

Pennsylvania Member of Congress Tracking Report - 06/23/19

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! Thanks for your patience with our altered format last week.

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)	29.0%	-0.9%
Senator Pat Toomey (R)	88.5%	+0.3%
PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)	69.0%	+0.2%

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. Four bills were scored this week - a trio of senate action to block arms sales, and a House appropriations bill.

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

"For a nation as a Society forms a moral person, and every member of it is personally responsible for his Society."

— [Thomas Jefferson](#), May 1792

Votes of Interest -

House passes massive appropriations bill

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 2740](#)

The House has spent the last two weeks working on a tremendous spending bill for the 2020 fiscal year, covering the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education... and all of their dependent organizations. According to the [New York Times](#), the bill contains \$983 billion in budgeted spending. To give an idea of the scope of this bill, and why it took weeks to get through, there were over 240 amendments, requiring 112 roll call votes!

Normally the amendment processes are the most revealing part of any of these big budget bills. But, with over 112 of them getting our MoCs on the record, let's just go for recapping some of the big ones:

- [Amendment 270](#) increases funding for refugee and entrant assistance. It passed 243-179. **Fitzpatrick voted YES.**
- [Amendment 267](#) would have allowed "[conscience protections](#)" at the Department of Health and Human Services. This is when healthcare workers can refuse to provide care to someone because of religious reasons (like refusing care to members of the LGBTQ community, or refusing to provide the morning-after pill). Thankfully, this measure failed, 192-230. **Fitzpatrick voted NO.**
- [Amendment 299](#) increases funding for the substance abuse and mental health services administration by \$6.5 million in order to support youth suicide prevention. It passed 386-38. **Fitzpatrick voted YES.**

- [Amendment 301](#) attempted to pull even more funding away from the ACA navigator program (one of the areas that has sustained heavy attacks from the Trump Administration). This failed in a 186-237 vote. **Fitzpatrick voted NO.**
- [Amendment 309](#) is one close to MoCTrack's heart, increasing funding for American History and Civics National Activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This passed 327-97. **Fitzpatrick voted YES.**
- [Amendment 343](#) attempted to remove the United States from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by disallowing any funds from being spent on those activities. That amendment failed, 174-244. **Fitzpatrick voted NO.**
- [Amendment 362](#) would prevent DOD from spending funds to implement ban on open transgender service. This passed, 243-183. **Fitzpatrick voted YES.**
- [Amendment 371](#) related to the Middle East arms sales described in the next section, on Senate votes. This amendment would block the 22 arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates that the president is trying to force through. This amendment passed, 237-191. **Fitzpatrick voted NO.**
- [Amendment 380](#) attempted to remove language from the bill that prohibits funds from being used for a border wall. This attempt failed, 197-237. **Fitzpatrick voted YES.**
- [Amendment 363](#) would limit the warrantless collection of American's communications under section 702 of FISA. This measure failed 175-253. Democrats were nearly split on this (110-126) and the GOP was also fractured (65-127). **Fitzpatrick voted NO.**

Many of our Pennsylvania MoCs were excited about various of their provisions that made their way into the bill's text, but were not necessarily voted upon as amendments:

- **PA-07's Rep. Susan Wild** and **PA-03's Rep. Dwight Evans** were both [talking up](#) a measure that would send an additional \$300 million to address the nationwide backlog of disability benefit appeals at the Social Security Administration.
- **PA-04's Rep. Madeleine Dean**, **PA-02's Rep. Brendan Boyle** and **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick** expressed excitement about the inclusion of Rep. Dean's request to fund the first nationwide health study on the consequences of [PFAS water contamination](#).
- **PA-02's Rep. Brendan Boyle** got increased funding to the [International Fund for Ireland](#) (IFI)
- **PA-17's Rep. Conor Lamb** and **PA-18's Rep. Mike Doyle** supported a [measure](#) to assign funding to a "U.S. Army research and development to mitigate musculoskeletal injury risk and optimize bone and muscle adaptation for military physical training."

