

## PA-01 Member of Congress Tracking Report - 06.28.20

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

### Tracking Congress in the Age of Trump

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

Member of Congress	This week's score	Change from last report
<a href="#">Senator Bob Casey (D)</a>	<b>29.5%</b>	<b>-0.3%</b>
<a href="#">Senator Pat Toomey (R)</a>	<b>88.0%</b>	<b>+0.1%</b>
<a href="#">PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)</a>	<b>64.5%</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>

Nate Silver's [FiveThirtyEight website](#) assesses the voting records of our MoCs to provide this index, by comparing any bills where President Trump has stated a position, and comparing the vote of the legislator to that opinion. There were two House votes scored this week - one for the Justice in Policing Act, and other on DC statehood.

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.

### Votes of Interest

#### A Trio of Police Reform Votes in Congress

What follows is a rundown of the drama in Congress this week related to Police Reform legislation. There were three separate votes that were a part of the action. Instead of running down the contents of the bills in question - the Senate Republicans' JUSTICE Act and the House Democrats' George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, please refer to this chart, from last week's MoCTrack, to review the differences between the two bills. The shortest possible assessment of the bills is the Senate version is full of loopholes and ignores major issues, while the House version has more outright bans of objectionable policies.



## Police Reform Legislation

Comparing the House's Justice in Policing Act to the Senate's JUSTICE Act

Proposal	House	Senate	Proposal	House	Senate
Chokeholds	BANS	Restricts use (with loopholes)	Create a Law Enforcement National Accreditation Program	✓	✗
Racial Profiling	BANS	Implements a training program	Modifies Qualified Immunity Rules to allow Victims of Police Brutality to Seek Damages	✓	✗
Police Misconduct	National Registry	Improves Data Collection	Ends Distribution of Military Equipment to Law Enforcement	✓	✗
No-Knock Warrants	BANS	Restricts use (with loopholes)	Punishes Falsified Police Reports	✗	✓
Use of Force	Standardizes	Data Collection	Criminalizes Sexual Contact between Law Enforcement and Prisoners	✗	✓
Establishes Lynching as a Hate Crime	✓	✓	Incentivizes Usage of Body Cameras	✓	✓

Pennsylvania Member of Congress Tracking Report - bringing you votes and quotes from PA's 20 MoCs #MoCTrack

**1** **Vote One: the GOP's toothless bill fails to achieve cloture**

[Senate Cloture Vote](#) on Motion to Proceed to [S. 3985](#): The JUSTICE Act

Prior to a bill coming to the floor of the Senate for a vote, it must achieve cloture - with 60 senators agreeing to end debate. The Senate Republican's version of police reform failed to achieve cloture. Here is what each of our senators had to say about the failure of the JUSTICE Act to get enough support to make it to the floor for a full vote:

● **Senator Bob Casey, from an article on the *WTAE* website titled "[Pa. US Senator Casey calls for 'accountability' in federal police reform legislation](#)", 06/25/20:**

"If you want to know the difference between the two bills, it comes down to one word: accountability. We are either going to deal in this moral moment with accountability for law enforcement misconduct or not.

Just on that basic issue, chokeholds. you have two choices: ban them, or incentivize the banning. Our bill bans them. The reason we're having this debate is because of what happened with a law enforcement officer murdering an American citizen using a chokehold. If the American people hadn't seen that, I'm not sure we'd be debating this...

...We've got to do more. We've got to make sure that Black Americans are not continually robbed, literally robbed of equal protection of the law. Their constitutional rights are violated, and sometimes their life ends because we don't have accountability.

It's supported overwhelmingly by the American people. They want real action. They don't want us nibbling around the edges. they want real accountability, they want real transparency."

● **Senator Pat Toomey, via his official website, [06/24/20](#):**

"After weeks of telling anyone with a notebook or microphone that the Senate has an obligation to consider policing reforms, Senate Democrats today blocked the opportunity to even consider legislation on this issue.

