

PA-01 Member of Congress Tracking Report - 06/30/19

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)	28.7%	-0.3%
Senator Pat Toomey (R)	88.7%	+0.2%
PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)	69.0%	0.0%

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 votes were scored this week, all on appropriations bills. Three were in the House, and one in the Senate.

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

"We have too many high sounding words, and too few actions that correspond with them."

— [Abigail Adams](#), 1774

Trying to end the detainment crisis at the border... ...a tragedy in four Acts

By now you have surely read about the truly deplorable conditions in which children and other detainees are being kept, in facilities contracted by our nation's Customs and Border Enforcement. It is impossible to ignore the reports the [dangerous overcrowding](#) with cells designed for 35 people holding 155 people; the [mistreatment of children](#) by guards; [children denied toothbrushes, soap, showers and beds](#); and [toddlers being left by guards](#) in the care of other migrant children. These are truly horrifying stories. Congress put their efforts this week into failing to address these problems. Here's how it happened:

☐ **Act One - The House tries to handle the humanitarian crisis in border detainment facilities**
[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 3401](#), the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Humanitarian Assistance and Security at the Southern Border Act, 2019

The House moved to pass a bill with emergency funding to deal with the humanitarian crisis. The bill under consideration would provide over \$4.5 billion to a number of agencies, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Department of Health and Human Services for the Administration for Children and Families program. There were attempts from progressives and Latinx lawmakers to add in more provisions to ensure improved care, because many MoCs were concerned that this bill was merely tossing more money to the very agencies who were the cause of the problems. The [New York Times](#) reported:

The House bill includes language that would require Customs and Border Protection to establish plans and protocols to deliver medical care, improve nutrition and hygiene, and train personnel to ensure the health and safety of children and adults in custody. It would mandate that the secretary of health and human services disclose which requirements were being temporarily waived to deal with a sudden influx of migrants. And the bill would limit the detention-center stay of any unaccompanied child to 90 days unless written notification was submitted to Congress attesting that no other facilities were available. Democrats also attached requirements for translators at Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement...

But after negotiations with more moderate members of the Democratic caucus, the resulting House bill was “more modest” (per [NBC News](#)) than what the concerned legislators were seeking.

This first vote was taken at about 10PM on Tuesday, June 25, 2019. It passed, 230-195. **Fitzpatrick voted YES**, and was the only PA MoC to break with his party for this vote. As it passed, the White House was already [threatening to veto](#) this House bill.

□ **Act Two - the Senate dismisses the House bill**

[Senate Vote](#) on [H.R. 3401](#) (in the state they got it from the House)

The Senate, upon receiving the House version of this bill, allowed a period of debate. This speech from Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.V.) perfectly encapsulates how the House’s offering was perceived by the Senate GOP:

Last night, the House of Representatives passed its version of the emergency border supplemental. Actually, to be more accurate, I would say the Democrats in the House passed their partisan version of a Homeland Security bill. I think the top-line numbers in the House bill may be similar, but the policy implications of that bill are vast...

...The partisan House bill would be vetoed by President Trump. What is needed is not more partisanship; what is needed is a bill that will become law so that we can get those resources to the southern border. That is why I am encouraged and proud that a bipartisan compromise was reached in the Senate Appropriations Committee. We passed it out of that committee 30 to 1 last week. (excerpt from the [Congressional Record](#) for June 26, 2019)

So, going into this vote on the House version of the bill, the Senate already knew that they had a bipartisan version of an emergency appropriations bill of their own waiting in the wings. In a vote taken at 2PM on Wednesday, June 26, 2019, the House version (remember, already with only “modest” oversight provisions) failed, 37-55. **Casey voted YES** and **Toomey voted NO**. Of the eight legislators who did not vote, seven were presidential candidates (Harris, Bennet, Warren, Klobuchar, Booker, Gillibrand, Sanders) who were facing debates in the coming nights.

