

PA-01 Member of Congress Tracking Report - 06/09/19

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 and a desire to make the process of getting legislative news easier! We want to offer thanks 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
Senator Bob Casey (D)	29.9%	-0.3%
Senator Pat Toomey (R)	88.2%	0.0%
PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)	68.8%	-0.6%

Nate Silver's [FiveThirtyEight website](#) assesses the voting records of our MoCs to provide this index, by reviewing any bills where President Trump has stated a position, and comparing the vote of the legislator to that opinion. Only one House vote was scored this week, granting a path to citizenship for DACA and TPS recipients.

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

"Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views."

— [James Madison](#), from Federalist 10

Votes of Interest -

The House votes to fix and improve the DACA and TPS programs broken by the President

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 6](#), The American Dream and Promise Act

Across the last two years the Trump Administration has taken numerous steps to make lives miserable for people residing in our country who are not citizens. Amongst the most notable were President's [September 2017 announcement](#) that he was ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, and the [2018 cancellation](#) of Temporary Protected Status for people from Sudan, Haiti, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Nepal, and Honduras. This has thrown millions of American residents into a state of perpetual uncertainty, but the American Dream and Promise Act looks to fix that.

The [Washington Post](#) has a concise description of the bill's contents. The legislation...

...would grant dreamers 10 years of legal residence status if they meet certain requirements. They would then receive permanent green cards after completing at least two years of higher education or military service, or after working for three years... In addition to dreamers, Tuesday's bill would offer protections to people with temporary protected status, which has allowed people from El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras and other

countries to avoid being deported to nations engulfed in war or affected by natural disasters.

The [Center for American Progress](#), a liberal policy advocacy group, provided several data points of how the H.R. 6 would impact Pennsylvania. First they identify the people affected:

- Pennsylvania is home to 28,400 immigrants who are eligible for protection under the Dream and Promise Act
- These individuals live with 57,200 family members; among those family members, 10,000 are U.S.-born citizen children.
- Dreamers in Pennsylvania who are eligible for protection under the bill arrived in the United States at the average age of 9.
- TPS- and DED-eligible immigrants in Pennsylvania who would be eligible for protection under H.R. 6 have on average lived in the United States since 1999.

And then the [Center for American Progress](#) outlines the economic impact of these affected people on our state:

- Immigrants eligible for the Dream and Promise Act own 2,300 homes in Pennsylvania and pay \$20,000,000 in annual mortgage payments
- Eligible immigrants and their households contribute \$193,900,000 in federal taxes and \$117,300,000 in state and local taxes each year
- Annually, these households generate \$822,500,000 in spending power

The vote on the American Dream and Promise Act took place on Tuesday, June 4, 2019. The bill passed in a 237-187 vote. All of the Democrats were joined by 7 Republicans in supporting this bill. **Fitzpatrick was one of the seven who voted YES.**

While Rep. Fitzpatrick was silent about his vote, here is what other PA MoCs had to say about the passage of H.R. 6:

□ **PA-03's Rep. Dwight Evans, [06/07/19](#):**

"I have long supported the #DreamAct and I was proud to vote for it again this week. The Senate should listen to the 71% in PA who support a path to citizenship for DACA recipients and TPS holders:" *tweeted with a link to a Philadelphia Inquirer article titled "[In battleground states, strong support for DACA immigrants, poll shows](#)"*

□ **PA-04's Rep. Madeleine Dean, [06/04/19](#):**

"@HouseDemocrats just passed #HR6 to #ProtectTheDream and TPS and DED recipients. President @BarackObama said it best: "This is about whether we are a people who kick hopeful young strivers out of America, or whether we treat them the way we'd want our own kids to be treated."

□ **PA-05's Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon, [06/04/19](#):**

"Our diversity is our promise and our district is home to immigrants from all backgrounds who enrich our community. Just a few moments ago, the House voted to keep that promise and #ProtectTheDream by passing the #DreamAndPromiseAct!" *tweeted with a link to a Washington Post article titled "[House passes immigration bill to protect 'dreamers,' offer a path to citizenship](#)"*

□ **PA-06's Rep. Chrissy Houlahan, [06/04/19](#):**

"America is the only home many of our #Dreamers have ever really known. They are our neighbors, teachers, veterans, and business owners. Today, I joined my colleagues in passing the Dream and Promise Act because we are stronger economically and as a nation when we stand united. To #Dreamers in my community and across the nation--I will not stop fighting for you."

