall "is probably not going to work."

Casey tweet of the week, 01/05/19: "President Trump doesn't seem to get it. He's not getting a concrete or steel wall along the width of the border- never, ever, ever, ever."

— part of a longer [thread](#) about immigration reform and border security, made in response to President Trump's [tweet](#) that read "The Democrats could solve the Shutdown problem in a very short period of time. All they have to do is approve REAL Border Security (including a Wall), something which everyone, other than drug dealers, human traffickers and criminals, want very badly! This would be so easy to do!"

Representative Brian Fitzpatrick hot topics: The representative shared only four tweets this week. The first celebrated the opening of the 116th Congress. Two tweets were shares of his press releases issued in conjunction with his [vote on the rules package](#) and his 'day one' [legislative priorities](#) (see the [Legislation of Interest](#) section for more on this topic). The final tweet was a response to the positive jobs report.

Fitzpatrick tweet of the week, 01/04/19: "Great news this morning as U.S. employers added the most workers in 10 months as wage gains accelerated and labor-force participation jumped."

— shared with a link to a [Bloomberg article](#) that showed December had an increase of 312,000 jobs

Senator Pat Toomey hot topics: The senator only shared three tweets this week. One congratulated all of the new or newly re-elected members of the Pennsylvania Congressional delegation, one sent thoughts and prayers to an injured member of the Highway Patrol, and his

final tweet included some self congratulatory sentiments regarding the economy, 'regulatory relief' and tax reform.

Toomey tweet of the week, 01/04/19: "The economy is the strongest it's been in decades. Over 300,000 new jobs in December, wages are growing at their fastest rate in years, & people who had given up hope in finding a job are rejoining the workforce. #TaxReform & regulatory relief are working!"

— shared with a link to a [Bloomberg article](#) about the recent jobs report (the same one cited above by Rep. Fitzpatrick)

Honorable mention, lawmaker

From @SenWhitehouse, (D-R.I.) on 01/02/19:

This is such bull***t.
First it was a hoax.
Then the science was uncertain.

Then we were "alarmists."
Then any fix was too expensive.
Now it will be fixed with "innovation."

— shared with a [link](#) to an article in *The Hill* titled "Republicans push 'innovation' as climate change solution"

Honorable mention, media

From [@SethAbramson](#), author of [Proof of Collusion](#), and master of the field of curated journalism, on 01/05/19:

"(THREAD) A couple days ago, MSNBC's @maddow presented compelling preliminary evidence that Trump gets intelligence and propaganda from Kremlin sources. Tonight I'll add to her report in a significant way by discussing the meeting pictured below. I hope you'll read on and retweet."

— this is the first of a [FIFTY TWEET THREAD](#) that is a must read for anyone interested in the Mueller investigation and the issue of President Trump's collusion with Russia

Honorable mention, constituent response

From @PhillyResistNOW on 01/04/19:

@SenToomey get in your tweets about your tax scam now before people start realizing that your scam involves messing with withholding and most of us will end up owing the IRS money come April. Great job. 2022 will be here soon. Try googling "resume writing help."

— tweeted in response to Sen. Toomey's [tweet of the week](#) about the jobs report

Casey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Kathy Sites

"I'm humbled by the opportunity to represent Pennsylvania in the U.S. Senate for another term. I will spend the 116th Congress fighting for middle-class families, children, workers, and seniors, to make sure that everyone has a fair shot at the American Dream."

— the senator's remarks upon his swearing in to the new 116th Congress as reported by [PAHomePage.com](#) in their article titled "[U.S. Senator Bob Casey Ready for Another Term in Office](#)"

"Instead of creating chaos, President Trump should support the bipartisan funding bill that the U.S. Senate passed unanimously yesterday. It provides over one billion dollars for border security funding, but not a wall that security experts say won't work."

— the senator's response to the current government shutdown as reported by *Allentown's WFMZ 69* in an article titled "[PA senators Toomey, Casey weigh in on government shutdown](#)"

"This decision is bad policy. I am going to oppose this vigorously. It is policy that shouldn't become law because it does nothing to move the country forward."