□ **Act Three - the Senate throws money at the agencies causing the problem**

[Senate Vote](#) on [H.R. 3401](#) (their version)

Having easily dismissed the House’s plan for addressing the detainee crisis, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell allowed a vote on the Senate’s plan for addressing the problems at the border. The same basic agencies would be the recipients of the funding (Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Department of Health and Human Services), but the focus and uses for that funding were allocated differently. The [Washington Post](#) characterizes the Senate-authored version of bill as “giving money to enforce the border. It also gives money to Immigrations and Customs Enforcement and immigration judges to try to speed up decisions about who can stay and who has to go.” The [New York Times](#) provided additional details:

The Senate legislation would allocate about \$1.3 billion to improve facilities at the border and \$2.9 billion for the care of migrant children. The measure prohibits the Department of Homeland Security from adding more beds at detention centers or migrant processing facilities, ostensibly to slow the immigration crackdown. The Senate would require the

department to allow congressional visits to facilities housing unaccompanied children with two days' notice; the House bill would permit them with no notice at all.

All of the "modest" provisions included in the House version of the bill - translators at ICE and CBP, unannounced inspections, improve nutrition and hygiene, training for officers and guards... all that is missing from this new Senate version.

The vote on the Senate version of the emergency border appropriation bill was taken around 3PM on Wednesday, June 26, 2019. It passed 84-8. The eight senators to vote NO were Democrats Mazie Hirono of Hawaii, Chris Van Hollen of Maryland, Ed Markey of Massachusetts, Bob Menendez of New Jersey and Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden of Oregon; and Republicans Rand Paul of Kentucky and Mike Lee of Utah. **Casey voted YES and Toomey voted YES.**

□ Act Four - the House folds, then leaves for vacation

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 3401](#) (in the state they got it back from the Senate)

As the day began on Thursday, June 27, 2019. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was facing pressure from all sides (to be charitable). Members of her party were pressing for a conference committee to iron out the differences between the Senate and House versions of the bill, according to [Vox](#), but Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell was not biting. Republican Members of the House were coming to the floor and pressing for consideration of the Senate version of the bill. Over 80 of them came up, and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy was keeping up the pressure on Twitter, and with continuous media appearances:



And the largest pressure was coming from the Congressional calendar. There was just one more day in session before a week-long break. Even if Mitch McConnell was willing to have a conference committee, there was no way that they would hammer out a compromise AND get both houses to vote on it before that weeklong break. McConnell wasn't going to bring the Senate back to DC for a special vote, especially because with the Senate having passed their bill, any delay in getting funding would be blamed on Democrats in the House..

And so, *The Washington Post* says it best with this article title: "[House passes \\$4.6 billion border bill as leaders cave to moderate Democrats and GOP.](#)" In a vote at 5PM on Thursday, June 27, 2019, the Senate's version of emergency border funding passed, 305-102. **Fitzpatrick voted YES.**

The problem, of course, is that money without improved oversight has little chance of fixing any problem. It was not a lack of resources that caused this crisis, but a lack of compassion for the people fleeing intolerable situations in their home countries. But, you know, the Congress got to leave for vacation on time. So, there's that, right?

Other Votes of Interest

The House Passes a second appropriations bill

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 3055](#)

This bill is one of many omnibus packages that Congress takes on every year (when they are doing their job and not kicking the can down the road with [continuing resolutions](#)) to fund the government. This appropriations bill is titled the “Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act” and as you might infer from that name it covers the Department of Commerce, the Department of Justice (DOJ), science agencies, including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Science Foundation (NSF). Other smaller, related agencies also included in the bill are the Bureau of the Census, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Marshals Service, the Office on Violence Against Women, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and the Federal Prison System.

The [Washington Business Journal](#) notes that this appropriations package includes material from another bill proposed after the shutdown, which will pay federal contractors for the time the government was closed. Their article reports that the bill:

...contains language from the Fair Compensation for Low-Wage Contractor Employees Act of 2019 that compensates federal contractors for pay or paid leave lost as a result of the 35-day budget impasse. The Fair Compensation bill, sponsored by Rep. Ayanna Pressley, D-Mass., proposed that the agencies affected by the shutdown adjust the price of the contracts suspended, delayed or interrupted when the government closed on Dec. 22, 2018, to recover the costs contractors, and contracted service workers, lost during the government’s closure. Eight departments, along with portions of the departments of Health and Human Services and Interior and multiple agencies, were affected.