□ **PA-07's Rep. Susan Wild, [06/04/19](#):**

"Today we passed the Dream & Promise Act, giving our patriotic Dreamers & and TPS recipients real protections under the law. As a nation of immigrants, these folks deserve a fair chance to remain part of the communities they've called home for most of their lives. #ProtectTheDream"



□ **PA-09's Rep. Dan Meuser, [06/05/19](#):**

"Read my statement below on the Democrats' "Dream Act," which I strongly oppose. The bill would hand amnesty to millions of individuals, including convicted criminals, currently living in the United States illegally" *tweeted with a link to the Congressman's website, and a statement titled "[Meuser Statement on Democratic Amnesty bill](#)"*

□ **PA-13's Rep. John Joyce, [06/04/19](#):**

"By continuing to stifle all efforts to assist our law enforcement and mend the flaws in our asylum process, Democrats are making it clear that political posturing is more important to them than the safety of the American people and the rule of law." *tweeted with a link to a press release on the Congressman's site titled "[Joyce votes to bolster border funding; Democrats instead ram through amnesty measure to make crisis worse](#)"*

□ **PA-14's Rep. Guy Reschenthaler, [06/04/19](#):**

"As the humanitarian crisis at our southern border escalates, House Democrats want to pass a bill to make the situation worse and provide amnesty to millions of people. They need to work with us to fix our broken immigration system and address this crisis." *tweeted with an embedded C-SPAN clip of the Congressman's speech echoing these sentiments*

□ **PA-18's Rep. Mike Doyle, [06/04/19](#):**

"Today, the House is taking an important vote on H.R. 6, the #DreamAndPromiseNow Act. I am proud to cosponsor this bill, which would protect Dreamers as well as TPS and DED recipients by creating a pathway to citizenship. I am voting yes to #ProtectTheDream!"

**PASS THE DREAM &
PROMISE ACT NOW!**

#DREAMANDPROMISENOW

Disaster Aid package FINALLY passes [House Vote](#) on [H.R. 2157](#)

In the [05/26/19 MoCTrack](#) we discussed the efforts to pass a disaster relief bill that would help victims of wildfires, floods and hurricanes. That bill had passed the House and Senate in slightly different forms just before the two chambers left DC for Memorial Day and then a home work week. The House tried to pass the bill by unanimous consent during the recess... but Texas [Rep. Chip Roy](#) objected, blocking passage. Across the next week, [two more Republican House members](#) got in the way of sending funds to these needed areas - Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) took his turn on 05/28/19, and then freshman Rep. John Rose (R-Tenn.) ground things to a halt on 05/30/19.

It was not until the full House came back in session that they could pass the bill by normal procedures. In a vote taken on Monday, June 3, 2019, the disaster funding passed, 354-58. All of the 58 dissenting votes were from Republicans. **Fitzpatrick voted YES.**

A few PA House members shared their thoughts on the passage of the Disaster Aid bill:

□ PA-03's Rep. Dwight Evans, [06/05/19](#):

"This morning, I joined @SpeakerPelosi & some of my @HouseDemocrats colleagues for an enrollment ceremony for the newly passed \$19.1B disaster relief bill, which would help our fellow Americans – including in #PuertoRico – who are still trying to recover from hurricanes."



□ PA-04's Rep. Madeleine Dean, [06/03/19](#):

The Representative retweeted content from Majority Leader Steny Hoyer that reads - "The House has now passed the bipartisan disaster relief supplemental after it was delayed by House Republicans. I hope @POTUS will sign it swiftly into law so emergency funds can be released to help American communities rebuild from recent disasters."

□ PA-05's Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon, [06/03/19](#):

The Representative retweeted content from the House Appropriations committee that reads - "NEW: The House has voted to approve bicameral, bipartisan disaster relief to provide relief & recovery assistance for Americans affected by recent natural disasters □ [LINK](#)

Read more about the bill □ [LINK](#)

#DisasterReliefForAll"



The Social Security Administration has a new Commissioner

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Andrew M. Saul to head up the Social Security Administration

The Senate confirmed a number of bureaucratic nominations from the Trump Administration this week, including a new Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, and a new Commissioner of the Social Security Administration (SSA). None of those votes were particularly divisive, with most having under 20 NO votes, and the most objections topping out at 36. But providing more detail about just one of the nominees and their forthcoming job responsibilities provides a key example of the quality of Trump nominees, and the scope of the damage they could potentially inflict. (*Editor's note - and the fact that my real life job involves constant interactions with the SSA means that this is an area with which I am intimately familiar*).