— from a *KYW News Radio* article titled "[Sen. Casey pushes back against proposed SNAP restrictions](#)"

"This decision only underscores that the Administration has no plan for Syria other than allowing Vladimir Putin to dictate U.S. policy. President Trump's Russia-first policy in the Middle East is harming U.S. national security."

— the senator's statement in response to the news that President Trump plans to remove troops from Syria, as reported by *kulturehub.com* in their article "[Trump announces that ISIS has been defeated... He's deadass wrong](#)"

Fitzpatrick in the News

"I'm not going to get involved in the games, our most basic function is to fund the government. We have to vote for what's in front of us and it's a binary choice ...you have to choose one or the other and trying to predict what the President or the Senate is going to do is an impossible analysis."

— the representative explains why he voted for the House spending bill from the end of the last Congress with \$5+ billion in wall funding, ensuring the government would endure a partial shutdown, from the *Washington Post* article titled "[Pelosi told Trump he didn't have the votes in the House. So what happened?](#)"

"I'm proud to cast my vote in support of the FIRST STEP Act with my fellow Problem Solvers Caucus members. As a former FBI agent, I understand criminal justice reform is critically important to reducing crime and recidivism. This bipartisan measure demonstrates our investment and confidence in our fellow Americans. While there is still more work to accomplish, this vote marks a generational shift towards a criminal justice system that establishes a more practical, efficient rehabilitative framework to keep communities safe. I appreciate the tireless work of bipartisan advocates, my colleagues, and members of the Administration who made today's positive outcome a reality."

— from an *Insider NJ* article titled "[Problem Solvers Caucus Applauds Passage of Bipartisan Criminal Justice Reform](#)"

"While I strongly believe that we must secure our border and fix our broken immigration system, Congress had plenty of opportunities to act and failed each time."

— from a late 2018 article in *WFMZ 69 Allentown* titled "[Partial government shutdown could continue into 2019](#)"

"I think the caucus will bring strength in numbers. Rather than us individually fighting in individual districts, we can have potentially a force-multiplier effect where we all come together."

— from a *WHYY* article titled "[Bucks County congressman seeks allies in water contamination battle](#)"

"I have not, and will not, vote to shut down the government. It's the basic duty of Congress to fund the federal government. Shutdowns disrupt government services, compromise national security, and cause uncertainty for federal employees."

— the representative's comments on his support for the latest spending bills (without the wall money), as reported in the *Allentown Morning Call* article titled "[Pennsylvania Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick will back House spending bill](#)"

"I believe that these ideas introduced today transcend political parties and strike at the heart of what our country needs: a rebirth of belief in our leaders and institutions so we can tackle the challenges we face and accomplish great things in this new era."

— [the representative's statement upon the introduction of his eight new pieces of legislation, as reported in the *Bucks Local News* article titled "Bucks County Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick sworn in, continues push for government reform, including term limits, transparency"](#)

"It is really going to give our community a platform to bring hometown witnesses down ... and give Bucks a front and center view."

— [from the *Bucks County Courier Times* article titled "Fitzpatrick focuses on new term; named heroin task force chair"](#)

Toomey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker

"In 2013, every Senate Democrat supported legislation to spend \$46 billion on border security and a wall. Now, many of these same lawmakers are balking about a bill that puts \$5 billion toward border security. For that reason, I am hopeful this impasse can be resolved soon."

— [an excerpt from the senator's statement on the shutdown, as reported in the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette* article titled "In Pa. delegation, shutdown draws pressure, spurs charges -- but no sign of an end"](#)

"In January, Americans will send a divided government to Washington. As we consider our legislative agenda for the next Congress, our first rule should be: do no harm. The American economy is the strongest we've seen in decades. Economic growth has accelerated, unemployment is at 3.7 percent, middle class wages are finally rising, and for the first time there are more job openings than there are people looking for a job. This is largely due to historic tax reform and regulatory relief that has been enacted over the past two years. We should make the expiring provisions of tax reform permanent and continue the regulatory reforms that helped get us here... Other areas where we have decent odds of making real progress include keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and the dangerously mentally ill; expanding opportunities for international trade; lowering the cost of health care; fighting opioid abuse; and modernizing the nation's aging infrastructure."

