

## PA-01 Member of Congress Tracking Report - 03/17/19

This is a 100% volunteer effort brought to you by a handful of progressive Democrats and Independents who share a vision of an informed electorate. We want to offer a big thank you to the Pennsylvania Together and Pennsylvania Statewide Indivisible organizations who host our report and help us share it out to the residents of our Commonwealth!

### 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	Change from last report
<a href="#">Senator Bob Casey (D)</a>	30.9%	-0.6%
<a href="#">Senator Pat Toomey (R)</a>	87.9%	-0.9%
<a href="#">PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)</a>	73.5%	0.0%

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. The votes scored this week are both from the Senate - the bill to end the national emergency and a resolution related to Yemen.

Want to see exactly what votes went into giving your MoC the numbers above? Click on the name of any legislator and you will be brought to their 538 webpage, where all of the positions that went into the index are listed in an easy-to-read format.

### Words From Our Founders

"All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives."

— Article I, Section 1 of the [US Constitution](#); the first words of the Constitution after the "we the people" preamble

"The Congress shall have Power To..make all Laws which shall be **necessary and proper** for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States."

— Article I, Section 8 of the US Constitution; also referred to as the "[elastic clause](#)" which give to Congress the right to fulfill any duties that are not expressly listed in the Constitution

### Votes of Interest

#### The Senate votes to end the national emergency

[Senate Vote](#) on H. J. Res. 46

Because this joint resolution is "[privileged](#)" Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell was forced to bring this legislation to end President Trump's emergency to the floor for a vote. Not only was he forced to do so, but the deadline for this was March 16th. So, this Thursday, March 14, 2019, the resolution was debated and then voted upon. It passed in a 59-41 vote, with 12 Republicans joining with all of the Democrats (and Independents) to vote for ending the fake emergency. **Casey voted YES** and **Toomey voted YES**.

Our Senators had this to say about their votes:

□ **Senator Bob Casey, 03/14/19, via [Twitter](#):**

“A bipartisan majority of the House and Senate has rejected President Trump’s gross abuse of power. It’s time for President Trump to withdraw his phony national emergency declaration and work with Congress to secure the border and reform our immigration system.”

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, 03/14/19, via [Twitter](#):**

“Well before the president declared this national emergency, I made clear that such a declaration was ill-advised. Our Constitution explicitly gives Congress the responsibility to determine how taxpayer money is used. The president’s emergency declaration undermines the fundamental constitutional principle of the separation of powers, and it sets a dangerous precedent that future presidents could use to advance controversial policies. I have supported, and will continue to support, the president’s sensible efforts to secure the southern border. I backed his \$5.7 billion request to build 234 miles of physical barriers at the ten most critical locations as determined by our border patrol, and voted last year for \$25 billion in border security, including \$18 billion specifically to build a physical barrier. But when I disagree with the president, I feel a responsibility to stand up and say so. For these reasons, I joined a bipartisan majority of my colleagues in voting to terminate the president’s national emergency declaration.”

### **And end in sight for the US involvement in Yemen?**

[Senate Vote](#) on S. J. Res. 7

The ongoing tug of war over the [United States’ military involvement in the hostilities in Yemen](#) is part of a larger conflict over the Trump Administration’s entire global foreign policy, their stance on human rights, and even the differing views on the role of the legislative branch in [arms sales](#) and [war powers](#). Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Ver.) explains, via the [New York Times](#), “The United States Congress is going to reassert its constitutional responsibility over issues of war that have been abdicated for presidents, Democrats and Republicans, for too many years.”

This situation is all but a do-over of the events from late 2018. During the 115th Congress the Senate took up a similar resolution and passed it, but then-Speaker of the House Paul Ryan refused to bring it to the floor for a vote. Similar sentiment does still exist in the Senate, with Senate Majority Leader McConnell calling this resolution “inappropriate and counterproductive” and Foreign Relations Chairman Jim Risch (R-Idaho) saying it is “a terrible message of U.S. division and lack of resolve” and a “bad precedent for using the War Powers Resolution to express political disagreements with a president,” also via the [New York Times](#).

In a vote taken on Wednesday, March 13, 2019, this measure passed, 54-46. Seven Republicans joined the Democrats and Independents to pass this resolution - Mike Lee (Utah), Susan Collins (Maine), Steve Daines (Montana), Jerry Moran (Kansas), Lisa Murkowski (Alaska), Rand Paul (Kentucky), and Todd Young (Indiana). **Casey voted YES** and **Toomey voted NO**. This bill now moves to the House, where it is likely to pass. This may result in President Trump’s second veto of his term in office.

### **Bureaucratic confirmation in the Labor Department**

[Senate Vote](#) on the nomination of William Beach to be Commissioner of Labor Statistics

According to their own [website](#), the Bureau of Labor Statistics

...is the principal federal agency responsible for measuring labor market activity, working conditions, and price changes in the economy. Its mission is to collect, analyze, and disseminate essential economic information to support public and private decision making. As an independent statistical agency, BLS serves its diverse user communities by providing products and services that are accurate, objective, relevant, timely, and accessible.

We have all seen how the president and his entire administration have denied the reality of facts and statistics. But now, the President is getting to fill the seat at the head of the agency that reports many of the critical statistics that measure the health of the economy.