"To be clear, this vote wasn't on final passage of Senator Tim Scott's JUSTICE Act. Rather, this was a vote to determine whether or not the Senate should even proceed to consideration of any policing reforms. This came after Senate Democrats received repeated assurances of a full debate, and opportunities to amend this bill as they saw fit.

"Again, a vote today would only have served to start the legislative process. And after all the amendment votes were cast, if Senate Democrats did not like the final product, they still could vote no and stop the legislation from moving forward. But instead, Senate Democrats chose obstruction and politics over actual debate and legislating."

**Vote date:** Wednesday, June 24, 2020

**Vote Tally:** 55-45 (failed)

**Party Breakdown:** A [supermajority of 60 votes](#) was needed to bring this bill to the floor for debate and a final vote. Democrats Doug Jones of Alabama and Joe Manchin of West Virginia voted YES along with most Republicans. All the other Democrats and Independents voted NO. All of the Republicans voted YES, with the exception of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. He voted NO, but for a very special reason. [GovTrack](#) explains, "Sometimes a party leader will vote on the winning side, even if it is against his or her position, to have the right to call for a new vote under a motion to reconsider."

**Additional Reading:**

- "[Senate Democrats Block GOP Police-Reform Bill](#)," from *Courthouse News*
- "[Senate Democrats Stall Republican Police Reform Bill to Force Negotiations](#)," from *New Yorker's Intelligencer*

- [“Trump's police executive order and Senate's blocked bill prove neither take reform seriously,”](#) an opinion piece in *NBC News*

**Senator Casey voted NO and Senator Toomey voted YES.**

**2** [Vote Two: the GOP's last-ditch attempt to hijack the House Democrat's police reform bill House Vote](#) on the Motion to Recommit with Instructions: [H.R. 7120](#), the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act

This is the portion of the Congressional proceedings in question, the House Republican's choice to offer a Motion to Recommit with Instructions. This image below details the steps before the final vote, from [Congress's website](#).

06/25/2020-6:51pm Mr. Stauber moved to recommit with instructions to the Committee on the Judiciary.  
Action By: House of Representatives

06/25/2020-6:51pm Floor summary: DEBATE - The House proceeded with 10 minutes of debate on the Stauber motion to recommit with instructions. The instructions contained in the motion seek to require the bill to be reported back to the House with an amendment to strike section 2 and all that follows of the bill and insert new text entitled, "George Floyd and Walter Scott Notification Act."  
Action By: House of Representatives

06/25/2020-8:02pm On motion to recommit with instructions Failed by the Yeas and Nays: 180 - 236 ([Roll no. 118](#)).  
Action By: House of Representatives

At the end of the debate on the House Democrats' police reform bill, Rep. Pete Stauber (R-MN) offered a Motion to recommit (more on what that means in our Learning About Legislation section). He offered this motion "with instruction" - to replace the entire text of the bill with the text of the Senate Republican's bill. That is the one we discussed above, the one that failed to get enough support to achieve cloture! The House then debated that motion before it came to a vote.

**Vote date: Thursday, June 25, 2020**      **Vote Tally: 180-236 (failed)**  
**Party Breakdown:** All of the Democrats voted NO, as did Libertarian Justin Amash of Michigan and three Republicans - Thomas Massie of Kentucky, Andy Harris of Maryland and Warren Davidson of Ohio. All of the other Republicans voted YES.

**Representative Brian Fitzpatrick voted YES.**

**3** [Vote three, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act passes the House \(without the loophole-ridden GOP replacement text\)](#) [House Vote](#) on [H.R. 7120](#): George Floyd Justice in Policing Act

With the partisan Motion to Recommit with Instructions out of the way, the real bill could finally get its vote. Only two of our Pennsylvania lawmakers were chosen to speak on the floor in the run-up to the final vote (both in support of the bill). If you would like to hear them, they can be found at this [C-Span link](#). The video itself is over five and a half hours long, so the minute markers for our PA lawmakers' speeches are indicated below:

- PA-02's Rep. Brendan Boyle, 2:49:12
- PA-04's Rep. Madeleine Dean, 1:56:16

There is additional coverage of our lawmakers' opinions on this bill in this week's Twitter coverage, with statements or commentary from almost all of our Representatives.