One last pair of snippets from the bill are of particular interest to those of us who are concerned with Congress's role in using (and blocking presidential use of) war powers. [Section 9024\(a\) of this bill](#) states "The Authorization for Use of Military Force (Public Law 107-40; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) is hereby repealed." That means that if this passes both houses of congress, the president would no longer be able to use military force under the AUMF signed after 9/11. The bill also states in Section 9026 "nothing in this Act may be construed as authorizing the use of force against Iran."

The final vote on this HUGE package took place on 06/19/19. It passed, 226-203. **Fitzpatrick voted NO.**

A trio of Senate votes on the Middle East Arms sales

[Senate Vote](#) on [S.J. Res. 36](#), [Senate Vote](#) on [S.J. Res. 38](#), and [Senate Vote](#) on [S.J. Res. 48](#)

About a month ago, the Trump Administration took the opportunity of the Congress's Memorial Day break and home work week absence from Washington DC to declare a [new fake emergency](#) so that they could bypass Congress in selling \$8.1 billion of arms to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. This step was taken to fulfill requirements of the Arms Export Control Act (you can read an explainer from a previous [Learning about legislation](#) segment if you want to know more). In response to this attempt by the executive to usurp legislative authority, Congressional leaders from both parties vowed to respond. This week's legislative action was that retort. [NPR](#) reports:

Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., introduced the measures, citing Saudi Arabia's role in the war in Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition has been engaged in a multi-year campaign against Houthi rebels, often with disastrous consequences for the civilian population. "If the Senate wants to show the world that, even if you are an ally you cannot kill with

impunity, this is the moment," Menendez said on the Senate floor... With 22 separate sales pending, the other 20 resolutions involved arms sales to other allies, including the United Arab Emirates. They were voted on en bloc...

Voting "en bloc" means that the 22 separate sales were lumped into three different chunks, each linked to above. S.J. Res. 36 and S.J. Res. 38 both pertained to the sales to Saudi Arabia. Both of those bills passed on 06/20/19 in votes of 53-45. All of the Democrats and Independents voted YES and were joined by seven Republicans - Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Sen. Todd Young of Indiana, Sen. Jerry Moran of Kansas, Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky, Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, Sen. Lindsay Graham of South Carolina, and Sen. Mike Lee of Utah. The third vote, on S.J. Res. 48, involved sales to the United Arab Emirates. That measure passed with a vote of 51-45. Of the seven Republicans noted above, two changed their votes for this one - Sen. Lee of Utah did not vote, and Sen. Murkowski of Alaska voted No. For all three of these votes **Casey voted YES (to block the sales) and Toomey voted NO (to allow the sales)**. These resolutions now move to the House, and from there, presumably, to a presidential veto.

Senate judicial confirmation #1

[Senate vote](#) on Matthew J. Kacsmaryk to the USDC in Texas

This [Huffington Post](#) article titled pretty much says it all when it comes to our first United States District Court nominee, Matthew Kacsmaryk - "Senate Advances Trump Court Pick Opposed By Pretty Much Every LGBTQ Rights Group Ever." From that article:

Lots of President Donald Trump's judicial nominees have records of opposing LGBTQ rights and abortion rights; indeed, it is essentially a requirement at this point. But Kacsmaryk, the deputy general counsel for First Liberty Institute, a right-wing Christian advocacy group, has drawn particular criticism for his extreme views on both fronts.

He has fought against protections for LGBTQ people in employment, housing and health care. He has called including protections for LGBTQ people in the Violence Against Women Act "a grave mistake." In 2015, when Utah passed nondiscrimination protections, Kacsmaryk called the law "a bad idea" because it suggests that discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity should be taken as seriously as other forms of discrimination. He signed on to a 2016 letter that called being transgender "a delusion."

Kacsmaryk also ripped the Supreme Court's decision in Obergefell v. Hodges, the landmark 2015 marriage equality case. He wrote that "five justices of the Supreme Court found an unwritten 'fundamental right' to same-sex marriage hiding in the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment — a secret knowledge so cleverly concealed in the nineteenth century amendment that it took almost 150 years to find."