More than 1 in 6 Americans - 62 million people - receive benefits administered by the SSA. About 80% of those benefits go to older Americans. The remainder receive benefits because of disabilities - 16% are disabled workers and their dependents, and 3% are young survivors of deceased parents who were benefit recipients. These statistics are from the [Center for Budget and Policy Priorities](#).

There are roughly [60,000 SSA employees](#). These people go way beyond the staffers of the [1,300 local district offices](#) who provide front line support to benefits recipients. They also include staff attorneys, hearing office clerks, hundreds of Administrative Law Judges, an information technology division, and payment processing centers. Last year they processed nearly [1.7 million applications](#) for benefits, and judges oversaw nearly [a million hearings](#). This is a MASSIVE administrative undertaking.

So that brings us to the nominee, Andrew M. Saul. Mr. Saul has no experience at all within the SSA. Instead, he graduated from college in the same class as President Trump, and he owned a women's clothing company named Caché. Mr. Saul does have some government appointee experience, having worked once the board of New York's Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), and then chairing the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board during the George W. Bush administration. According to [AllGOV.com](#), the nominee ran for Congress but was forced to withdraw from the race once the *New York Times* reported that two of his campaign donors were bidding on projects at the MTA while he was a board member, a clear conflict of interest that he failed to report. That same site recounted a peculiar story about the nominee attempting to avoid a ticket by impersonating a law enforcement officer:

In 2012, he tried to get out of a trespassing charge by claiming he was a police commissioner. Saul was trying to ride a bicycle on a dam when told by a police officer that he was trespassing. Saul ignored the officer, who had to pull Saul off his bike. Saul produced a "courtesy card" he'd received through the MTA police. Despite all that, Saul wasn't ticketed.

Mr. Saul himself doesn't seem particularly prepared for his new responsibilities. [Federal Computer Week](#), an industry periodical for government IT workers, reported that Mr. Saul said he was "scared to death of the systems." He is referring to the aged, or "legacy," computer systems used by the SSA, which desperately need updating.

Alex Lawson, Executive Director of Social Security Works, made the following [statement](#) about the nomination of Mr. Saul to head up the SSA:

Saul graduated from The Wharton School in 1968, the same year as Donald Trump...
Saul appears to believe that his wealth and privilege should make him above the law.
This is not a man who should be in charge of Social Security, a program that is an essential lifeline for over 60 million Americans and their families. A vote for Andrew Saul is a vote against Social Security

The vote on Andrew Saul's nomination took place this past Tuesday, June 4, 2019. Mr. Saul was confirmed in a 77-16 vote. **Casey voted YES** and **Toomey voted YES**.

UPDATE on the President's latest fake emergency and the Saudi arms sale

In our last MoCTrack report we discussed President Trump's [new fake emergency declaration](#), made so he can sell \$8.1 billion in arms to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates over the objections of bipartisan majorities of both houses of Congress. Events have progressed in the last two weeks, and this is where things stand as of 06/09/19.

[Vice News](#) explains, "This time, lawmakers are planning to force individual votes on all 22 of the arms sales already approved by the administration. And even Trump's normally reliable Senate allies are preparing to confront the Trump administration on the Senate floor because they see the arms sales as an executive power grab." The same outlet had quotes from GOP Sen. Rand Paul, who said "I think there's a growing number of people and a growing resistance to allowing the government to operate by emergency. So I think that you're going to see the biggest vote we've had." They also notes that even Trump-fan Sen. Lindsey Graham "disagrees" with this kind of executive action.

New Jersey Senator Robert Menendez is the ranking member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and he has been one of the most outspoken opponents to this sale. He is working with Committee Chair Lindsey Graham to formulate the legislative plan to thwart the President. The [New York Times](#) explains:

The coalition of senators is hoping to leverage a provision in the Arms Export Control Act that allows lawmakers to introduce what is known as a privileged joint resolution of disapproval against a proposed sale of arms, in essence forcing a debate and a vote. Their plan is to introduce 22 such resolutions, one for each proposed arms sale. A simple majority of lawmakers would need to vote to allow the debate to proceed — and if the measures advanced, the group of senators could monopolize hours of floor time as soon as mid-June.