**Vote date: Thursday, June 25, 2020**      **Vote Tally: 236-181**

**Party Breakdown:** All Democrats Present voted YES. They were joined by three Republicans - Brian Fitzpatrick of PA-01, Will Hurd of Texas and Fred Upton of Michigan. The remaining Republicans and Libertarian Justin Amash voted NO.

**Additional Reading:**

- ["House Democrats pass sweeping police overhaul, Senate stalls,"](#) from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*
- ["House Passes Sweeping Policing Bill Targeting Racial Bias and Use of Force,"](#) from *The New York Times*
- ["House Approves Police Reform Bill, But Issue Stalled Amid Partisan Standoff,"](#) from *NPR*
- ["House approves police reform bill named in honor of George Floyd,"](#) from *CNN Politics*

**Representative Brian Fitzpatrick voted YES.**

## The House wants Washington, D.C. to be the 51st State

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 51](#): Washington, D.C. Admission Act

Washington, DC has a population of 700,000 people, and yet they have no voting representation in Congress, in either the House or the Senate. Both Vermont and Wyoming have populations that are smaller than DC, and each of those states have three votes (two senators and one at-large representative). This bill, H.R. 51, would create a 51st state, named "Washington, Douglass Commonwealth," after Frederick Douglass, and to separate it from the northwestern state. The bill was introduced by Rep. Eleanor Norton, who represents DC in the House, but does not get a vote on legislation. She stated, according to [CBS News](#), "the United States is the only democratic country that denies both voting rights in the national legislature and local autonomy to the residents of the nation's capital."

This is the first time a DC statehood bill has passed in one of our legislative houses. It is, however, unlikely to get any further in this Congress, as both Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and President Trump have expressed opposition to the idea of DC statehood.

**Vote date: Friday, June 26, 2020**

**Vote Tally: 232-180**

**Party Breakdown:** All Republicans present voted NO, and they were joined by Libertarian Justin Amash and Democrat Collin Peterson of Minnesota. All other Democrats voted YES.

**Additional Reading:**

- ["House approves measure to make Washington, D.C. a state,"](#) from *CBS News*
- ["House approves statehood for DC in 232-180 vote,"](#) from *The Hill*
- ["In Historic Vote, House Backs Statehood For D.C.; Trump And The Senate Say No,"](#) from *NPR*

**Representative Brian Fitzpatrick voted NO.**

## Judicial Confirmation

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Cory T. Wilson to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit

Judge Cory Wilson currently serves on the Mississippi state Court of Appeals. He had already been nominated for a district court seat (and had yet to be confirmed), but while his nomination was pending, he was RE-nominated for a seat on a more senior court, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

After going to Yale Law School, Wilson clerked for a judge on the Eleventh Circuit before going to work in private practice. He worked in the private sector for all but one year of his career (when he served as a White House Fellow), before being elected to the state legislature in 2016. He then was appointed to the judicial seat in Mississippi in 2019.

Our friends at [the Vetting Room](#) collected some of Wilson's tweets on controversial subjects that cast doubt on his ability to maintain the open-mind required of a good judge:

Wilson also maintains an active Twitter account. His tweets and his writings have already drawn sharp criticism from liberal groups. Specifically, Wilson has called for the reversal of the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade*, and has referred to same-sex marriage as "a pander to liberal interest groups." Similarly, Wilson has been sharply critical of the Affordable Care Act, describing the law's passage as "perverse" and "illegitimate." ... in a tweet on October 5, 2018, Wilson praises Sen. Susan Collins for supporting the nomination of Justice Brett Kavanaugh, praising her for rejecting "ugly tactics employed by the Left." Similarly, the day before the 2018 election, Wilson wrote that the election was a choice between "#RepublicanResults, or unhinged Dem #Resistance."