The vote for this bill was taken on Tuesday, June 25, 2019. The bill passed, 227-194. Not a single Republican voted YES, and one Democrat - Rep. BenMcAdams of Utah - joined the GOP in their NO votes. **Fitzpatrick voted NO**. This bill now moves to the Senate.

The House passes a third appropriations bill

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 3351](#)

This is another one of the many appropriations bills that the Congress needs to pass to fund the government through fiscal year 2020. [GovTrack](#) explains that this omnibus bill covers spending on “the Department of the Treasury, the Executive Office of the President, the judiciary, the District of Columbia, and several independent agencies.” Some (but certainly not all, for brevity’s sake) of those independent agencies include the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Election Assistance Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, the Federal Election Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, the General Services Administration, the National Archives, the Office Personnel Management, the Office of Special Counsel, and the Office of Government Ethics.

An industry blog, [Meritalk](#) (self-described as ‘improving outcomes of Government IT’) reports that this bill “provides \$24.55 billion in discretionary funding – an increase of \$1.44 billion from the FY2019 allocation and \$355.5 million more than the White House budget request.” The package also includes \$18 million to Treasury Department efforts to boost enhanced cybersecurity, \$35 million for the Technology Modernization Fund, and there is also protective text that states “None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the Office of Personnel Management to implement or carry out any furloughs or reduction in force of employees of the Office.” According to [Meritalk](#) this last snippet “follows recent threats from the White House to furlough 150 OPM employees if Congress blocks its plan to eliminate OPM.”

The [Washington Business Journal](#) notes that a report attached to this bill calls on the General Services Administration and the Department of Justice to investigate the lease of federally owned property to the president’s businesses:

The appropriations committee's report calls upon the GSA General Counsel and the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel to look specifically at that issue,

"including the legal obligations which the GSA faces to ensure that the lease is being complied with and is itself in compliance with the law, including the U.S. Constitution." The report with the spending bill, sponsored by Rep. Mike Quigley, D-Ill., would require the GSA to send the committee a review within 180 days, including its full findings and recommendations to cure outstanding constitutional issues, including "any potential plans for modification or termination of the terms of the lease."

The bill came up for a vote on Wednesday, June 26, 2019 and passed 224-196. Republicans presented a unified front in voting NO, and they were joined by 5 Democrats. **Fitzpatrick voted NO.** This bill now moves to the Senate.

The House takes on Election Security

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 2722](#), the SAFE Act

In the wake of information from the Mueller Report about how Russia compromised our nation's election infrastructure, the House moved this week to increase election security. The SAFE Act, introduced by Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.) would do the following (excerpted from the [GovTrack bill summary](#)):

- establish requirements for voting systems, including that systems (1) use individual, durable, voter-verified paper ballots; (2) make a voter's marked ballot available for inspection and verification by the voter before the vote is cast; (3) ensure that individuals with disabilities are given an equivalent opportunity to vote, including with privacy and independence, in a manner that produces a voter-verified paper ballot; and (4) be manufactured in the United States.
- The National Science Foundation must award grants to study, test, and develop accessible voter-verified paper ballot voting and best practices to enhance the accessibility of such voting for individuals with disabilities, for voters whose primary language is not English, and for voters with difficulties in literacy.
- The Election Assistance Commission (EAC) must award grants to states to (1) replace certain voting systems, carry out voting system security improvements, and implement and model best practices for ballot design, ballot instructions, and the testing of ballots; and (2) conduct risk-limiting audits.

The [Government Technology](#) blog adds that "the measure would authorize \$600 million for states to bolster election security. It also would give states \$175 million biannually to help sustain election infrastructure."

The House vote was taken on Thursday, June 27, 2019. It passed, 225-184. Only one lawmaker, Rep. Brian Mast (R-Fla.) crossed party lines. **Fitzpatrick voted NO.** This bill now moves to the Senate.

The Senate passes the 2020 Defense Authorization, punts Iran amendment until after bill passes

[Senate Vote](#) on [S. 1790](#)

This is a massive bill that funds Department of Defense operations for the 2020 fiscal year. [The Hill](#) provides a precise summary of what was included in the authorization:

The bill provides \$750 billion in total spending, including a base budget of \$642.5 billion for the Pentagon and \$23.3 billion for the Department of Energy's national security programs. It also gives \$75.9 billion for the overseas contingency operations fund, an account that does not fall under budget cap restrictions.