Additionally, [Lambda Legal](#) issued a release in opposition to Mr. Kacsmaryk. They observe that the nominee "has made a career for himself out of trying to take away the rights of our community. No LGBTQ person could ever expect a fair day in Matthew Kacsmaryk's courtroom." They recapped his career's anti-LGBTQ efforts like this, "He defended a baker who refused to sell a cake to a same-sex couple for their wedding after calling their marriage an "abomination." He has called transgender people "delusional" and said that the "very idea of gender identity is problematic." He says that the fight for LGBTQ equality is "on the wrong side of history."

The confirmation vote was held on 06/19/19, Mr. Kacsmaryk was confirmed to the bench, 52-46. Susan Collins of Maine was the only senator to cross party lines. **Casey voted NO** and **Toomey voted YES**.

Senate judicial confirmation #2

[Senate Vote](#) on Allen Cothrel Winsor to the USDC in Florida

Our second judicial nominee for this week, Allen Cothrel Winsor, will serve on United States District Court for Florida's Northern District. The [Vetting Room](#) notes that this Federalist Society member has clerked for

a judge on the US Court of Appeals before a career that included both private and public practice, most notably his four year stint as Solicitor General of Florida. But it is not Mr. Winsor's employment history, but his actual judicial philosophy and ideology that causes the most concern. The Alliance For Justice provided a summary of Mr. Winsor's work, much of which is deeply disturbing. All the following comes directly from their [brief](#):

- he defended several troubling laws, including repeated efforts in Florida to dilute the vote of persons of color and make it harder for Floridians to vote.
- Winsor defended a Florida law that required that the driver's license or Social Security number on a registration form be verified before a voter can be registered to vote... [a judge noted] while black voters made up 13% of the scanned pool, they comprised 26% of those who were purged.
- Winsor also submitted an amicus brief in *Glossip v. Gross*, arguing in support of Oklahoma's execution method. The case involved the use of midazolam, an anesthetic that came under scrutiny after it was used in Oklahoma's botched execution of Clayton Lockett. For Lockett, 43 minutes passed between the administration of midazolam and his death.
- Winsor defended a Florida law that imposed a mandatory 24-hour waiting period before accessing abortion care... Opponents of the law claimed that "the extra doctor's visit is an unnecessary burden, especially for poor women who may have limited access to transportation or find it difficult to take multiple days off work to have two appointments at a far-away clinic." In April 2016, the Florida Supreme Court blocked the law, and it was recently declared unconstitutional.
- Winsor defended Florida's marriage laws, which prohibited same-sex marriage, in several lawsuits
- Winsor was the signatory for the state of Florida on the filing of 29 states, lead by the state of Texas, to sue the EPA and stop the Clean Power Plan (CPP)
- Winsor defended a Florida statute that required suspicionless drug tests for all applicants seeking Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits
- Winsor defended a Florida law that prohibited doctors from discussing gun safety with patients. The law was supported by the National Rifle Association

In a vote taken on 06/19/19, Mr. Winsor was confirmed to a lifetime position on the federal bench, 54-44. Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia was the only Democrat or Independent to join with the Republicans in confirming this nominee. **Casey voted NO and Toomey voted YES.**

Senate judicial confirmation #3

[Senate Vote](#) on James David Cain, Jr to the USDC in Louisiana

Next in our list of confirmed judges we have James David Cain, Jr. who will serve on the United States District Court for the Western District of Louisiana. Mr. Cain is a founding member and partner of Loftin, Cain & LeBlanc LLC, according to the [American Press of Lake Charles](#). The [Vetting Room](#) provides additional information about his private sector work, explaining "Cain focused on representing the Lake Charles City Police Department and the Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's Department against civil rights suits." That same source also notes that Mr. Cain has given campaign donations exclusively to Republican candidates in the last decade, including to Rep. Steve Scalise and to the PAC for Senator John Kennedy (who voted in this confirmation). Like many fellow nominees, Mr. Cain is a member of the Federalist Society.