Winning such support from Republican lawmakers is not out of the question. Members of Congress from both parties were livid early this year when the White House missed a congressional deadline to submit a report detailing whether the administration found Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman personally responsible for Mr. Khashoggi's death.

If you would like a reminder of how a privileged resolution works, you can find a short explainer from a past Learning about Legislation segment [here](#).

[NBC News](#) underscores what is at stake in this battle between the executive and legislative branches, by providing details about the items that will be sold to the Middle East from the United States if the sale goes through:

The planned arms sales include mortar bombs, engines and maintenance support for F-15 fighter jets for Saudi Arabia and equipment for AH-64 helicopters, laser-guided rockets, javelin anti-tank missiles, Patriot missiles and F-16 fighter jet engine parts for the United Arab Emirates. But the most controversial weapons in the deal are precision-guided bombs, which would almost certainly be used in the Saudi-led air war in Yemen.

Please continue to call your MoCs to let them know how you feel about this issue. [Scripts](#) for different MoCs are available for your convenience.

Where our MoCs currently stand on starting an impeachment inquiry

□ Senator Bob Casey, 05/30/19, via his [website](#):

"Congress must come together and stop Russian interference in the 2020 election at all costs. Republicans in Congress have done little on the question of Russian interference because they fear upsetting President Trump. It's time for them to stand up and protect our Democracy. Congress also needs to hold President Trump accountable for his abuse of presidential authority. Holding President Trump accountable will require additional hearings, testimony and potentially legislation to ensure the Russians are stopped and what occurred in 2016 never happens again."

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, 05/31/19, excerpt from the [Bucks County Courier Times](#):**

Toomey, Casey's Republican colleague, was not available Thursday for comment, spokesman Steve Kelly said.

However, Kelly said the senator's opinions had not changed since an April interview with the Beaver County Times, a sister paper to this publication. In that interview, Toomey said he saw nothing in the Mueller Report that "rises to an obstruction of justice" charge, and therefore there was no justification for impeachment.

Toomey offered that "a lot of what the president has said and done is extremely inappropriate," but that he believes evidence of obstruction has to involve actions such as perjury, encouraging others to commit perjury, or bribing someone to change their testimony.

"I'm not aware that there are any allegations of that sort," Toomey said. "So, my impression thus far is that there is no obstruction-of-justice charge to be made against the president."

□ **Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, 05/31/19, excerpt from the [Bucks County Courier Times](#):**

Cole Staudt, a spokesperson for Fitzpatrick, wrote in an email that Fitzpatrick believes Mueller and Attorney General Bill Barr need to testify before Congress. He added that without their testimony, it is "irresponsible to even discuss impeachment proceedings."

"Impeachment is one of the most serious and significant actions that a member of Congress can take. It is essentially overturning the results of an election," Staudt added. "The congressman is disappointed that Special Counsel Mueller will not be testifying, as he believes his testimony is necessary to shed light on the many unanswered questions raised in the report."

Asked what steps Congress needs to take next, Staudt said Fitzpatrick believes it must "act urgently" to protect elections from foreign influence and interference, calling it a "real and significant threat."

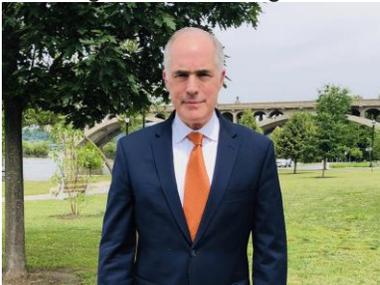
Twitter Action

This is where we take a look at some of the most active topics on Twitter this past week, and show you what Pennsylvania's MoCs had to say.