But the final word has to go to [The Alliance for Justice](#):

Alliance for Justice strongly opposed the confirmation of Cory Wilson to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Wilson called the Affordable Care Act "illegitimate" and "perverse" and made clear that courts should invalidate the law and take away health care from millions. He called civil rights organizations "rent-a-mobs." He denounced claims of voter suppressions as "poppycock" and championed measures to make it harder for African Americans to vote.... Wilson's record as a legislator, his prolific presence of social media, and his op-ed writings, paint a picture of a deeply partisan political actor.

**Vote date:** **Wednesday, June 24, 2020** **Vote Tally:** **52-48**  
**Party Breakdown:** This was nearly a party line vote. Maine Republican Sen. Susan Collins voted NO along with all the Independents and Democrats. The other Republicans all voted YES.

#### **Additional Reading:**

- "[Judge Cory Wilson – Nominee to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit](#)," from *The Vetting Room*
- "[Cory Wilson - United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit](#)," from the *Alliance for Justice*
- "[Trump's 200th judge called for the 'complete and immediate reversal' of Roe v. Wade](#)," from *CBS News*

**Senator Casey voted NO and Senator Toomey voted YES.**

#### **Unanimously passed legislation**

The following bills were passed through unanimous consent or voice vote (which presumes unanimity, as any member can object to the voice vote and ask for a roll call). This list excludes bills related to post offices, stamps, memorials, awareness weeks and other ceremonial activities.

- [S.327](#) - Wounded Veterans Recreation Act
- [S.2472](#) - Neil A. Armstrong Test Facility Act
- [H.R.7036](#) - Antitrust Criminal Penalty Enhancement and Reform Permanent Extension Act
- [H.R.7259](#) - Patents for Humanity Program Improvement Act
- [S.3377](#) - Antitrust Criminal Penalty Enhancement and Reform Permanent Extension Act
- [S.3798](#) - Hong Kong Autonomy Act (introduced by Senator Toomey)

- [S.Res.579](#) - A resolution encouraging the international community to remain committed to collaboration and coordination to mitigate and prevent the further spread of COVID-19 and urging renewed United States leadership and participation in global efforts on therapeutics and vaccine development and delivery to address COVID-19 and prevent further deaths
- [S.Res.596](#) - A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Hong Kong national security law proposed by the Government of the People's Republic of China would violate the obligations of that government under the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Hong Kong Basic Law and calling upon all free nations of the world to stand with the people of Hong Kong

A bit of special good news in the land of unanimously passed legislation... One of the bills that was included in our [Legislation for Change](#) package of calls to action, "[S.2163](#) - Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys Act," passed the Senate unanimously on Thursday. Please consider contacting your Representative to let them know you support this bill and hope it gets a speedy vote in the House!

## MoC Twitter Action

*Courtesy of contributor Susan Vogel*

### Twitter Action - Coronavirus

#### ● Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [06/26/20](#):

"Don't bothsides this pandemic. Only one party downplayed the severity of #COVID19, prioritized super-rich stock market investors, suggested sacrificing our seniors, demonized mask-wearing & are still trying to gut affordable health care.