In a [letter](#) to senators, the People for the American Way made this statement about Mr. Cain's refusal to address certain questions at his confirmation hearing:

On behalf of our 1.5 million supporters nationwide, People For the American Way opposes the nomination of James David Cain, Jr... In [his] testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, [he] did not express agreement with *Brown v. Board of Education*, a core belief that is indispensable to a lifetime position on the federal bench... Nominees for the court that issued *Brown* have long expressed their agreement with the decision without generating headlines. But since President Trump took office, judicial nominees' support for *Brown* has gone the way of so many other democratic norms. Refusal to acknowledge the correctness of the case has become commonplace.

The confirmation vote was held on 06/19/19 and Mr. Cain was confirmed to the bench, 77-21. Republicans

were unanimous in their support of the nominee, and they were joined by 23 Democrats and 1 Independent. **Casey voted NO** and **Toomey voted YES**.

Senate judicial confirmation #4

[Senate vote](#) on Greg Gerard Guidry to the USDC in Louisiana

Our last new judge this week is Greg Gerard Guidry, who will serve on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. Mr. Guidry worked for a New Orleans oil and energy focused law firm before entering the public sector. He does have judicial experience, having served upon two Louisiana courts, according to [NOLA.com](#). But his refusal to affirm that Brown vs. Board of Education (the landmark 1954 decision that desegregated schools) was correctly decided in his confirmation hearing caused a letter of disapproval to be sent out from the [People for the American Way](#), a self described “progressive advocacy organizations founded to fight right-wing extremism and build a democratic society that implements the ideals of freedom, equality, opportunity and justice for all.” In their [letter](#) opposing the confirmation of Mr. Guidry, they state, “Judicial nominees should be committed to the principles Brown v. Board of Education represents and to a judiciary that reliably applies those principles. Senators should have the same commitment: That means taking seriously judicial nominees’ refusal to acknowledge that Brown was correctly decided.”

Additionally, the answers that Mr. Guidry provided to a Senate [judicial questionnaire](#) provide other objectionable content. Guidry has been a member of the Federalist Society since 2000, and when asked he stated that he intends to remain a member, even if confirmed. And the [Vetting Room](#) reports on accusations that Mr. Guidry violated the Hatch Act, that he solicited funds for a campaign on his official court stationary, and that the Louisiana Judicial Campaign Oversight Committee found that some of Mr. Guidry’s campaign mailers violated the state’s code of judicial conduct. Mr. Guidry has also been endorsed by the Family Research Council, an anti-LGBTQ group.

In a vote taken on 06/19/19, Mr. Guidry was confirmed to a lifetime position on the federal bench, 53-46. This was a pure party line vote. **Casey voted NO** and **Toomey voted YES**.

Twitter Action - MoCs on Legislation

□ **Senator Bob Casey, [06/21/19](#):**

“@realdonaldtrump The actions by your Administration to sabotage, slash and undermine Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act have already resulted in higher out-of-pocket costs for individuals and families in need of prescription drugs to remain healthy. We urge you to protect comprehensive health care coverage through Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act for our nation’s children, seniors, people with disabilities and families to make sure drugs are affordable for everyone.” *tweeted with a link to his [website statement](#)*

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, [06/17/19](#):**

“Access to good schools shouldn’t be determined by a child’s zip code. PA’s EITC program has provided millions in scholarships to lower-income kids to help accomplish this goal. With a waiting list of over 40,000 kids, now is the time to expand PA’s EITC.” *tweeted with a link to the Allentown Morning Call article titled “[U.S. Sen. Pat Toomey wades into fight over \\$100M in business tax breaks for private schools in Pennsylvania](#)”*

□ **PA-01’s Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, [06/17/19](#):**

“For years, half the funds authorized for the LWCF, which come from offshore oil and gas drilling royalties, were diverted to other areas. It’s past time to fully #FundLWCF which grows our economy & protects precious land across the country.” *tweeted with a link to a Penn Capital Start article titled “[Pa.’s Fitzpatrick backs bill to permanently pay for Land Water Conservation Fund](#)”*

MoC Tweets of the week

What happened to “assorted awesomeness”? Well, we were feeling a bit too constrained to provide happy-jolly content. “Tweet of the week” lets us highlight awesome content, but it also gives the freedom to share tweets that are full of material from a MoC that is just plain awful, and yet still says a lot about them as a legislator.