Twitter Action - Gun Violence Awareness

□ **Senator Bob Casey, [06/07/19](#):**

"Today I'm wearing orange to help raise awareness for the need to address gun violence. It's long past time we enact commonsense reforms, like universal background checks, to help reduce the number of shootings. #WearOrange"



Twitter Action - President Trump's Tariff threat to Mexico

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, [06/07/19](#):**

"I'm glad the president has signed off on a deal in which Mexico will do more to help combat the crisis at our southern border. It's also reassuring that, as a result of this agreement, Americans will not be forced to pay much higher taxes on goods imported from Mexico." *tweeted with a link to a Washington*

Post tweet/link that reads [“Trump says U.S. and Mexico have reached a deal on trade and migration, with the threat of tariffs on Mexican imports ‘indefinitely suspended’”](#)

Twitter Action - 75th Anniversary of D-Day

□ **Senator Bob Casey, [06/05/19](#):**

“I got the chance to see the Normandy American Cemetery, Omaha Beach and the English Channel, where 160,000 Allied troops invaded Nazi-occupied France, and the bluffs at Pointe du Hoc, where U.S. Army Rangers heroically climbed 100 feet straight up the cliffs during the invasion. Seeing these sites and taking part in the 70th anniversary was a poignant reminder of the tremendous sacrifices made both past and present by our service members and their families. It is important that we commemorate these key events in American history, while reflecting on the consequences of war and sacrifices of American servicemembers and their families. Our troops have and continue to make great sacrifices and contributions for our country, and it is our solemn duty to honor their valor.”

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, [06/06/19](#):**

“75 years ago, Allied forces conducted one of the most daring and impactful military operations. D-Day was a turning point in the fight of good against evil. The actions of heroes that day forever changed the world for the better. #DDay75”



□ **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, [06/06/19](#):**

“75 years ago, more than 150,000 soldiers stormed the beaches of Normandy in the name of freedom. God bless our veterans, especially the Heroes from D-Day. #DDay75”



Twitter Action - Promoted Legislation

□ **Senator Bob Casey, [05/31/19](#):**

The Senator shared this content from [Philadelphia Gay News](#) - “@SenBobCasey recently met with LGBTQ seniors at the John C. Anderson Apartments to receive feedback that could inform his efforts to pass the recently-introduced Inclusive Aging Act.”

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, [06/03/19](#):**

"Families seeking a nursing home for a loved one deserve to know when a facility has systemic shortcomings. For years, a subset of underperforming homes have been excluded from public disclosure. @SenBobCasey & I are working to change that." *tweeted with a link to a Penn Live article titled ["These Pennsylvania nursing homes are among the nation's most troubled, senators say"](#)*

□ **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, [06/04/19](#):**

"In communities across the country, PFAS chemicals have poisoned the drinking water of countless Americans and we must act swiftly to stop the spread of these dangerous chemicals and hold those responsible for this crisis accountable." *tweeted with a link to a Water Online article titled ["Fitzpatrick Introduces Bipartisan Legislation To Add PFAS To The Toxic Release Inventory"](#)*

Twitter Action - Assorted Awesomeness

□ **Senator Bob Casey, [06/06/19](#):**

"Thank you Carlisle for your questions, for your concerns and for taking an active role in your government."



□ **Senator Pat Toomey, [06/04/19](#):**

"We honor the Chinese citizens who 30 years ago stood in protest at Tiananmen Square to demand freedom from repression. To this day, the Chinese Communist Party still denies what happened next, the slaughter of countless innocent citizens. #Tiananmen30"

□ **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, [06/04/19](#):**

"Bucks County Technical High School gives over 1,400 students an opportunity to gain technical skills to succeed in our growing economy. I joined them to talk about how they are helping fill our nation's skills gap. Thank you to all the staff who are helping our children succeed!"



Casey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Kathy Sites

"We want to make sure that in the reauthorization process, we hear from folks directly who are either dealing with these issues personally in their families or themselves, or in the context of work that they do at a senior center or some other setting."

"The reauthorization of the Older Americans Act already has bipartisan support to help move it along. The question is, will that bipartisan support get us to passage on reauthorization? That's what we're working on now. But I think we'll get there some way or another."

"Depending on the number of amendments and the complexity or contention about an amendment, you can either have a markup that moves quickly or one that takes longer. We don't know which variety that this will be."

— [Senator Casey sought input/feedback from senior citizens regarding the reauthorization of The Older American Act as reported in the *Wyoming County Press Examiner* article titled "Casey seeks older Americans input"](#)

"I have advocated for an end to UPMC's prepayment policy since it was first announced. The rules of the Medicare program will ensure UPMC is paid for the care it provides and I appreciate UPMC's decision to prioritize the needs of its patients over profit. I have long advocated for a result that would put patients first and I am pleased to hear of this new development. This is the correct decision and I hope UPMC and Highmark will continue to keep the needs of beneficiaries in mind."