The defense insider blog [Just Security](#) further details what is included in the bill, including some limitations on the executive branch. The bill:

...imposes onerous restrictions and requirements on the use of Department of Defense (DoD) resources to secure the southern border. The mark outright prohibits the use of national defense funds (Section 1046) or military construction funds authorized in any Military Construction Authorization Act from FY2015-19 (Section 2801) to construct a wall, fence, or other physical barrier along the southern border. The mark further modifies and clarifies the construction authority in the event of a declaration of war or national emergency (Section 2802). Military construction projects authorized under a national

emergency declaration cannot exceed \$500 million. For domestic military construction projects, the limit is only \$100 million. In the event of a national emergency declaration, construction can begin only five days after the appropriate congressional committees receive a report explaining why the armed forces are needed to respond and how each construction project directly supports the immediate needs of the armed forces.

In a vote taken on the afternoon of Thursday, June 27, 2019, the measure passed the Senate, 86-8. The eight senators who voted against the bill included 3 Republicans (Mike Braun of Indiana, Rand Paul of Kentucky, and Mike Lee of Utah) and 5 Democrats (Ed Markey of Massachusetts, Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, Cory Booker of New Jersey, Jeff Merkley of Oregon and Ron Wyden of Oregon). Of the six senators who did not place a vote, five of the are Democratic candidates who were participating in that night's debate. **Casey voted YES** and **Toomey voted YES**.

In a procedurally peculiar motion, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell allowed an amendment vote ([S.Amdt. 883](#)) to the bill to be placed the morning (at 5:02 AM, quite a long night for those who participated in the debate!) following the actual bill's passage. Senator Tom Udall (D-N.M.) offered an amendment that would "prohibit unauthorized military operations in or against Iran." This measure needed a 60% super-majority to pass. So even though a majority of our senators voted for it, the amendment failed, in a 50-40 vote. All of the 40 votes opposing the amendment came from Republicans. The fifty votes in favor came from 44 Democrats, 2 Independents and 4 Republicans. **Casey voted YES** and **Toomey voted NO**. This bill now moves to the House.

Our MoCs respond to the humanitarian crisis at our borders, and the aid bill

☐ **Senator Bob Casey, [06/27/19](#):**

"Since September of 2018, these six children have died while in United States government custody.
Carlos Hernandez Vásquez, 16 years old.
Wilmer Josué Ramírez Vásquez, 2 years old.
Darlyn Cristabel Cordova-Valle, 10 years old.
Juan de León Gutiérrez, 16 years old.
Jakelin Caal Maquin, 7 years old.
Felipe Gomez Alonzo, 8 years old."

Tweeted with an embedded clip of the floor speech of the Senator talking about the children who died in US custody

☐ **Senator Pat Toomey, [06/26/19](#):**

"Today, I joined an overwhelming bipartisan majority of my colleagues in supporting emergency funding to address the crisis at the border. See my full statement:"

“ Today the Senate approved \$4.59 billion in emergency funding to provide immediate assistance at our southern border. These funds will be used to care for migrant children and adults in custody while strengthening border security and the immigration court system. Unlike the House bill, this measure passed with significant bipartisan support and can be signed into law. If Speaker Pelosi and House Democrats are serious about addressing the crisis at our border, they will take it up and pass it without delay.

toomey.senate.gov

☐ **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, [06/28/19](#):**

The MoC retweeted content from Rep. Fred Upton (R-Mich.) - "☐ Given the humanitarian crisis at the border, the Problem Solvers Caucus is asking for the immediate consideration on the House Floor today of HR 3401, as amended by the Senate. ☐"

STATEMENT FROM THE BIPARTISAN PROBLEM SOLVERS CAUCUS ON THE BORDER EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL BILL

WASHINGTON – The Problem Solvers Caucus, which includes 23 Democrats and 23 Republicans, today issued the following statement regarding the border emergency supplemental bill.

“Given the humanitarian crisis at the border, the Problem Solvers Caucus is asking for the immediate consideration on the House Floor today of HR 3401, as amended by the Senate.”