□ **Senator Bob Casey, [06/18/19](#):**

“I applaud the @CBPMidAtlantic, @ICEgov, @USCG, @PhillyPolice officers working to stop the flow of illegal drugs through our ports of entry. This seizure is further evidence that a border wall will not stop drugs from “pouring into the country” as the President has claimed, and points to the vulnerability they have created by reassigning @CBP officers from already understaffed Ports to the southern border. I hope the President will stop playing political games, get serious about stopping illegal drug trafficking and start working to address the real threats of illicit smuggling at our Ports of Entry. It’s time for this Administration to start working with Congress to address staffing shortages and improving the screening of cargo, passenger vehicles and sea containers.”

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, [06/21/19](#):**

“Did you know that June is #NationalCandyMonth? As the keeper of the Senate candy desk, & a senator from America’s leading confectionery producing state, this is a pretty big deal to me. Tip of the hat to all PA confectioners who help satisfy the sweet tooth of all 100 Senators!”

□ **PA-01’s Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, [06/21/19](#):**

“The Sudanese people rose up, opposing human rights abuses and seeking a change in leadership. Thousands have been killed, jailed, and displaced as the government attempts to stifle the people. I #StandWithSudan and it’s people and am calling for a peaceful end to the conflict.”



Casey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Kathy Sites

“These costs, to say the least, can be crushing. How the hell can we get prescription drug prices down when we have the Affordable Care Act being attacked morning, noon and night, and the Medicaid program being the subject of what I would call decimation because of what the administration is doing?”

— from the senator’s statements at a hearing held by the Senate’s Special Committee on Aging about increasing drug costs and efforts to address it as reported by the [globepost.com](#) in an article titled “[Is the Trump Administration Actually Reducing the Cost of Prescription Drugs?](#)”

“We know over and over again a misdemeanor hate crime often leads to a violent felony with a gun.”

“Mitch McConnell has refused to allocate time for debate and votes, debate and votes, over and over again. In addition to universal background checks legislation, this bill should be taken up as well. the broader issue is this even prior to the horror in Virginia, the Senate should be debating and voting on common sense gun measures.”

— the senator discusses The Disarm Hate Act that he introduced in the Senate, after it passes in the House. The act is designed to curtail the nation's problem with gun violence by keeping guns out of the hands of those convicted of hate crimes, from a [KXNet.com](#) article titled "[U.S. Senator Suggests 'Disarming Hate'](#)"

"It is a common misconception that only wealthy families adopt. We must do all we can do to ensure that all children are afforded the opportunity to grow up in a permanent, loving home. This legislation is a commonsense approach to improve lower-income families' ability to adopt and support children from foster care."

— the senator comments on the Adoption Tax Credit Refundability Act, legislation that makes the current adoption tax credit fully refundable as reported in the [fourstatehomepage.com](#) article titled "[Legislators introduce bill to make adoption more affordable for families](#)"

"This is one of those categories.. whatever it takes. Sign me up for it because we have to get this right. It will be easier to monitor change with now public monthly reports."

"There may be work that we have to do to improve the mechanics of this program, the special focus facilities program. So, we're going to examine any option possible to make sure that we are delivering on the promise of quality care."

— the senator spoke in Lebanon County about the report issued by him and Senator Toomey regarding the state of the nations nursing home, from a [Local 21 News](#) article titled "[Family speaks out about troubled nursing home](#)"

"By extending WIC to 6-year olds, I hope it will enhance the program and bridge the "WIC gap" between nutrition at home and school. That nutritional gap, where there's 12 months or 6 months, can be the difference between whether or not that child grows or succeeds in life."