— [the senator's comments on the recent decision to halt prepayment requirement as reported in a *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* article titled "UPMC drops controversial planned prepayment policy"](#)

"I am pleased that CMS has taken the work that I have done with Senator Toomey seriously and is heeding our call to release the list of nursing facilities that are nominated to the Special Focus Facilities program. Our bipartisan work will ensure that families have all the information at their fingertips when choosing a nursing home."

— [one decision by Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services to release the names of nursing homes considered special focus facilities due to poor care for residents, from an article in *PennLive* titled "Following pressure from Pa. Senators, government will release more information about troubled nursing homes"](#)

"Oversight of America's poorest quality nursing homes falls short of what taxpayers should expect."

— [from an article in a Columbus, Ohio ABC News affiliate titled "Federal list of nursing homes with "persistent poor care" includes 8 in Central Ohio"](#)

"If you're on the candidate list or a participant in the program, that's a cause for concern. And if a family member is trying to make a decision about choosing a nursing home – or trying to help another family member make a decision – they need all the information possible."

"We are now advocating for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to release updated candidate lists each month alongside its regular list of special focus facilities."

"Given the importance of improving poorly performing nursing homes, I am open to any changes that might improve the program. This should be the focus of both parties, both houses, and both branches of government."

— [from additional *Penn Live* reporting on the nursing home situation being addressed by both of our PA senators, in an article titled "These Pennsylvania nursing homes are among the nation's most troubled, senators say"](#)

Fitzpatrick in the News

"I am proud we were able to work together to deliver these critical funds for the Delaware River Basin Restoration Program which will help our community protect our drinking water. We must all take steps to protect our environment and use American innovation to improve environmental policies and encourage better environmental stewardship so the Basin can continue to help our community thrive for generations to come."

— from an article in [TapInto.net](#) titled "[Reps. Watson Coleman, Boyle and Fitzpatrick Announce Increase in Funding for Protection of the Delaware River Basin](#)"

"No veteran should be homeless, and we must take every action possible to ensure we care for those who stepped up to serve our country. This legislation will help address the needs of our women veterans and their families while also helping us identify areas we can improve services focused on helping homeless veterans."

— from an article on [ConnectingVets.com](#) titled "[Women veterans are the fastest growing group of homeless vets. This bill aims to help.](#)"

"There is no greater responsibility than taking care of our kids," he said. "When you talk to people about the millions of unfilled jobs in this country, one of the reasons that always comes up is the lack of affordable child care. When people talk about the cost, you have to ask what is the cost of inaction? I think it's one of the wisest investments we can make."

— from an article in the [Bucks County Courier Times](#) titled "[Panel: Greater investments needed in early childhood education](#)"

Toomey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker

"The president is right to point out the crisis at our southern border. However, a blanket tax increase on everything Americans purchase from Mexico is the wrong remedy."

"Tariffs are a dangerous and risky economic tool. They raise the cost of products for American families, reduce market share abroad for U.S. exporters and make our economy less competitive globally. History has shown us time and again that nobody wins a trade war. Trade is mutually beneficial and trade restrictions, like tariffs, are mutually harmful."

"The president's use of tax hikes on Americans as a tool to effect change in Mexican policy is misguided. It is past time for Congress to step up and reassert its constitutional responsibility on tariffs."

— from an article in the [Beaver Times](#) titled "[U.S. Sen. Pat Toomey says Trump's tariff threat on Mexican goods is 'misguided'](#)"

"Pennsylvania has seen what happens with sanctuary cities. They become a magnet for dangerous criminals who are in this country illegally. Why in the world do they want to protect these people when among them are violent criminals? That's what we're talking about here: We're talking about people who are being picked up by local law enforcement for a reason. ... The idea that we've got to protect these criminals from the consequences of their own prior criminal acts is just unbelievable to me."

"...When our Democratic colleagues think that violent criminals should be allowed to stay and wander our streets freely without federal authorities being able to deport them, it's a little difficult to find common ground."