— [from an article in *The Times-Leader of Wilke-Barre* titled "Wishes for 2019: Leaders tell us their hopes, dreams"](#)

"If you read it closely, what it says is by the end of the century, the economic impact is tiny...we've got to weigh the cost of mitigation against whatever lost economic output there may be, and the people who are very worried about this don't think it's very much."

— [the senator's comments on a recent, alarming report on climate change, from a *WHYY* article titled "Heading into 2019, action on climate change divides GOP in Congress"](#)

"I don't think that Chairman Powell is in any danger of being fired by the president. Some of the president's comments have been unfortunate, but Chairman Powell is not going to let politics interfere with his decision making process."

— [the senator comments on the status of the Fed Chairman, from an article in *The Bond Buyer* titled "Trump team attempts to assure markets that Powell's job is safe"](#)

"The greatest asset we have is that most people around the world want to be allied with us... It's a force multiplier, it's a great ability to achieve our goals and I don't think the president shares that view nearly to the extent that the rest of us do, and I think senators need to step up and reassert a bigger role for the Senate in finding our foreign policy."

— [from a *Politico* article titled "Trump swipes at senators, Mattis over military alliances"](#)

Learning About Legislation - The Role of the Speaker of the House

In all of the reporting this week revolving around the selection of Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House, little space was given to what exactly goes into the job of the Speaker. In 2017 the Congressional Research Service produced a white paper titled [The Speaker of the House: House Officer, Party Leader, and Representative](#) that does an admirable job of outlining the history of the position. All of the quotes in this section are excerpted from that report.

The position of Speaker is one that is outlined in the [Constitution](#). Article I, Section 2 says “the House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers.” But the Constitution has nothing more to say about the position, and there was little discussion of the office during the Constitutional Convention. Because of this, the job as we know it today is mostly defined by precedent, and the responsibilities performed by previous speakers.

As the Leader of the House, the Speaker has the following powers and responsibilities:

- Administering the oath of office to Members;
- Calling the House to order;
- Preserving order and decorum within the chamber and in the galleries;
- Recognizing Members to speak and make motions;
- Deciding points of order;
- Counting a quorum;
- Presenting the pending business to the House for a vote;
- Appointing Speakers pro tempore and chairs of the Committee of the Whole;
- Certifying various actions of the House, including signing all acts and joint resolutions, writs, warrants, and subpoenas of (or issued to) the House;
- Appointing select and conference committees;
- Appointing certain House officers (such as the inspector general, the historian of the House, and the general counsel);
- Referring measures to committee(s);
- and Examining and approving the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day’s session.

Outside of those administrative roles as leader of the entire House, the Speaker also holds the responsibility of acting as the leader, and negotiating power, within her own political party. A big part of that involves the organization of the caucus into committees. The rules are slightly different for each of the parties, but for Democrats, “...a Speaker from that party would recommend (to the caucus) nominees for officers of the House. A Speaker’s prominence within the caucus is reinforced because he or she would chair the Steering and Policy Committee and appoint two vice-chairs, and up to 15 of the committee’s members. In addition, a Speaker would appoint one Member to the House Budget Committee. He or she would nominate the Democratic membership on the Committee on Rules and on the Committee on House Administration and recommend to the caucus a nominee for chair of these two committees. A Speaker of the Democratic Party also serves as a member of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and appoints eight of its members.”

Another major task is the management of the scheduling for the House. Depending on the rules voted upon at the start of each new Congress, the Speaker maintains all or most of the authority around what bills are brought to the floor for a vote. The CRS paper cites former Speaker Thomas (Tip) O’Neill, who observed “if [a Speaker] doesn’t want a certain bill to come up, it usually doesn’t.”

It has become a matter of precedent, however, that once a Member of Congress becomes Speaker, they no longer exercise any number of tasks that are the job of regular members. Specifically, “...it may be notable or even controversial when he or she exercises the powers granted to other Members, such as debating, voting, and sitting as a Member of a standing committee of the House.” While he was Vice President, Thomas Jefferson prepared a manual (titled, appropriately enough, *Jefferson’s Manual*) that has been included in the rules of the House. In that document, Jefferson noted (paraphrased by the CRS paper) “the Speaker is typically heard only on matters of order, and it is highly irregular to speak on any other matter while presiding.”