— the senator explains "The WIC Act," which would extend eligibility for children from age 5 to 6 and extend the certification periods for infants and postpartum women while in Lackawanna County on June 14, as reported by [citizensvoice.com](#) in an article titled "[Casey eyes loopholes in WIC](#)"

Fitzpatrick in the News

"Congress has failed to pass a budget, failed to pass appropriations bills, repeatedly shut down the government, and allows our immigration and health care systems to continue to deteriorate. Members of Congress don't deserve a pay raise while failing to do their job as hardworking Americans show up to work every day, complete their work, and still live paycheck to paycheck."

— from an [Allentown Morning Call](#) article titled "[Should Congress get a \\$4,500 pay raise? Bucks County Republican Brian Fitzpatrick says no.](#)"

"I am pleased that enough of my colleagues agreed to join me that we were able to force leadership to put this ridiculous raise on hold. I look forward to meeting House leadership at the negotiating table to ensure the Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill doesn't include any pay increase for myself or any of my colleagues."

— from a [Doylestown Intelligencer](#) article titled "[Fitzpatrick sponsors measure to halt lawmakers' pay](#)"

"The Philly Shipyard represents enormous economic opportunity for residents and enterprises in the greater Philadelphia region... Congressional support for Philly Shipyard has always been a bipartisan,

regional effort with members from southeastern Pennsylvania, South Jersey and Delaware. We are proud to be working with our colleagues and to do our part to bring these new jobs to Philadelphia.”

— from the [Ripon Advance](#) blog post titled “[Fitzpatrick seeks to secure new federal shipbuilding work for Pennsylvania workers](#)”

“Since its establishment over 50 years ago, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has promoted recreational activity and contributed to our nation’s robust economy, along with conserving our national parks, forests, and critical wildlife areas. I fought for reauthorization of this fund which affects 98 percent of counties in the United States and encompasses 1 in 15 American jobs. Now I’m fighting to fully fund the LWCF so we can address conservation and recreational access needs across the country.”

— from a [Pennsylvania Capital Star](#) article on “[Pa.’s Fitzpatrick backs bill to permanently pay for Land Water Conservation Fund | Friday Morning Coffee](#)”

“[I]t pains me to know that your company would be getting this benefit while simultaneously and potentially illegally blocking its employees of their right to form and join a union.”

— an excerpt from a letter Rep. Fitzpatrick wrote to a casino owner, from a [Huffington Post](#) article titled “[‘Glitch’ In GOP Tax Law Comes Back To Bite Trump Megadonors](#)”

“I’m Irish and I’m traveling to Ireland and in August to Ukraine with Brendan Boyle. ... I love Ukraine as much as Ireland. They need a voice, and I promise to be that voice.”

— from an article in [Ukrainian Weekly](#) titled “[Alexander B. Chernyk Medal presented to Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick](#)”

Toomey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker

“I don’t want to advocate exactly what the president should do. It’s commendable that the president’s instinctive approach is to try to avoid an escalation that could lead to war.”

“Having withdrawn, I think the strategy is to impose sanctions so tough that the regime can’t withstand the domestic political pressure. The goal is to do a lot of damage to their economy... [I]f this economy suffers further, I think we’re likely to see political unrest, and I think that’s what it will take for the regime to decide they’ve got a better chance on holding power if they abandon their nuclear weapons program.”

“The president has at his disposal experts who can give him a very wide range of responses. I think there has to be a response.”

— Senator Toomey’s deference to President Trump on an issue that is 100% the constitutional responsibility of the Congress, from an article in [WESA](#) titled “[Toomey Commends Trump’s Approach On Iran, Amid Growing Tensions](#)”

“...let’s remember this regime in Iran is responsible for killing hundreds of American soldiers in Iraq when they were designing an (improvised explosive device) ... for the exclusive purpose of penetrating American armored vehicles and killing the American soldiers inside. And, so, I think very soon we may have to send an unequivocal message that this greedy government cannot be killing Americans.”