Republicans did." *tweeted with a link to a New York Times opinion titled "[America Didn't Give Up on Covid-19. Republicans Did.](#)"*

#### ● PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, [06/23/20](#):

"Independent restaurants have been hit especially hard by the #COVID19 pandemic. Without help, they will suffer from the economic impact of the pandemic for years. I am proud to partner with

@RepSusanWild & @RepDwightEvans to help restaurants in our region." *tweeted with a link to a Pennsylvania Business report article titled "[Reps. Fitzpatrick, Wild introduce legislation to stabilize restaurant industry after COVID-19](#)"*

### Twitter Action - The House's George Floyd Justice in Policing Act

#### ● PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, [06/25/20](#):

*The representative did not tweet any text, but instead shared a link to his lengthy website statement titled "[Fitzpatrick Statement on Police Reform Legislative Packages.](#)"*

### Tweet of the Week

#### ● Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [06/27/20](#):

"I have never known a child to be a threat to national security. The order issued last evening by Judge Dolly M. Gee to release migrant children held in U.S. custody is the right decision, but it shouldn't have taken a pandemic to treat children with basic compassion.

We have heard of the inhumane conditions asylum-seeking children and their families face in detention, including troubling accounts of medical care not being provided until children are very ill.

I've long expressed opposition to child and family detention, including specific concerns about the facility in Berks County. Enough is enough. There's no legitimate reason to hold children and families in detention.

These facilities, including the Berks Family Residential Center in Pennsylvania, should be closed for good. The job of government is to protect children, not incarcerate them."

● **Senator Pat Toomey, @SenToomey, 06/21/20:**

"The best title I've ever had, or ever will have, is dad. Wishing all the other dads a very happy, safe, and relaxing #FathersDay."

● **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, 06/22/20:**

"The Great American @OutdoorsAct will permanently #FundLWCF and #RestoreOurParks for generations. This is the largest conservation bill in years, and I am proud to be a part of it. @RepCunningham @SenCoryGardner @Sen\_JoeManchin @RepSherrill @CongMikeSimpson" *tweeted with a link to the Philadelphia Inquirer article titled "[Independence Park, Valley Forge, Pinelands could benefit from bill with billions for conservation](#)"*

## Casey in the News

*Courtesy of contributor Linda Houk*

"No organization likes change often... Sometimes change has to be imposed. This isn't working.

I used to believe this theory that if you can discipline and hold accountable the bad apples one by one by one, that that will be enough...But I no longer believe that, to be blunt about it. This is a system – the criminal justice system, policing, and frankly a lot of parts of our government – that's infused with racism."

—from an article on [WESA 90.5FM](#), titled "[Casey Calls For Sweeping Reform To Address Police System 'Infused With Racism'](#)"

"We are not in a moment that is merely a legislative moment where we are considering the advancement of policy... We are in a moral moment for the country. This doesn't happen very often. This is a moral moment and even if you didn't agree with me, you would agree that this isn't a typical debate.

"It really just doesn't meet the moment. Just on policy, bill vs. bill, I don't think anyone could make a compelling argument that what they have proposed meets the moment."

—from an article in the [Penn Live Patriot-News](#), titled "[Casey, Toomey stand behind political divide as police reform proposals head for failure](#)"

"It has engaged a cross-section of Americans in ways that I have never seen. They're all saying to us, 'You've got to do something transformative here. You've got to bring about systemic change.'

This is a system ... that is infused with racism... This is a systemic racism problem that pervades the entire criminal justice system as well as parts of society.”

— from an article in the [Ellwood City Ledger](#), titled [“Casey says Americans want ‘transformative’ change in policing reform legislation”](#)

“A lot more could have been done once we knew how fast this was spreading in long-term care settings.”

—from an article in [Erie News Now](#), titled [“Nursing home deaths, COVID-19 to headline Thursday House hearing”](#)

## **Fitzpatrick in the News**

*Research on this section courtesy of CC*

“PFAS chemical contamination can lead to serious health issues, and we must act with an urgency that matches the scale of the problem. The more we learn about these chemicals, the clearer the danger becomes. That is why the American people deserve to know where these toxins are used.”