President Trump chose William Beach, a former Director of the Center for Data Analysis at the Heritage Foundation, that deeply conservative think tank [funded](#) by folks like the DeVos family. Heritage Foundation leaders [celebrated](#) the nomination, saying that Beach would bring “an innovative mindset that will excite economists everywhere.”

The Senate voted upon this nomination on Wednesday, March 13, 2019. Mr. Beach was confirmed in a 55-44 vote, with Democrats Kyrsten Sinema (Arizona) and Joe Manchin (West Virginia) joining the Republicans in voting yes. **Casey voted NO** and **Toomey voted YES**.

### **More judicial conservative court packing, part 1**

[Senate vote](#) on the confirmation of Paul Matey to the USDC, 3rd Circuit

This week the Senate considered the Trump Administration judicial nominee, Paul B. Matey. He's a 'veteran' of the [Bridgegate scandal](#), having served as the deputy chief counsel to former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie during that debacle. He was also confirmed over the objections of both New Jersey Senators Booker and Menendez, with the Judiciary Committee bringing up the nomination despite the two home state senators not returning blue slips for the nominee.

Here's what the [Alliance for Justice](#) said about this:

The confirmation of Paul Matey is the latest erosion of Senate norms in President Trump and Senate Republican's drive to pack the courts. Until Trump became president, no person had ever been confirmed over the objection of both home state senators. Matey will now be the second in just the last month. Neither Senator Menendez nor Booker supports his nomination. In fact, despite repeated requests to do so, Senator Booker was not given an opportunity to even meet with Matey until just days before his confirmation vote, belying any pretense that there was meaningful consultation with home state senators.

In a vote on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, the Senate confirmed Mr. Matey, 54-45. Democrat Joe Manchin (West Virginia) joined all of the Republicans for this vote. **Casey voted NO** and **Toomey voted YES**. And now New Jersey, one of the bluest states in the country, has a federal court that is majority Republican.

### **More judicial conservative court packing, part 2**

[Senate vote](#) on the confirmation of Neomi Rao to be United States Circuit Judge for DC

A second Trump pick made it through the Senate this week. Neomi Rao is the Administration's pick to fill Brett Kavanaugh's seat on the DC district court. Ms. Rao is the head of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, and her views on gender and sexual violence were central to her confirmation hearings. [Politico](#) reports that while an undergraduate, Ms. Rao wrote that if a woman “drinks to the point where she can no longer choose, well, getting to that point was part of her choice.” The [New York Magazine](#) Intelligencer column wrote that Ms. Rao's views “views place her firmly on the far-right end of the political spectrum” and they note that Justice Clarence Thomas, who she clerked for, has been lobbying for Ms. Rao's confirmation.

NARAL Pro-Choice America compiled a [lengthy document](#) with detail on Ms. Rao's conservative anti-choice views. While she was the Administrator of the Office Information and Regulatory Affairs, Ms. Rao oversaw the development of the Title X gag rule, administrative changes to the ACA that “vastly expand the categories of employers that are allowed to deny their employees the ACA's contraceptive coverage benefit,” and the creation of a new division of the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Housing and Human Services, where the “entire focus of the new division is to ‘protect’ healthcare workers who want to discriminate against patients seeking certain health services, like reproductive care or care for LGBTQ people.”

The Alliance for Justice issued the following [statement](#) about Ms. Rao:

Neomi Rao's record of offensive statements about women, sexual assault survivors, LGBTQ people, people of color and the environment is matched only by her track record of advancing federal government policies that are deeply harmful to these same communities and interests. It only makes matters worse that she is being named to the nation's second-highest court and to the seat once held by Brett Kavanaugh, who has faced credible allegations of sexual abuse. Senators should understand that a vote to confirm Neomi Rao is a slap in the face to some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

The group also shared a variety of [horrifying excerpts](#) from Rao's writings on topics from gender politics to affirmative action to rape to intolerance for multiculturalism.

In a vote on Wednesday, March 13, 2019, the Senate voted to confirm Neomi Rao, 53-46. This was a pure party line vote. **Casey voted NO** and **Toomey voted YES**.

Sen. Toomey did not issue any public comments about this vote, but Sen. Casey shared his thoughts:

□ **Senator Bob Casey, 03/13/19, via [Twitter](#):**

"Today I'm casting a vote against Neomi Rao, President Trump's nominee to replace Brett Kavanaugh on the D.C. Circuit. In her current role in the administration, Rao has led the President's dangerous efforts to roll back protections for victims of sexual assault, workers facing discrimination and the environment."

### **The House wants the Mueller Report to be made public**

[House vote](#) on H. Con Res. 24

This is a concurrent resolution introduced by House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.). The resolution itself is lengthy, but the crux of it can be found in the final segments:

Whereas the allegations at the center of Special Counsel Mueller's investigation strike at the core of our democracy, and there is an overwhelming public interest in releasing the Special Counsel's report to ensure public confidence in both the process and the result of the investigation: Now, therefore, be it

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That Congress—

(1) calls for the public release of any report, including findings, Special Counsel Mueller provides to the Attorney General, except to the extent the public disclosure of any portion thereof is expressly prohibited by law; and

(2) calls for the full release to Congress of any report, including findings, Special Counsel Mueller provides to the Attorney General.

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The resolution was co-sponsored by a number of other members of the House leadership, including House Committee on Financial Services Chairperson Maxine Waters (D-Calif.), House Committee on Oversight and Reform Chairperson Elijah Cummings (D-Mary.), and House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Chairperson Adam Schiff (D-Calif.).