— from an article in the [Washington Free Beacon](#) titled "[Toomey: Sanctuary Cities 'Endanger the Public,' 'Should Come to an End'](#)"

"Virtually all, if not all of the fentanyl that ends up on the streets in Central Pennsylvania, and everywhere else in our Commonwealth, originates overseas... While I will acknowledge that this is not likely to end all fentanyl imports into the United States, it likely would make it much more difficult and therefore much more expensive and the hope is it would diminish the supply of this really, really, dangerous poison,"

— from an article on *We Are Central PA* titled "[Sen. Toomey proposes bill against illegal fentanyl imports](#)"

"The American economy is the best it's been in 50 years -- due in large part to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act." However, the president's latest unilateral tax hikes put at risk these advances. This decision also threatens to upend 25 years of duty-free treatment for products that cross the U.S.-Mexico border, and violates longstanding American commitments under NAFTA and at the World Trade Organization."

"For the past quarter of a century, American manufacturers have benefitted from NAFTA's zero tariff treatment to build highly integrated supply chains that span the North American continent, including in the auto industry."

— from an article in *Lehigh Valley Live* titled "[Toomey, GOP senator from Lehigh Valley, blasts new Trump tariffs as 'blanket tax increase'](#)"

"When a family makes the hard decision to seek nursing home services for a loved one, they deserve to know if a facility under consideration suffers from systemic shortcomings."

— from an article in *Newsday* titled "[Senate report reveals nearly 400 troubled nursing homes, including 2 on LI](#)"

Lastly, Elayne *HIGHLY* recommends this entire interview with Senator Toomey, as reported by Milwaukee's National Public Radio affiliate, WUWM 89.7. The piece is titled "[Republican Sen. Pat Toomey On Why He Opposes Trump's Plan To Impose Tariffs On Mexico](#)," and the content is also available via audio at that link. Here are some of the Toomey gems available in that interview:

- "I am not a supporter of the new - the newly negotiated NAFTA deal because I think it's going to diminish trade. So my threatening to withhold my support - it would be a hollow threat."
- "I mean, you know, how the Mexicans respond when they have a free trade agreement that precludes tariffs like this and the president nevertheless imposes tariffs like this - it's hard to imagine the Mexican Senate ratifying this agreement. It's hard for me to imagine the U.S. Senate approving it, or the House, for that matter. So I do think that is a serious obstacle for the administration."
- "...ultimately, I think if the president chooses to impose a round of tariffs, the authority under which the administration has indicated they would do this, I think there is a resolution of disapproval mechanism available to Congress. And so, you know, we would certainly have to seriously consider voting to disapprove it."

We here at MoCTrack do our best to convey the junior senator's content, but you really need to listen to this interview to get to just how uncomfortable he was with the tough questioning in the second half. GIVE IT A LISTEN!

Committee Corner

In this section we provide snippets from some of the most interesting hearings of the week. For all of this week's hearings, no transcriptions were provided by Congress or Committee, so they were performed by our MoCTrack team. Accordingly, we only provide a snippet from the hearing, with some of the best (or worst) moments from our Pennsylvania MoCs. Time markers and links are provided, so that you can see and hear the full exchanges from which these quotes are pulled, at your convenience.

Unfortunately, neither of Rep. Fitzpatrick's Committees or, more specifically, the subcommittees on which he sits held hearings last week. Here, however, are two snippets from interesting hearings - one on reproductive freedom and one on food stamps/school lunches, that provide an insight in how other PA MoCs are acquitting themselves in their committees.

The House Judiciary Committee hearing titled "Threats to Reproductive Rights in America" - June 4, 2019. Please visit the House Judiciary Committee's [website](#) for full information on witnesses present at this hearing, as well as links to their prepared statements.

□ **PA-05's Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon** - "As someone who has used Planned Parenthood for family planning services, to plan my own family, and has also held the hand of a young woman who chose to terminate her pregnancy after she was raped by a sexual predator twenty years her senior, I support the right of all women to make those choices based upon their own unique circumstances. I believe we must protect women's right to have access to a full range of reproductive healthcare options, and the ability to make those decisions in consultation with their medical providers, based upon their own circumstances, and their own religious beliefs, not someone else's religious beliefs." *Hearing is available on [Youtube](#), these remarks start around 2:29:14*

The House Education and Labor Committee hearing titled "Examining the Policies and Priorities of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service." - June 4, 2019.

Please visit the House Education and Labor Committee's [website](#) for full information on witnesses present at this hearing, as well as links to their prepared statements.