— from an article in the [Doylestown Intelligencer](#) titled [“PFAS Bill would require Army Corps of Engineers test own sites”](#)

“The last few months have been challenging for millions across the country. It is outrageous when scammers and other bad actors seek to economically harm our most vulnerable communities during this pandemic. These scammers are the worst of the worst. The COVID-19 SCAM Act would give the FTC the power to go after scam callers and their operations immediately and provide relief and security to seniors, consumers, and other vulnerable populations across the country. I am proud to work with our Regional Recovery Task Force on this bipartisan legislation.”

— from an article in the press release aggregator site [Insider NJ](#) titled [“Regional Recovery Task Force Co-Chairs Sherrill and King Introduce Legislation to Protect Americans from COVID-19 Scam Calls”](#)

“Our independent, local restaurants have been hit especially hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. Forced to operate through takeout and delivery only, many family-operated restaurants in my community have lost thousands of dollars in potential income. The mom and pop diner and deli on Main Street and hurting right now. Without immediate help, these local businesses and their hardworking employees will be suffering from the economic impact of this pandemic for years to come.”

— from an article in the [Bucks County Courier Times](#) titled [“Poll: Finello edging closer to Fitzpatrick for 1st Congressional seat”](#)

“My favorite image of the flag happened right here in our community and it was Christmas night in 1776... What Emanuel Leutze [painter of the iconic image of Washington crossing the Delaware] said was that the American flag and the country of America was more than a country to him. It was an idea. And his idea of America was people from all different backgrounds, all in the same boat, all rowing in the same direction. That’s what America meant to this young German immigrant and that’s what the flag meant to him. And that’s the flag we continue to honor today.”

— from a [Bucks Local News](#) article titled [“Special patriotic salute marks Old Glory’s birthday at Fairless Hills Elks Lodge”](#)

The transition for our service members back to civilian life can be difficult no matter the circumstances. However, particularly during the current coronavirus pandemic, we believe Congress must do everything in our power to support our veterans and transitioning service

members, especially by addressing their workforce development, employment and economic needs.

These studies also indicate increased veterans' suicide rates during the Great Recession, tied in part to less economic opportunity. Accordingly, we are concerned that the adverse economic conditions stemming from COVID-19 could cause similar harm to the veterans' community today."

— an excerpt from a letter sent by Rep. Fitzpatrick and "a bipartisan contingent of lawmakers" to "congressional leaders, as reported by the *Ripon Advance* blog post titled "[Fitzpatrick seeks workforce policy improvements for military veterans in next relief package](#)"

"The U.S. forward presence in Germany serves as a cornerstone of NATO's deterrent against Russian aggression. This is not the time to take any action that might cause the Putin regime to question the credibility of the NATO deterrent or might lead our NATO allies and partners to doubt the U.S. commitment to our collective security.

We fear this partial U.S. withdrawal from Germany will fail to convince Berlin to spend more, while putting U.S. strategic interests at risk. The United States should continue to lead by example and remain fully committed to the NATO alliance, which has successfully deterred the outbreak of another costly world war on the continent since its formation."

— an excerpt of a letter sent by Rep. Fitzpatrick and five other Republican House members to President Trump, from an article on *The Hour* titled "[House Republicans urge Trump to keep U.S. troops in Germany](#)"

"Today I voted for The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020 because it contains many much-needed reforms, and because we must move the legislative process and negotiations forward so we can begin to repair the social contract between police officers and the communities that they serve. It is important to note that, like Senator Tim Scott's legislation in the Senate, this House legislation will serve as a launching point for bipartisan, bicameral negotiations and is still in need of modified bipartisan language before being considered in its final form; namely, a qualified immunity provision that needs to be drafted in a bipartisan manner that simultaneously accomplishes two key objectives: the protection of citizens' constitutional rights and civil liberties, and the protection of police officers' safety and ability to do their jobs free from fear of potential frivolous lawsuits. We can, and must, accomplish both. When the House and Senate versions are brought together to the conference committee, this will launch the process to help mend the gap and rebuild the social contract between police officers and the communities that they serve. Having served as a lifelong federal law enforcement agent and federal prosecutor, I will play an active role in bridging this gap. And I will insist that the final package be written in a way that both protects citizens' constitutional and civil rights and preserves the noble profession of law enforcement, the profession that I have dedicated the majority of my adult life to, the profession that my great uncle Phil sacrificed his life and paid the ultimate price for.