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Twitter Action - MoCs on legislation

- **Senator Bob Casey, [06/27/19](#):**
“Glad to see my bipartisan bill with @SenToddYoung to improve #Medicare enrollment was unanimously voted out of the Ways & Means Committee this week. Both House and Senate should act swiftly to pass this important bill. Thanks to more than 85 supporters for helping move my #BENESAct forward, including @BCBSAssociation @MedicareRights @AARPadvocates and more.”

- **Senator Pat Toomey, [06/27/19](#):**
The senator retweeted content from his co-sponsor, Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-Mary.) - “The #BRINKAct will finally close a big loophole in our sanctions regime with North Korea. I’m glad that it will be included in the NDAA, and @SenToomey and I will keep pushing until it passes. Tune in live to hear the latest:” tweeted with an embedded video clip that features Senator Toomey speaking, among other senators

- **PA-01’s Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, [06/26/19](#):**
“Apprenticeship programs are a proven tool for workers to learn advanced skills while also earning a paycheck. I am proud to work with @RepLindaSanchez on this bipartisan legislation to enhance America’s workforce.” *tweeted with a link to a post on the [Ripon Advance](#)*

Tweet of the Week

- **Senator Bob Casey, [06/28/19](#):**
This thread was tweeted in response to news reports that President Trump wagged his finger and joked to Russian President Putin, “don’t meddle in the election.”
“.@realDonaldTrump a foreign adversary meddling in our election is no laughing matter.

Let me remind you, according to the Special Counsel report, “[t]he Russian government interfered in the 2016 presidential election in sweeping and systematic fashion.” (Vol. I, p. 1)

The Special Counsel’s office “identified dozens of U.S. rallies organized by the IRA,” including “a series of pro-Trump rallies in October 2016” targeting my own constituents in Pennsylvania. (Vol I, p. 29-31)

In addition to this influence campaign, Russian military hackers known as the GRU engaged in “cyber intrusions...and releases of hacked materials damaging to the Clinton Campaign.” (Vol. I, p. 4)

“The GRU stole hundreds of thousands of documents” from the Clinton Campaign and Democratic committees and “began disseminating stolen materials through the fictitious online personas ‘DCLeaks’ and ‘Guccifer 2.0.’” (Vol. I, p. 4)

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence report clearly stated that Vladimir Putin personally “ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the U.S. presidential election”

Despite the findings of Robert Mueller and our intelligence community, you have demonstrated no willingness to lead on this. Your lack of action is a serious, dangerous dereliction of his sworn duty to protect our Nation “against all enemies, foreign and domestic.”

By refusing to act, you are making our country less safe.”

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, [06/24/19](#):**

“Today, @POTUS acted to help empower Americans to make better-informed decisions about their health care. See my full statement on his executive order:”

“

A great way to lower health care costs is by empowering consumers to make informed choices. I applaud the president for taking the initiative to make health care prices and quality far more transparent to patients.

I'm also pleased the administration is expanding access to Health Savings Accounts for preventative care. I look forward to continuing to work with the president and my colleagues as these regulations are finalized in order to improve cost and quality transparency for consumers, expand choice, and lower prices across the entire sector.

toomey.senate.gov

□ **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, [06/26/19](#):**

The MoC retweeted content from I AM ALS - “Thank you @RepBrianFitz for being a co-founder of the #ALSCaucus and working to create a bipartisan team of lawmakers who will think creatively about policy solutions to comprehensively address #ALS. You are an #ALSchampion.”



Casey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Kathy Sites

“We know that the majority of seniors and people with disabilities want to age in their homes and communities. In order to help them do so, we must ensure they have safe, accessible and affordable housing. This is why I hosted today’s discussion to hear directly from members of the community about their unique housing needs. Federal, state and local leaders must work together to ensure we create

comprehensive strategies for breaking down barriers to accessing supportive housing services for those who need them.”

— [the senator’s comments roundtable discussion in Wayne County about the housing needs of seniors and people with disabilities, as reported in a News Eagle article titled “Local Leaders Engage in Conversation With Senator Casey”](#)

“Based on recent reports, there is significant evidence that some federal contractors and grantees have not provided adequate accommodations for children in line with legal and contractual requirements. In one such report, children in a facility near El Paso, Texas were given inadequate food, water, and sanitation. Further, it was reported that older children were taking care of infants and that there was an outbreak of the flu due to improper medical care. These news reports build on previous reports from the Office of Inspector General at the Department of Health and Human Services indicating that many of the federal contractors and grantees charged with the care of migrant children, both by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Homeland Security, have not complied with all applicable federal and state policies and requirements. This is especially troubling given that the children in their care are often young and unable to advocate for their interests.”