Lastly, the Speaker of the House is the second in the line of succession for the presidency, just after the Vice President.

Legislation of Interest

The first weeks of a new Congress are a time when Congresspeople re-submit old bills that never made it through the previous Congress. It is also a time when many choose to make political “day one” priorities in legislative form, statements of principle that they can turn to in months and years to come and say “I believe so strongly in Topic X, that on my first day in office I introduced legislation to address how Topic X affects our district...”

It will take several weeks to sort out which of these news bills have the potential to move forward, and which are just *day one* efforts. It is interesting, though, to review what topics each of our legislators saw fit to introduce as their first offerings in this new Congress. And keep in mind, with the glut of new incoming bills, the Congress.gov and Govtrack.us websites that monitor legislation *may* be running a bit behind entering ALL of the bills pouring in. If your MoC doesn't have any bills here, they may simply have not been processed yet.

No new bills processed yet:

PA-02 Rep. Brendan Boyle (D)

PA-04 Rep. Madeleine Dean (D)

PA-05 Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon (D)

PA-06 Rep. Chrissy Houlihan (D)

PA-07 Rep. Susan Wild (D)

PA-08 Rep. Matt Cartwright (D)

PA-17 Rep. Conor Lamb (D)

PA-18 Rep. Mike Doyle (D)

PA-09 Rep. Dan Meuser (R)

PA-10 Scott Perry (R)

PA-13 Rep. John Joyce (R)

PA-14 Rep. Guy Reschenthaler (R)

PA-16 Rep. Mike Kelly (R)

We'll check in next week to see what these legislators have dropped as their first bills.

PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick

Rep. Fitzpatrick has introduced [8 new bills](#) in these first days of the 116th Congress

- To prohibit a bill from containing multiple subjects ([H.R. 160](#))
- To prohibit family members of people in important government positions from raising funds from foreign entities ([H.R. 161](#))
- To require the President and Vice President to disclose their tax returns ([H.R. 162](#))
- To require nonpartisan commissions to carry out redistricting, and to require states to hold open primaries ([H.R. 163](#))
- To terminate the pensions of Members of Congress ([H.R. 164](#))
- Introducing a constitutional amendment to only pay Members of Congress if they pass budgets ([H.J Res. 10](#))
- Introducing a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget ([H.J Res. 11](#))
- Introducing a constitutional amendment on term limits ([H.J. Res. 12](#))

PA-03 Rep. Dwight Evans (D)

Rep. Evans has introduced [3 new bills](#) thus far.

- To repeal the law that prohibits lawsuits against gun manufacturers ([H.R. 157](#))
- To allow public school buildings to qualify for a tax credit to make improvements ([H.R. 158](#))
- To help small businesses by creating a grant program to address rising costs of tax compliance ([H.R. 159](#))

PA-11 Rep. Lloyd Smucker (R)

Rep. Smucker has introduced [one new](#) and very locally popular bill, to create a Susquehanna National Heritage Area ([H.R. 262](#))

PA-12 Rep. Tom Marino (R)

Rep. Marino introduced [2 new](#) items, both constitutional amendments, both on topics that his caucus member from PA-01 also introduced.

- Introducing a constitutional amendment to prohibit a bill from containing multiple subjects ([H.J. Res. 15](#))
- Introducing a constitutional amendment on term limits ([H.J. Res. 16](#))

PA-15 Rep. Glenn W. Thompson (R)

Rep. Thompson has introduced [one bill](#), titled “To amend the Mineral Leasing Act and the Energy Policy Act of 1992 to repeal provisions relating only to the Allegheny National Forest.” In the absence of bill text, and without a press release on Rep. Thompson’s website, I’m at a loss to provide more context. ([H.R. 245](#))

Call to Action - Support this bill!

Each week we will close the report with one bill that is worth calling your MoC about. Seriously. Pick up the phone, fill out a website contact form, or go visit your MoC’s office about this.