"This moment calls on all of us to come together and repair this social contract so that we as Americans can start to heal. I firmly believe that we are all capable of rising to this challenge, because our own community in Bucks and Montgomery Counties have been a model when it comes to police-community relations. We need to apply our community model, always making improvements based on self-reflection, listening, understanding and learning, and show the rest of our country and the world that we are a country of law and order, a country that respects the rights, dignity, and equality of everyone, a country where police officers are one with the communities in which they serve. We are all members of the human family. I hope my colleagues will join me as we move forward to merge these bills and get a bill signed into law that will rise to this moment."

— an excerpt from the Congressman's lengthy statement, as reported in the *Levittown Now* article "[Congressman Fitzpatrick Votes For Police Reform Bill](#)"

## **Toomey in the News**

*Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker*

"What you really need to do is to get started, and however weak you think the bill is you can offer up an amendment, an entire substitute, an entirely different bill, a very common form of amendment in the Senate is to strike the entire bill that is under consideration and offer a replacement...sooooo.....I'm sorry that just doesn't make sense."

— from a *Times-Herald* article titled "[Pa. senators react as police reform bill stalls in the Senate](#)"

*On the topic of a new stimulus payment bill:* "I don't think that's a good idea at this point."

— from an article on *KMOV4*, titled "[Trump administration open to a second round of stimulus payments. Here's what that could look like](#)"

"I'm a skeptic about the idea of doing that. That was an emergency measure taken when we were in a full-blown crisis and, frankly, knew it was wildly inefficient because all kinds of people were getting checks whose work was not jeopardized."

— from an article in *The Hill* titled "[Next COVID-19 bill depends on June jobs report](#)"

"Temporary nonimmigrant workers contribute to the U.S. economy, pay taxes, and help drive innovation and job creation.

Even in the current employment environment, limiting visas for these workers will only serve to prevent companies from filling open positions.

This will slow economic growth, drive up the costs of goods and services, and ultimately cost jobs for American workers."

— from a *MyChesCo* article titled "[Toomey Statement on Trump Administration Limiting Nonimmigrant Visas](#)"

"Today, the Senate stood up to the communist regime in Beijing and stood with the people of Hong Kong. "The mandatory sanctions established in this bill will punish those in China who seek to undermine Hong Kong's autonomy or erode the basic freedoms promised to Hongkongers. I very much appreciate the great work done by Senator Van Hollen in helping to get this bill passed and I hope the House will take it up and pass it in short order, so the president can sign it."

— from an article in *American Military News* titled "[US Senate passes bill to sanction China over Hong Kong takeover](#)"

## **Learning about Legislation - The Motion to Commit, revisited**

This week, we highlighted the vote taken by the House immediately before the final vote on the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, where the Republicans wanted to amend the bill by replacing the entire text of the bill introduced in the House with the text of the Senate GOP's loophole-ridden offering. This action is called a "motion to recommit," which literally means to send something back to a committee. This is the last step that a dissenting party can take before the final vote is taken on legislation.

In a 2016 [white paper](#) on the Motion to Recommit process, the Congressional Research Service explains:

The motion to recommit is often referred to as 'the minority's motion,' because preference in recognition for offering a motion to recommit is given to a member of the minority party who is opposed to the bill. The stated purpose of giving the minority party this right was to allow them to 'have a vote upon its position upon great public questions.' House rules protect this minority right...

Motions to recommit are of two types: 'straight' motions and motions that include instructions. A Member offering a 'straight' motion to recommit seeks to send the measure to committee with no requirement for further consideration by the House. A Member offering a motion to recommit with instructions seeks to immediately amend the underlying bill on the House floor.