— [and excerpt from a letter from Senator Casey and six of his colleagues to officials at HHS and GAO about reports of deplorable conditions in camps housing migrant children as reported by the Sierra Sun Times titled “U.S. Senators Say Federal Contractors in Charge of Migrant Children Must be Investigated”](#)

“In purchasing these hospitals, you made a commitment to these people and to the city of Philadelphia. We ask that you honor that commitment by exploring all options to protect these important institutions and do everything you can to reach an agreement that will keep them open.”

— [an excerpt from a letter authored by Senator Casey and five Pennsylvania Representative regarding the closure of Hahnemann Hospital as reported by ABC affiliate WPM in an article titled “More calls for Hahnemann Hospital CEO to reverse closure decision”](#)

“This seizure is further evidence that a border wall will not stop drugs from ‘pouring into the country’ as the president has previously claimed and points to the vulnerability the administration has created by reassigning border protection officers from already understaffed Ports to the southern border.”

— [from an article in Complex titled “Over 16 Tons of Cocaine Worth \\$1 Billion Seized at Philadelphia Port”](#)

Fitzpatrick in the News

“I was honored to be recognized by the Ukrainian National Information Service and thank them for their work. As co-chair of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus, I have never wavered in my support of Ukrainian sovereignty and condemning Russian aggression. I will continue to stand with the Ukrainian people, who have demonstrated time and again their will for a sovereign and democratic country.”

— [from an article in The Ukrainian Weekly titled “Ukrainian Day advocacy event held in Washington”](#)

“Apprenticeship programs grow our economy by fostering training programs that will prepare workers for in-demand careers. By closing the skills gap, this bipartisan program will encourage more good-paying jobs for working families, while addressing our nation’s current shortage of trained workers. I am proud to work with Congresswoman Sanchez on this bipartisan legislation to enhance America’s workforce and bring robust job growth to Bucks and Montgomery Counties.”

— [from a Ripon Advance blog post titled “Fitzpatrick proposes tax credit for employers running apprenticeship programs”](#)

“A key component of mental health is early detection and treatment. With 75 percent of mental health conditions appearing before 24 years of age, it is important that institutions of higher learning have the

professional resources and capabilities to improve retention rates and allow students to succeed. I am confident this bipartisan legislation will provide stronger learning environments in our nation's colleges and universities."

— from a [WCBC Newsradio](#) article titled "[Trone Introduces Higher Education Mental Health Initiative](#)"

The launch of the ALS Caucus is welcome news in the fight against such a debilitating disease. [Families] need our support on the federal level to support enhanced research and treatment options."

— from a [Ripon Advance](#) blog post titled "[Calvert, Fitzpatrick present new bipartisan ALS caucus](#)"

Toomey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker

"In my view, the only way we can hope to change North Korea is with crippling sanctions. The sanctions currently in place are not sufficient... [the sanctions] would present Chinese banks with a very simple choice: You can do business with the United States, or you can do business with North Korea, but you can't do business with both."

— from an article in the [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) titled "[With sanctions measure, Toomey leads Senate's push to force Trump to get tougher on North Korea](#)"

Mr. Toomey and Mr. Van Hollen reintroduced the bill in March, one week after the Hanoi summit talks suddenly fell apart. Asked that day about Mr. Trump's view on Mr. Warmbier's death in an interview with MSNBC, Mr. Toomey said, "You'd have to ask the president why he takes that view. My own view is Kim is certainly responsible for that atrocity."

"I'm not aware of any resistance from the administration," Mr. Toomey said at the press conference on Thursday, adding that the administration agrees the measure "would strengthen the hand of U.S. negotiators — if and when negotiations should become meaningful."