In a vote taken on Thursday, March 14, 2019, the House passed this bill unanimously, 420-0. Four Republicans (Paul Gosar of Arizona, Matt Gaetz of Florida, Thomas Massie of Kentucky and Justin Amash of Michigan) voted "Present." The *Guardian* [reported](#) that this unanimity is because "lawmakers in both parties have maintained there will have to be some sort of public discussion when the report is done – and privately hope that a report shows conclusions that are favorable to their own side."

In the hours immediately after the passage of this concurrent resolution, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer attempted to bring this to the floor of the Senate, but he was blocked by South Carolina Republican Lindsey Graham. *USA Today* [reported](#) that Graham “asked that the resolution also include calling for the appointment of a new special counsel to investigate how the Justice Department conducted its investigation.” It is unclear if the Democrats will be able to get this brought to the floor of the Senate again without it being similarly blocked.

### **Some of the uncontroversial actions that passed the House**

Not every action taken in our legislative branch is controversial, despite what usually gets covered in MoCTrack. Here are some of the bills that made it through the House with no fuss, and little fanfare.

- [H. Res. 206](#) - this is a resolution that says “lack of sunlight and transparency in financial transactions and corporate formation poses a threat to our national security and our economy’s security” and sets the stage for passing additional legislation in coming months to close loopholes. This bill passed by a voice vote, which is a presumption of unanimity
- [H.R. 596](#) - this bill would prohibit the United States (as in the President, the State Department, or any member of our foreign policy apparatus) from recognizing the annexation of Crimea by Russia as legitimate. On March 12, 2019, this passed 427-1 under a suspension of the rules (meaning a 2/3 supermajority would be needed for passage). The PA MoCs were unanimous in support of this measure. The only NO vote came from Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.)
- [H.R. 1404](#) - this bill is called the “Vladimir Putin Transparency Act” and it calls for additional transparency into the finances and corrupt actions of Russian President Putin as a “response to Russian interference.” The bill directs the Director of National Intelligence, in coordination with the Secretary of Treasury and the Secretary of State, to issue a report on “the net worth and financial and other assets of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his family members, legitimate as well as illegitimate” as well as the methods Putin used to conceal his holdings. This measure passed via a voice vote
- [H.R. 1582](#) - this is the Electronic Message Preservation Act, which broadens the mandate of the National Archives, by expanding the scope of the materials that must be preserved. It redefines “electronic message” to not just include e-mail, but also “other electronic messaging systems that are used for purposes of communicating between individuals.” That means texts, Slack, internal messenger programs, and - possibly (though this may need to go to the courts for clarification) even tweets. The bill also specifies the manner in which this new expansion applies to the President. This bill passed by voice vote
- [H.R. 1608](#) - This bill increases transparency in the appointment process for federal advisory committees, and outlines the process by which such committees are created and staffed. Pointedly, it has a sub-section titled “Preventing efforts to circumvent the Federal Advisory Committee Act and public disclosure” and it contains detailed rules for ensuring records from such groups are made public. This passed by voice vote
- [H.R. 1654](#) - this is the “Federal Register Modernization Act” and it changes wording in the US Code so that places where “printing” is mandated, it now reads that “publishing” is what is required. This is going to save a LOT of paper. This passed by voice vote
- [H.R. 1122](#) - the goal of this bill, as described by its author, Rep. Emanuel Cleaver II (D-Mo.), is to “carry out a housing choice voucher mobility demonstration to encourage families receiving such voucher assistance to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to opportunity areas.” Right now people who receive Section 8 housing vouchers are often clustered into very specific parts of cities, and this program will find ways to address that issue by creating trial programs and seeing which work. On March 11, 2019, this passed 387-22 under a suspension of the rules (meaning a 2/3 supermajority would be needed for passage). The only PA MoC who voted against this program is PA-10’s Rep. Scott Perry. I am awaiting comment from Rep. Perry’s office as to why he was a NO vote, as there was no info on his social media or his website
- [H.R. 1414](#) - This bill updates the duties of the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network. The mission of the organization now reads the FinCEN is to “safeguard the financial system from illicit use and combat money laundering and promote national security through the collection, analysis, and dissemination of financial intelligence and strategic use of financial authorities.” And other sections of the existing rules for FinCEN now include that the group should work with tribal

authorities (in addition to “Federal, State, local, and foreign law enforcement agencies”) and that their efforts are to now include “matters involving emerging technologies or value that substitutes for currency” (like BitCoin). This passed the House by a voice vote

## **Our MoCs respond to the Christchurch Mosque Massacre**

□ **Senator Bob Casey, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**

“Like many of you, I woke up this morning confronted by the horrific news out of Christchurch, New Zealand. By sheer coincidence, I was scheduled to meet with survivors of the October shooting in Squirrel Hill, Pennsylvania this morning. Together we mourned this senseless loss of life at yet another house of worship, taken by yet another man who exhibited racism and hatred online, who committed yet another mass shooting with semi-automatic weapons. The epidemic of hate coursing through so much of our society is a symptom of the fear stoked by those who seek to divide us. We all must look deep within ourselves and reject that fear and stand united against these abhorrent acts of violence.”