[H.R. 1](#): To expand Americans’ access to the ballot box, reduce the influence of big money in politics, and strengthen ethics rules for public servants

This is the signature bill from the Democratic Majority in the 116th Congress and it is focused on ethics reform. It was introduced on January 3, 2019 by Rep. John Sarbanes (D-Md.) and it is pending in [ten different committees](#). Rep. Sarbanes has a *detailed* recap of his bill [here](#), but these are the big points from his [website](#):

Voting Rights

- Improve Access – H.R. 1 expands access to the ballot box by taking aim at institutional barriers to voting, such as cumbersome registration systems, limited voting hours and many other roadblocks. H.R. 1 creates automatic voter registration across the country, ensures that individuals who have completed felony sentences have their full rights restored, expands voting by mail and early voting and modernizes the U.S. voting system.
- Promote Integrity – H.R. 1 fights back against Republicans’ assault on voting rights by committing Congress to build the record necessary to restore the Voting Rights Act, prohibiting voter roll purges like those seen in Ohio, Georgia and elsewhere and ensuring that discriminatory voter ID laws do not prevent Americans citizens from exercising their rights. H.R. 1 also ends partisan gerrymandering to prevent politicians from pick their voters and making Americans feel like their voices do not count.
- Ensure Security – H.R. 1 ensures that American elections are decided by American voters without interference by foreign adversaries. The bill enhances federal support for voting system security, particularly paper ballots, and increases oversight over election vendors.

Campaign Finance

- Guarantee Disclosure – H.R. 1 shines a light on dark money in politics by requiring any organization involved in political activity to disclose its large donors, which will break the nesting-doll system that allows big-money contributors and special interests to hide their spending in networks of so-called “social welfare” organizations.
- Empower Citizens – H.R. 1 levels the political playing field for everyday Americans, creating a multiple matching system for small donations and allowing the American people to exercise their due influence in a post-Citizens United world, while reaffirming that Congress should have the authority to regulate money in politics. The new system of citizen-owned elections will break special interests’ stranglehold on Congress and lay the groundwork for an agenda that serves the American people.
- Strengthen Oversight – H.R. 1 ensures that there are cops on the campaign finance beat that will enforce the laws already on the books. H.R. 1 tightens rules on super PACs and restructures the Federal Election Commission to break the gridlock and enhance its enforcement mechanisms. It also repeals Mitch McConnell’s riders that prevent government agencies from requiring commonsense disclosure of political spending.

Ethics and Accountability

- Fortify Ethics Law – H.R. 1 breaks the influence economy in Washington and increases accountability by expanding conflict of interest law and divestment requirements, slowing the revolving door, preventing Members of Congress from serving on corporate boards and requiring presidential candidates to disclose their tax returns.
- Impose Greater Ethics Enforcement – H.R. 1 gives teeth to federal ethics oversight by overhauling the Office of Government Ethics, closing registration loopholes for lobbyists and foreign agents, ensuring watchdogs have sufficient resources to enforce the law and creating a code of ethics for the Supreme Court.

This bill is an amazing starting point for the 116th Congress. It is 100% worth it to call your representative to ask them to co-sponsor this effort. And if they refuse to do so, pressure them as to WHY they won't support it! This is a great tool for us in this Congress, because [most Americans want these changes](#). So if your MoC doesn't support this, then all of that MoC's constituents need to hear about it.

Thanks for reading up on what our Pennsylvania Members of Congress have been doing this past week. We're delighted to have you as a reader. If you liked what you read here and think others need to keep up with our MoCs, please share our website - <http://www.patogether.org/congress.html> Or you can head over to Twitter and search for #MoCTrack and retweet what you see there.

This report brought to you by the PA MoCTrack team...

Elayne Baker

Gary Garb

Kathy Sikes

Kierstyn Piotrowski Zolfo

Are you an introvert activist looking for ways to help a progressive effort that don't involve phone calls, door knocking, or leaving your house? We are always seeking additional assistance. Our Congresspeople are always busy and there is always more for us to cover — tasks big (example - what traditional media is saying about your MoC) and small (example - what's your MoC tweeting about) to fit any level of time commitment or experience. Can you help us out? Please email KierstynPZ@gmail.com and put "MoCTrack Help" in the subject. Thanks!