“I don’t know what those strikes were, and I don’t know what circumstances exactly called for (Trump) to withdraw the decision and even if, in fact, it’s accurate as reported that he gave a green light and then withdrew it. I just don’t know, because we haven’t had a briefing on this. It just happened, obviously.”

“The strategy is to impose sanctions that are so tough that the regime can’t withstand the domestic pressure. Remember, this regime is not a popular regime. If this economy suffers further, I think we’re likely to see political unrest.”

— the senator’s comments at an unrelated news conference at UPMC Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, as reported in the [TRIBLive.com](#) article titled “[Sen. Toomey lauds Trump for calling off Iran strikes, supports stricter economic sanctions](#)”

“We need monsters like this to suffer very serious consequences. It directs the Department of Justice to submit a one time report to Congress on best practices for enforcing anti-stalking laws at federal, state and local level. I think our public safety needs to take into account the kind of damage social media abuse this way can do.”

— from a [CBS Pittsburgh](#) article titled “[Bipartisan Bill Would Toughen Penalties For Online Predators Who Target Children](#)”

Call to Action - Support these Bills!

With more and more stories coming out about the mistreatment of children, migrants and asylum-seekers, actions are planned in Philadelphia and Langhorne on Tuesday, June 25th. More information is available at the [Pennsylvania Together website](#). MoCTrack helped out the activists organizing these events by finding eight already-pending bills in Congress that would address a number of the abuses that have been reported upon. Below you will find the bill names, sponsors, Pennsylvania MoCs who are “call targets” (as in they have not co-sponsored the legislation) and scripts. Please consider checking in with your representatives on any or all of these worthy bills.

Homeland Security Improvement Act – H.R. 2203

This bill increases transparency, accountability, and community engagement at the DHS; provides independent oversight of border security activities; and improves training of CBP and ICE personnel.

Bill Sponsor – Rep. Veronica Escobar (D-TX)

CONTACT Target – Rep. Fitzpatrick

Script - “I am calling today because I want <MoC name> to support the Homeland Security Improvement Act. There have been too many deaths of children, and too many reports of abuses to allow the current regime to proceed unchanged. Accountability and independent oversight are crucial factors for humane and effective border administration. This bill will bring affected groups together to build a more transparent system for the Department of Homeland Security and its dependent agencies like ICE and CBP. Please join on as a co-sponsor of the Homeland Security Improvement Act.”

Families Belong Together Act – S. 271/H.R. 883

This bill helps parents and children achieve lawful permanent resident status and authorizes money to help educate them on their legal rights as they enter the immigration process.

Bill Sponsors – Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Rep. Joaquin Castro (D-TX)

CONTACT Target – Rep. Fitzpatrick, Senator Casey and Senator Toomey

Script – “I am calling today because I want <MoC name> to support the Families Belong Together Act. Our nation has unlawfully separated thousands of families at our borders. This has caused unimaginable trauma. We owe it to these families to not just reunify them, but to provide some recompense for the damage we have done. This bill does that by helping get these families started on the path of achieving legal status here. Please join on as a co-sponsor of the Families Belong Together Act.”

REUNITE Act – S. 557/H.R. 1012

(Reunite Every Unaccompanied Newborn Infant, Toddler and other children Exeditiously Act)

This bill requires that the Department of Homeland Security, within 10 days of its passage, create guidance for immediate family reunification, and then facilitate all steps needs to prioritize reunification.

Bill Sponsors – Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA) and Rep. Adriano Espaillat (D-NY)

CONTACT Targets – Rep. Fitzaptrick, Senator Casey and Senator Toomey

Script – “I am calling today because I want <MoC name> to support the REUNITE Act. The Trump Administration zero tolerance family separation policy is a blight on our nation. That we are a year out from widespread knowledge of this practice and there are still children held in jail-like conditions is a travesty. We owe it to them, and we owe it to ourselves to reunify them as soon as is humanly possible. That’s why I support the REUNITE Act, and I would like <MoC name> to join on as a co-sponsor.”