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**

“Mosques and places of worship should be safe havens where people of faith can join together in prayer, celebration, and reflection. The news out of Christchurch is heartbreaking. Our nation’s thoughts and condolences today are with New Zealand.”

□ **PA-01’s Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**

“The Christchurch terrorist attacks were sickening and vile acts of pure hatred. My heart breaks for all those affected, and we stand in solidarity with the people of New Zealand in condemning extremism, hatred and violence in all forms. White supremacists are terrorists and cowards, and religious bigotry in any form is an evil that will not be tolerated. An attack on innocent, peaceful worshippers, whether at a mosque, synagogue, church or temple, is an attack on us all. We must be unequivocal in our denunciation of these acts and strive for a more peaceful and tolerant world that loves and respects all of God’s children.”

□ **PA-02’s Rep. Brendan Boyle, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**

The Representative retweeted political analyst matthew Dowd, who wrote, “Muslim poet Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī :

‘Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it.’

‘The wound is the place where the Light enters you.’  
My Muslim brothers and sisters, we are family.”

□ **PA-03’s Rep. Dwight Evans, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**

“Americans of good will grieve with our Muslim sisters & brothers, as we did after hate-fueled attacks in Pittsburgh & Charleston. We stand with you.”

□ **PA-04’s Rep. Madeleine Dean, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**

“It is heartbreaking to read about the ChristChurch Mosques Massacre in New Zealand. In the memory of the victims we must drive hate out of our societies and build a world that loves and respects all faiths.”

□ **PA-05’s Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**

“No one should have to live in the shadow of fear because of their religion. My heart is with the peace-loving people of New Zealand and the victims of this hate-fueled attack. Kia kaha, New Zealand. We cannot let the hate win. #Kiakaha #NewZealand”

□ **PA-06’s Rep. Chrissy Houlahan, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**

“My heart goes out to all the victims of the Christchurch attack in New Zealand. I stand against bigotry of all forms. We must continue to defeat the fears and hatred at the root of this terrorist attack both here at home and around the world.”

- **PA-07's Rep. Susan Wild, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**  
 "I am heartbroken for New Zealand, for the victims & their families & for the global Muslim community. As we witness this kind of extremism rise in our own country we must unite in its condemnation. This kind of hate & senseless violence has no place here or anywhere in the world."
- **PA-09's Rep. Dan Meuser, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**  
 "My thoughts and prayers are with the victims of the vicious attack in Christchurch, New Zealand. No one should ever be the target of violence because of their faith. America stands with New Zealand in this most challenging time."
- **PA-10's Rep. Scott Perry, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**  
 "I'm saddened to learn of the cowardly and methodical acts of terror in Christchurch, New Zealand. This kind of radical hatred and violence has no place in our world. The victims and their loved ones will remain in my prayers."
- **PA-14's Rep. Guy Reschenthaler, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**  
 "Deeply saddened to hear of the 49 innocent Muslims killed in the New Zealand mosque attack. We must condemn this senseless act of hate on a house of worship, and stand in solidarity with the people of New Zealand."
- **PA-18 Rep. Mike Doyle, 03/15/19, via [Twitter](#):**  
 "49 lives lost & more injured. Mourning for Christchurch, the families, and the communities impacted by the attack in New Zealand, and thinking about our responsibility to drive out the hate that has fueled this attack and so many like it."

## MoC Twitter Action

**Senator Bob Casey hot topics:** The senator was back to his old form, with a lot of Twitter content to cover. He started the week with a series of tweets about the anti-hazing bill he introduced, including retweets of news coverage about that legislation. The senator then released two threads with his response to the President's Budget proposal - the first with his overall reaction, the second with a detailed analysis with the issues he found most objectionable. The Senator then stated that he was voting against the judicial nomination of Neomi Rao. Additional topics touched upon were the Equality Act, the fake national emergency, the passing of former Senator Birch Bayh, affordable child care, the president's "hints" at violence from his supporters, and the Special Olympics. The Senator also announced a [Town Hall](#) this week!

**Casey tweets of the week, 03/11/19:** "After passing into law a massive tax giveaway to the super-rich and biggest corporations, the Trump Administration has proposed a budget that will drastically cut programs that benefit everyday Pennsylvania families. By cutting vital programs like Medicare and Medicaid and seeking to once again repeal the Affordable Care Act, this budget hurts our children, seniors, individuals with disabilities and workers and I will work to make sure it never becomes law... Every time we think we've reached the bottom with this Administration, they sink a little lower."

— made in response to the release of the President's budget, shared with a link (shared 03/13/19) to a Washington Post article titled "[Trump proposes big cuts to health programs for poor, elderly and disabled](#)"

**Representative Brian Fitzpatrick hot topics:** The representative's new social media staffer is continuing their charm offensive, with more pictures from community events - with boy scouts, fire fighters, the Bucks County Community Foundation, more boy scouts, more fire fighters, and Human Rights Campaign activists. He shared a multi-tweet thread about his decision to return his pay from the time period of the shutdown, and then retweeted press coverage from that action. From a policy perspective, the congressman pushed the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, oversight of PFAS water contamination, and the Equality Act.

**Fitzpatrick tweet of the week, 03/14/19:** “Testified at a hearing on how to modernize Congress to ensure all members have the ability to have their legislation discussed and voted on. Party leaders hold too much power and I’ll continue working to make sure the rules encourage bipartisan cooperation and consensus building.”