□ **PA-15's Rep. Glenn W. Thompson** - "Ultimate food security comes through a job. And over seven million jobs are open and available throughout this great country today. And we do have a skills gap. We know that, we've addressed, we've worked hard in this committee to address that skills gap and quite frankly, within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, I appreciate your work, and the work of Secretary Purdue to help those folks who are able-bodied, which is a definition that comes with broad exemptions for small kids and different things, age ranges, ummm...ummm... very definitive exclusions, but people who are able bodied to be able to get access, to be able to get that training that leads to food security." *Hearing is available on [Youtube](#), these remarks start around 1:01:52.*

Learning about Legislation

Instead of providing a new LAL section, I want to direct you to a resource you may wish to use. The fine folks at Lower Bucks Indivisible (my first and home Indivisible group) don't just maintain our PA-01 content on their website. The amazing webmaster, Gary, has excerpted all of our previous Learning About Legislation segments and have them all up in [one handy place](#). It's a great resource if you want to dig into some of the more technical aspects of keeping an eye on Congress. Some examples of past topics are...

- [The Senate Parliamentarian and Reconciliation](#)
- The definition of "[Conference](#)"
- [The Blue Slip Process](#) for judicial confirmations
- [Motion to Recommit](#)
- ["Queen of the Hill" Rule](#)
- [Motion to Table](#)
- [Unfunded Mandates](#)
- The Role of the [Speaker of the House](#)

If you are ever feeling like polishing up on some topics you might have last learned about in civics class in high school, check out our [archive](#) of Learning About Legislation articles.

Call to Action - Support this Bill!

[S. 1686/ H.R. 2950](#) - The Know Conflicts Act

The House version of this bill was introduced by PA-04's Rep. Madeleine Dean on 05/23/19 and it is pending in the House Oversight and Reform Committee. It does not have any co-sponsors yet. The Senate version of the bill was introduced by our own Sen. Bob Casey on the same day. That bill is pending in the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs committee, and it has a co-sponsor in Minnesota Senator and presidential candidate Amy Klobuchar.

This bill is a key example of turning norms into laws. As we all know from our experiences in the years since President Trump's inauguration, there are many ethical issues that we all assumed were enshrined

in law, and we found that when Trump deviated from what presidents before him had done, he was merely breaking norms and precedents, and there was no recourse in the law.

This offering from Senator Casey and Representative Dean would update the Federal Funding and Accountability Act of 2006. It would require that a publicly available database (www.USASpending.gov) that already tracks all federal awards, contracts and assistance would now also include whether any such grant is being made to any business or other holding of the President or Vice President, thus making public all conflicts of interest between the bureaucracy and the executive branch. The legislation would also require that an annual report of any such conflicts be made directly to Congress. This bill is supported by Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), whose executive director [observed](#) "...this kind of prevention is especially important since current federal law exempts the President and Vice President from some ethics and conflicts laws that apply to other executive branch employees,"

Senator Casey explained why he introduced this bill, [noting](#) "if we've said it once, we have said it a million times: the American people have the right to know if their highest elected leaders have financial ties that could affect decision-making from the Situation Room to the Federal Reserve." Representative Dean concurred, [adding](#) "...public service is a sacred trust, and conflicts of interest jeopardize that trust. That is unacceptable – and it's why this legislation is so important. The public deserve to know that their tax dollars are being used responsibly, ethically, and without conflict."

You are encouraged to call ☐ **Senator Bob Casey** and ☐ **PA-04's Rep. Madeleine Dean** to thank them for introducing these bills! Please use the following script with any other PA MoC. Use the Senate bill number with Sen. Toomey, and the HR# with all of the other uncommitted PA House members:

☐☐☐ - "Hi, my name is <xxx> and I am calling from <zipcode>. I am calling because I would like <lawmaker name> to co-sponsor [S. 1686/ H.R. 2950 - The Know Conflicts Act](#). This bill was introduced in both houses by fellow members of the Pennsylvania Congressional delegation, Senator Casey and Representative Dean. I support this bill because I feel that transparency in government spending is critical to a healthy government. Right now there are no laws that require information be made public related to conflicts of interest between the bureaucracy and the top members of the executive branch. I think it is important that we fix that oversight in the Federal Funding and Accountability Act of 2006. The government is supposed to work for the people, and it is important that we know that federal moneys are being awarded to serve our communities, and not because it creates profit for president or vice president.. This bill has the support of government ethics watchdogs, and I would like to know that it has <insert lawmaker's name> as well.

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 - 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

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!