— and additional except from the same [Pittsburgh Post Gazette](#) article that needed the context of the surrounding text from the paper to illuminate the meaning of Senator Toomey's comments

"I was proud to play my part in this effort and will continue to push back on federal rules that force commuters to pay more at the pump with minimal environmental benefit."

— the senator's comments on the Trump Administration's EPA policy change that eliminates a rule requiring a pollution reducing fuel mix in hot months, from an article in the [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) titled "[Good news for consumers: No more summer gas](#)"

"All Pennsylvanians — particularly the residents of Bucks and Montgomery counties — should be fully aware of any risks associated with PFAS in drinking water."

— from an article in the [Pennsylvania Capital Star](#) titled "[Pa. lawmakers seize on Pentagon spending bill to tackle PFAS in drinking water](#)"

"The waivers simply diminish the burden of this terrible mandate on the refineries least able to afford it, and therefore allow them to continue doing business... [The EPA] should continue working to bolster our flourishing energy sector, not undermine it."

— from an article in the [Financial Post](#) titled "[Republican senators urge U.S. EPA to hold firm on refinery biofuel waivers](#)"

"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."

— from an article on *WTF* titled "[Sen. Toomey commends Trump's approach on Iran, amid growing tensions](#)"

Learning about Legislation

Normally, when the House and Senate pass separate version of the same bill, they create a "conference committee," a group of legislators representing both houses and both parties, to iron out the differences. That did not happen this past week, when House Speaker Nancy Pelosi agreed to bring the Senate version of H.R. 3401 up for a vote in the exact form that the Senate passed it. If you would like to read more about conference committees, here is a [link to a past Learning about legislation segment](#), with an examination of how such a group melded the House and Senate versions of the GOP Tax Plan into its final (sloppy and in need of multiple fixes) form.

Call to Action - Support this Bill!

[H.R. 3239](#) - Humanitarian Standards for Individuals in Customs and Border Protection Custody Act

We established in the 'tragedy in four acts' segment of the MoCTrack report this week that the emergency funding bill passed by both houses does little to address the humanitarian detainee crisis at our borders. Little in the bill would enforce minimum standards for living conditions for the migrants, asylum-seekers and child detainees being incarcerated by our government. This bill, introduced by Rep. Raul Ruiz (D-Calif.) would make necessary changes to ensure that the people being imprisoned by our government have the benefits of an increased minimum standard of care.

The bill would provide for:

- A health screening to be made within 3-12 hours of detainment, with chaperones available
- Availability of interpreters
- Established prioritization for children, infants, elderly, pregnant or disabled individuals
- Minimum standards for water, hygiene and sanitation (for example, "A private, safe, clean, and reliable toilet with proper waste disposal and a hand washing station, with not less than one toilet available for every 12 male detainees, and 1 toilet per 8 female detainees" - from section 3.2)
- Standards for nutrition, including accommodations for any dietary needs or restrictions
- Definition of appropriate shelter (examples - "there shall be no less than 2 square meters of space for each detainee" and "each detainee shall be provided with temperature appropriate clothing and bedding" and "the facility shall be well lit and well ventilated, with the humidity and temperature kept at comfortable levels, between 68 and 74 degrees Fahrenheit" - from section 5)
- All facilities would have video monitoring "to prevent the sexual abuse or physical harm of vulnerable detainees" (section 5.12b)
- Unannounced, regular inspection to ensure these standards are being met

While it feels ridiculous that these minimum standards of care need to be outlined, the reports of the conditions under which current detainees are suffering makes the passage of these standards imperative.

The sponsor, Rep. Ruiz, said this about his legislation, in an interview with [NBC News](#): "These standards are consistent with the humanitarian principles that ensure the basic conditions for a life with dignity."

Right now, the following Pennsylvania legislators are co-sponsors of H.R. 3239:

- PA-02's Rep. Brendan Boyle
- PA-04's Rep. Madeleine Dean
- PA-18's Rep. Mike Doyle

Since Rep. Fitzpatrick is not already a co-sponsor, please use the following script when you call him:

“I am calling today because I want Rep. Fitzpatrick 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.”

And please consider calling Senator Toomey and Casey to ask them to introduce similar (or identical) legislation in the Senate.

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.

Congress will be on recess all next week. So we are taking next weekend off - our next MoCTrack Report will be out on July 14th!

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!