— shared with an [image from the hearing](#)

**Senator Pat Toomey hot topics:** The senator had a lot to say on Twitter this week (as opposed to previous weeks of only three or five tweets), but almost all of it was on a single topic. The senator issued a five tweet thread explaining his vote opposing the president’s national emergency. He followed that up with some promotion for an appearance he made on Meet the Press to explain that vote, as well as a link to his editorial in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on the same topic. The remainder of his tweets were photo ops with student visitors to DC, a holiday message for St. Patrick’s Day, and his thoughts on the mosque shooting in New Zealand.

**Toomey tweet of the week, 03/14/19:** “But when I disagree with the president, I feel a responsibility to stand up and say so. For these reasons, I joined a bipartisan majority of my colleagues in voting to terminate the president’s national emergency declaration.”

— part of his [thread](#) (copied in full above) on the national emergency vote

#### **Honorable mention, lawmaker**

From @SenWhitehouse, Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) on 03/17/19:

“There’s something deeply troubled in @realDonaldTrump constantly trying to belittle John McCain. Deep within, Trump must realize how far better a man John was and will always be.”

— [tweeted](#) in reply to one of President Trump’s many [unhinged tweets](#) on Saturday, which read “Spreading the fake and totally discredited Dossier “is unfortunately a very dark stain against John McCain.” Ken Starr, Former Independent Counsel. He had far worse “stains” than this, including thumbs down on repeal and replace after years of campaigning to repeal and replace!”

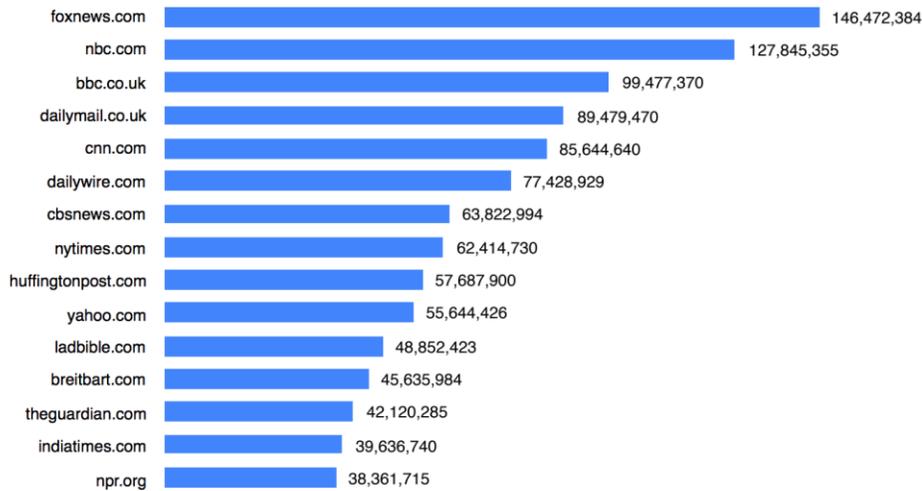
#### **Honorable mention, media**

From @NateSilver538 on 03/16/19:

“Facebook’s News Feed algorithm seems to be surfacing more fake news than ever. A friend—apologies for stealing his theory—once claimed to me the problem with News Feed is that Facebook “engagement” is more or less a proxy for eliciting an emotional response. And you probably want an emotional response when sharing personal updates with family/friends...But what happens when you reward \*news\* content—especially hard news or political news—that elicits an emotional response? You wind up with the complete shitshow that News Feed has become.”

— shared with a link to a [Niman Lab](#) graphic and article

### Top Web Publishers by Facebook Engagement



#### Honorable mention, constituent response

From [@Uniquifying](#) on 03/14/19:

“At least one PA senator can face his constituents in the largest city in the state, @SenToomey.”

— made in response to Senator Casey’s town hall announcement; since 2013 Senator Toomey has had only two in-person town halls, neither in Philadelphia

#### Casey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Kathy Sites

“American hourly workers face an unbearable situation: Wages are flat and the prices of life’s necessities keep rising. By some estimates, we live in a country where wages went up by 12 percent; only 12 percent over 40 years. Many low wage families are desperate--as costs climb for college tuition, health care, childcare, groceries, and more. Congress must find a way to get wages up and drive costs down. We’re literally at the point where a generation of Americans are facing the prospect of making a hell of lot less money in real dollar terms than their parents”

— from an article on [YourErie.com](#) titled “[Senator Bob Casey Co-Sponsors 'Raise the Wage Act'](#)”

“We believe Walmart should make it a priority to help any greeter who wants to - particularly those with long tenures at your company - to transition into a new opportunity at Walmart. We understand that businesses may make changes to the job requirements of certain positions, but we are concerned that the elimination of the greeter position may preclude individuals with disabilities from working at Walmart. We know you share our goal of ensuring that workers of all abilities are able to find gainful, competitive integrated employment.”

— an excerpt from a letter sent by Senator Casey and five colleagues to Wal-Mart, as reported in the [PennLive](#) article titled “[Sen. Bob Casey, other U.S. senators call on Walmart to support workers with disabilities](#)”

“The key to his victory was not only surging turnout in urban and suburban areas but cutting down losing margins in rural areas that had overwhelmingly backed Trump. This is the road map for how the Democratic presidential nominee can flip the state in 2020. We showed in 2018 that you can do very well in traditionally strong areas for Democrats like urban and suburban communities and still do well enough in places where Democrats have taken heavy losses over the years. Democrats shouldn’t ignore

Pennsylvania in the primary. I'm hoping that some candidates who may only be focused on the near-term primaries and caucuses will also try to plant a flag in Pennsylvania."