Mental Health Care for Children Inhumanely Separated from Parents by the Federal Government Act of 2019 – H.R. 1339

This bill provides for mental health care to be made available to children who have been harmed by the separation from their families.

Bill Sponsor – Rep. Nanette Barragán (D-CA)

CONTACT Targets – Rep. Fitzaptrick

Script – “I am calling today because I want <MoC name> to support the Mental Health Care for Children Inhumanely Separated from Parents by the Federal Government Act. The Trump Administration’s policy of separating children from their families as a part of their zero tolerance policy has caused untold emotional and mental devastation to thousands of children. Our nation made this problem, and it is our responsibility to fix it! This is an excellent bill that provides mental health care for the children who have been traumatized by the actions of our government. That’s why I support Mental Health Care for Children Inhumanely Separated from Parents by the Federal Government Act, and I would like <MoC name> to join on as a co-sponsor.”

Keep Families Together Act – S. 292/H.R. 541

This bill drastically limits family separation at our borders and ports of entry.

Bill Sponsors – Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Rep. Jerry Nadler (D-NY)

CONTACT Targets – Rep. Fitzaptrick and Senator Toomey

Script – “I am calling today because I want <MoC name> to support the Keep Families Together Act. Our nation should not be using the tactic of tearing apart parents and children as a means of discouraging migrants or asylum seekers. Such an action is cruel and it is unworthy of what our nation stands for. Please join on as a co-sponsor of the Keep Families Together Act.”

Asylum Seeker Protection Act – H.R. 2662

This bill stops any funds from being used to enforce the “Migrant Protection Protocols,” the Trump Administration’s plan to force all migrants and asylum seekers to wait in Mexico for their cases to be processed.

Bill Sponsor – Rep. Veronica Escobar (D-TX)

CONTACT Targets – Rep. Fitzaptrick

Script – “I am calling today because I want <MoC name> to support the Asylum Seeker Protection Act. It is both immoral and illegal for the Trump Administration to force asylum seekers to wait in another country, indefinitely, for their claim to be processed. Congress must put a stop to this. Please join on as a co-sponsor of the Asylum Seeker Protection Act.”

Humanitarian Standards for Individuals in Customs and Border Protection Custody Act – H.R. 3239

This bill provides for greatly improved minimum standards of care, in relation to food, shelter, health screenings, water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Bill Sponsor – Rep. Raul Ruiz (D-CA)

CONTACT Targets – Rep. Fitzaptrick

Script – “I am calling today because I want <MoC name> to support the Humanitarian Standards for Individuals in Customs and Border Protection Custody Act. Media is reporting on increasing abuses and indignities being forced on detained migrants and asylum-seekers. We have seen pictures of people kept outside under bridges, and in crowded, unsanitary conditions. People have died in custody, for lack of basic medical care. This bill outlines basic minimum standards – like access to water and sanitation. Our nation is better than the care that we have provided until now. We need to do better. Please join on as a co-sponsor of the Humanitarian Standards for Individuals in Customs and Border Protection Custody Act.”

Protecting Families and Improving Immigration Procedures Act – S. 1733

This bill adds to the Keep Families Together Act by providing for more resources and judges to help clear the backlog of more than 800,000 immigration cases; ensures that families with children aren't forced into indefinite detention; and allows for more judicial flexibility.

Bill Sponsor – Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)

CONTACT Targets – Sen. Casey and Sen. Toomey

Script – “I am calling today because I want Senator <name> to support the Protecting Families and Improving Immigration Procedures Act. The systems at the border are overwhelmed, and need more resources if we are to process the claims of migrants and asylum-seekers quickly and humanely. This is at the crux of ending the separation of families and their detention in inhumane circumstances. This bill mandates the hiring of more judicial teams, and gives judges the flexibility to respond to each individuals circumstances. That's why I support Protecting Families and Improving Immigration Procedures Act, and I would like Senator <name> to join on as a co-sponsor.”

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!