— from a [Politico](#) article titled "[Swing-state senators become 2020 kingmakers](#)"

"This will be a boost for young learners and a financial reprieve for families. This isn't one of those things you just theorize about. We need to do this. This is essential for our workforce. It's essential for our economy. I hope there's room for Democrats and Republicans to work together on child care. I want the investment to be a "transformative" one that will have a seismic impact on the workforce and our future economy."

— from a [WHYY](#) article titled "[U.S. Sen. Casey of Pa. urging 'transformative' investment in child care subsidies](#)"

"We will not have the workforce we need and will not be able to compete in the world if we do not invest in early childcare and learning. This is America! We can do better than we're doing when it comes to our children."

— from an article on the Pittsburgh [CBS](#) affiliate [WDKA's](#) website titled "[Sen. Bob Casey Introduces Two New Bills Around Affordable Childcare, Tax Credit](#)"

## **Fitzpatrick in the News**

"The American people need fewer politicians and more independent voices focused on serving. Redistricting reform is a crucial, bipartisan step to ensuring our government remains one of, by and for the people – not just political insiders."

— from the [Ripon Advance](#) blog post titled "[Fitzpatrick, colleagues urge High Court to rule gerrymandering unconstitutional](#)"

"When we are in danger, we call 9-1-1 and rely on those on the other end of the line to make sure we get the help we need. This legislation will give our 9-1-1 operators and dispatchers the resources, benefits, and recognition they deserve."

— the representative explains why he is cosponsoring a bill to change the classification of 9-1-1 dispatchers from clerical to a protective service, in the [Homeland Preparedness News](#) blog post titled "[Bill seeks 9-1-1 dispatcher reclassification](#)"

"If over 800,000 federal employees and their families were forced to live without their paychecks due to no fault of their own, then no member of Congress should accept a dime of pay for that period. If members of Congress actually feel the pain of the people they represent, perhaps they would approach their jobs differently."

— from an article in the [Bucks County Courier Times](#) titled "[U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick returns shutdown pay](#)"

"LGBTQ Americans are part of the fabric of our society and should be free to exercise the rights guaranteed to every American by the Constitution to participate fully in our society and pursue every opportunity."

— from a [CBS News](#) article titled "[Congressional Democrats, GOP moderates look to enshrine LGBTQ legal protections](#)"

## **Toomey in the News**

*Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker*

"Well before the president declared this national emergency, I made clear that such a declaration was ill-advised. Our Constitution explicitly gives Congress the responsibility to determine how taxpayer money is used. The president's emergency declaration undermines the fundamental constitutional principle of the separation of powers, and it sets a dangerous precedent that future presidents could use to advance controversial policies."

— from the *Allentown Morning Call* article titled "[In his words: Pat Toomey's statement on his vote against the president's national emergency declaration](#)"

"The president has, under existing law, adequate discretion over funding sources that would enable him to secure \$5.7 billion without having to invoke emergency powers. Nevertheless, the president decided to declare a national emergency, which gives him virtually unlimited access to funds that Congress specifically dedicated for military construction projects.

I share the president's frustration and goal of securing the border, but I have serious concerns about his national emergency declaration. Well before the president declared an emergency, I made clear that such a declaration was ill-advised.

Regardless of the party in the White House, it is unacceptable for presidents to do what the Constitution only gives Congress the responsibility to do. I repeatedly criticized President Obama when he did this by unilaterally rewriting Obamacare, making unconstitutional executive appointments and granting legal status to millions of illegal immigrants.

It was wrong when President Obama did it and it is wrong for President Trump to do so now. It would be wrong for a future president to do it, too, which is why Sen. Mike Lee (R., Utah) and I are supporting reforms to the National Emergencies Act that protect the separation of powers. There's no reason why Democrats, who have said they oppose President Trump's emergency declaration on constitutional grounds, shouldn't join us."

— from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* opinion piece authored by the senator himself titled "[Sen. Pat Toomey: Why I don't support Trump's national emergency declaration](#)"

"As a former restaurant owner, I know keeping a small business alive is always a challenge. The federal tax code should not make it more difficult for a restaurateur or a retailer. Capital invested in a company should be fully deductible at the time of the investment. This helps make the investment affordable. Our simple, bipartisan fix recognizes the economic benefits from immediate expensing and will help grow the economy and create jobs."

— from an article in *Accounting Today* titled "[Senators introduce bill to correct glitch in tax law discouraging store and restaurant repairs](#)"

"Co-op programs, such as the program offered at Drexel University, allow undergraduates to gain valuable full-time work experience and develop career skills while still in college. This bipartisan measure will make it easier for more Pennsylvania students with financial needs to access meaningful, paid work experiences in their chosen field of study and use their earnings to help pay for college."

— from an article in Elmira, New York's *NBC affiliate WETM TV 18*, titled "[Gillibrand, Toomey introduce work-study program expansion legislation](#)"

"The specter of the reimposition of the punitive medical device tax threatens patients, American jobs, and medical innovation. It's time to end this uncertainty once and for all and finally repeal the medical device tax. I urge my colleagues to join this bipartisan effort."

— from an article in *Healthcare Business Daily News* titled "[Bill in Senate proposes permanent repeal of medical device excise tax](#)"

Senator Toomey was also profiled in a *Pittsburgh Magazine* piece titled "[Pat Toomey and President Trump: Not Always on Same Page](#)." He had a LOT to say on a variety of topics...

- *On women and the GOP:* “Republicans did very, very badly with women; that’s not a sustainable situation to be in. Women make up a majority of the electorate. We did badly in suburbs, although I think that was also driven largely by how badly we did with women. It’s appropriate as a political party and as individual members of the party to take stock and think about what’s driving that. A midterm is often significantly about the occupant of the White House; it’s seldom entirely about the president, but it’s partly about that. That’s part of it. It was a rough night for Republicans.”
- *On the opioid crisis:* “I’ve spent more time meeting with and speaking with constituents on this topic than any other topic ... The U.S. Federal Government is the world’s biggest buyer of opioids, by far. No other entity is close. And the United States prescribes more opioids per person than any other country in the world, and it’s not even close ... So there’s no doubt in my mind that we overprescribe; there’s no doubt in my mind that there’s overprescription in Medicaid and Medicare as well, and we don’t monitor that very well ... We’ve now improved how we do that... For instance, requiring electronic prescriptions. Having a database that’s operable interstate, so we can know who’s got what kind of prescriptions. Requiring that a primary care physician is notified if someone has a nonfatal overdose of an opioid. You’d think that would be common sense, but the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid [Services] were not doing this. So those are examples of small, incremental improvements in how we manage this huge quantity of opioids that we purchase and deliver to participants in these programs.
- *On his relationship with the president:* “I have a role to play. The Congress is an independently elected, separate branch of government. The Constitution assigns responsibilities to us that are very clear; the president has a different set of responsibilities. We both ought to do our jobs. Sometimes, that means I’m going to disagree with the president. I disagreed with President Obama very, very frequently; I disagree with President Trump occasionally. When I do, I feel like I’ve got an obligation, if it’s an important matter, to stand up and do something about it”
- *On the budgeting process and shutdowns:* “What I think we should have as a failsafe is legislation enacted — and I’m a co-sponsor, I’m a full supporter of this — which says that, if we get to the end of the fiscal year and some portion of the federal government hasn’t been funded through the appropriations process, then that portion ... gets automatically funded at the previous year’s level .... If we had that in place, it wouldn’t be possible to have a government shutdown.”

## Legislation of Interest - the American Dream and Promise Act of 2019

Back in 2017, the President announced that DACA recipients, or Dreamers, would no longer be protected under federal law. This started a scramble to find a legislative solution to protect these individuals who were brought to the United States as children, through no fault of their own. The Congress was unable to pass any such protection since that time, though several versions of legislation to protect Dreamers were introduced during the 115th Congress, with varying levels of support.

All that has changed now, with a united front of Democrats backing the newly introduced American Dream and Promise Act of 2019. But what is in this bill? And what makes it different from the various Dream Acts that circulated in previous Congresses? Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-Calif.) provided this [summary](#) of the bill which explains the contents in some detail. Here’s what you need to know about the bill’s contents:

### Title I: Protecting America’s Dreamers

- Dreamers would be given conditional permanent resident status for 10 years, and cancel removal proceedings if they have been in the US for 4 years before the passage of the bill; were under 17 when they were brought here; don’t have a criminal record (not counting traffic violations); graduate from high school, trade school or an apprenticeship program; and pass background checks.
- For a Dreamer to get full lawful permanent resident (LPR) status, they need to get a degree (or be in the midst of getting one) from a college, university or technical program; complete two years of military service, or have a job.

- The bill also includes a number of provisions for Dreamers, including letting them access federal financial aid; enabling them to access professional, commercial, and business licenses; and allowing eligible Dreamers who were deported from the United States by the Trump Administration to apply for relief from abroad.

### **Title II: A Path Forward for TPS and DED Recipients**

- The Dream and Promise Act would grant individuals with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) LPR status and cancel removal proceedings if they have been here for at least 3 years, and/or had protected status in September 2016.
- The bill amends would also adjust the way that TPS changes are made by the Department of Homeland Security. They would have to issue a report if they opt to end TPS status, and they have to “describe the qualitative and quantitative methods” they used to make that decision.

### **Title III: Additional General Provisions**

- This includes a new rule saying that a person who appears to be eligible to become a Dreamer cannot be removed from the country without giving them an opportunity to apply for the program
- There are fee exemptions based on income
- People who apply for the program are granted confidentiality - this would prohibit ICE from “using information provided during the application for immigration enforcement”
- Judicial review process for those who have been denied status have been strengthened

This bill is a huge improvement over previous iterations of Dream Acts, in that the pool of potentially protected individuals who can apply to become covered under the program has been widened, and the judicial review and confidentiality segments are broader. The portions of the bill that define how TPS programs are to be reported upon also provide for more sunlight, and the portion that says that “qualitative and quantitative methods” used to make any TPS program decisions must be reported upon means that the excuse “the president just doesn’t want to help these people anymore” is no longer going to fly! In their [explainer piece](#) on the bill, Vox observed:

If passed, HR 6 would represent the most generous immigration bill since the Reagan “amnesty” of 1986... the bill matters because it’s a statement of the Democratic consensus on immigration. That may come into play if Trump and Republicans make another effort to pass an immigration bill of their own — or if Congress is spurred into action again by the threat of an end to DACA. And as Democratic 2020 candidates start articulating their own visions of the presidency, and set their priorities for what they’d do if elected, the bill is one marker of where the party stands.

Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-Calif.) go to the heart of the matter when she made this [statement](#) upon the introduction of this bill:

As a co-author of the original Dream Act, and as the congresswoman for the district with the nation’s largest Dreamer population, it is a privilege to lead today’s introduction of the Dream and Promise Act. I have seen firsthand the love that our Dreamers have for our country. They are our neighbors and colleagues who help strengthen our communities. They are students, scientists, researchers, and small business owners. Our Dream and Promise Act recognizes the contributions and patriotism of Dreamers, TPS recipients, and DED beneficiaries by helping them stay in America, pursue a path to citizenship, and keep strengthening our great country. I look forward to fighting for the passage of this pivotal legislation in the House, and making it the law of the land.

And so, with an eye towards helping the Congresswoman fight for the passage of this bill...

## **Call to Action - Support this Bill!**

### **[H.R. 6: American Dream and Promise Act of 2019](#)**

The bill, as described above, was introduced on March 12, 2019 by Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-Calif.) It is pending in the House Education and Labor and House Judiciary Committees. The following Pennsylvania MoCs are part of the 210 co-sponsors (all D):

- PA-02’s Rep. Brendan Boyle
- PA-03’s Rep. Dwight Evans

- PA-04's Rep. Madeleine Dean
- PA-05's Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon
- PA-06's Rep. Chrissy Houlahan
- PA-07's Rep. Susan Wild
- PA-18's Rep. Mike Doyle

That means that we have a lot of work to do to get wider support for this legislation! The great folks at [Make the Road PA](#) suggest using the following script for talking points with Representative Fitzpatrick:

Hi, I'm (name) and I live in your district. You must act now to provide permanent protection and a path to citizenship for Dreamers and TPS recipients! The cost of rolling back these important programs could reach billions of dollars over the next decade, but saving them will not only keep families together but improve the economy. These families are part of my community and make important contributions to our schools, workplaces, and shared prosperity as a nation. I'm asking you to co sponsor the Dream and Promise Act to make the American Dream a reality for our immigrant communities.

Additionally, it is crucial to drive public support of this topic amongst our friends and neighbors on social media. The great folks at the [Immigration Hub](#) provided these talking points for us to use when discussing the American Dream and Promise Act of 2019:

- Immigrant youth with DACA and TPS holders had lawful status in the United States. They had their lives upended when the Trump Administration ripped away their deportation protections.
- Many immigrant youth and TPS holders are part of mixed status families, and have U.S. citizen and legal resident parents, children, and other relatives. They face separation from their families if deported.
- This bill would give Dreamers and TPS holders the ability to continue contributing to our communities. We have already invested in Dreamers by educating them in our schools. Dreamers with DACA are now a vital part of our workforce, contributing to our economic growth and our society as teachers, engineers, nurses, and small business owners. Unfortunately, even though many would like to serve, almost all are restricted from earning the designation of United States Soldier, Sailor, Airman or Marine
- It makes no sense to penalize our own nation by deporting them to countries they have not been to in decades. We can allow these young people and working adults to contribute more fully to our society, economy, and national security, or we can lose their talents to foreign competitors.
- Immigrant youth and TPS recipients are strong contributors to our economy. An analysis by the Center for American Progress (CAP) found that employers would experience nearly \$1 billion in losses if TPS holders are stripped of work authorization.
- Employers have reported billions of dollars in economic losses because of their inability to find workers, even as they wait for Congress to guarantee protections for DACA and TPS holders.
- The bottom line is that the fate of immigrant youth and TPS holders are tied closely together. Unless Congress addresses these families' common challenges via legislation, we will risk tearing apart thousands of families and our country will be faced with severe, negative economic repercussions.

This bill is a key example of the amazing positive change that is the result of taking the House in 2018. This is the kind of bill that we all hoped to see come out of that victory. Let's get behind it, and help fix the problem that President Trump made when he ended protection for Dreamers and TPS recipients!

**A reminder of other Call to Action bills from previous MoCTrack Reports:**

- [The Green New Deal!](#)
- [Repairing the Voting Rights Act at the invitation of SCOTUS, to protect against voter suppression and intimidation](#)
- [Forcing the president to stand up to human rights abuses \(like the murder of Jamal Khashoggi\) and disentangling the US from the hostilities in Yemen](#)

- [Modernizing a 1988 bill about “undetectable weapons” to include new 3D printed guns](#)
- [Prohibiting the president from ordering a nuclear first strike if Congress hasn't declared war](#)
- [The Democrats' signature ethics reform package, H.R. 1](#)
- [A bill to create more IT/Cybersecurity infrastructure and oversight](#)
- [A bill to provide back pay to low-wage contractor employees](#)

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-01 MoCTrack team...

Elayne Baker

Gary Garb

Kathy Sikes

Kierstyn Piotrowski Zolfo

With additional help from Ashleigh Strange from [Make the Road PA](#)

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](mailto:KierstynPZ@gmail.com) and put "MoCTrack Help" in the subject. Thanks!