A motion to recommit may have various procedural effects, including amending an underlying measure, sending it to one or more committees, providing additional time for its consideration, or potentially disposing of the legislation. Due to its inclusion of policy language, the motion to recommit might also have political effects, such as allowing Members to go on record as supporting or opposing a specific policy and creating a comprehensive public record to emphasize the minority party's differences from the platform of the majority.

So, a motion to recommit is a vote taken where a legislator has the opportunity to express his or her adherence to a principle or to the will of his or her party. Such motions are rarely, if ever, reported on in the press, so our local legislators usually make their votes on motions to recommit straight party line affairs.



## **Support this Bill - Protect Our Post Offices!!**

**[H.R. 6425: Protect Our Post Offices Act](#)**

Our United States Postal Service is in danger! During the coronavirus pandemic, President Donald Trump has blocked vital funding that the Postal Service desperately needs to stay in business. The [Center for American Progress](#) notes that "each day, nearly half a million U.S. Postal Service workers deliver lifesaving medications, heartfelt letters from family members, vote-by-mail ballots, and other indispensable pieces of mail to Americans living across the country—from major cities to remote rural communities." And, since we need to have the option to mail in our ballots if we want to stay safe and relieve burdens upon our electoral volunteers and workers for the November elections, the US Postal service is a major player in protecting our democracy!

Part of the issue is that the Post Office is running out of money because of a 2006 bill that puts requirements on the USPS that no other federal department is burdened with. [Politifact](#) explains, "the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act required the Postal Service to pre-fund future retiree health benefits, not pensions. The law put a financial strain on the service, which has defaulted on some of the statutorily prescribed payments." MoCTrack would like to add that the 2006 bill was passed in a lame duck session of Congress, just as the GOP was about to hand over control of both Houses of Congress to Democrats for the first time in over a decade.

There are things we can do to help the USPS. Some people are rallying in support of the organization and participating in caravans to deliver petitions to Washington. But what you can do from home is to encourage your lawmaker to support H.R. 6425: Protect Our Post Offices Act, a bill that would appropriate \$25 billion to the USPS, money that would remain available to help it weather the stresses put on the service by the coronavirus pandemic.

● **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick** has **NOT** come out in support of this bill as of Saturday, June 27, 2020. Accordingly, we ask you to call him to express your support for this bill and ask him to co-sponsor H.R. 6425, the Protect our Post Offices Act.

Here is a sample script you can use:

Each day, nearly half a million U.S. Postal Service workers deliver lifesaving medications, heartfelt letters from family members, and other indispensable pieces of mail to Americans living across the country—from major cities to remote rural communities. The U.S. Postal Service often provided last-mile service to the online retailers who are powering our economy. I also rely on the U.S. Postal Service, and I support H.R. 6425, the Protect our Post Offices Act. Five of his Pennsylvania colleagues are already co-sponsors of this legislation and I would like Representative Fitzpatrick to join them.”

Thank YOU for taking action to support a federal agency that provides a half million jobs and an irreplaceable service to all Americans... one that protects our democracy!

*Editor's Note - MoCTrack LOVES a good rally or political action. If you are like us and want to know more about what folks have been doing in person to support the USPS, you can read more about those postal worker rallies and actions (that we mentioned above) here:*

- ['Save The USPS!': U.S. Postal Service Workers Calling On Congress To Provide Funding In Next Stimulus Bill](#), from *3 CBS Philly*
- [Postal Workers caravan delivers 2 million 'Save USPS' petitions to Washington](#), from *People's World*
- [Postal Day of Action: "We Need the Postal Service!"](#), from *Labor Notes*

This report was brought to you by the Pennsylvania MoCTrack team...

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We are seeking additional assistance. Our Congresspeople are always busy and there is always more for us to cover — tasks big and small to fit any level of time commitment or experience. Can you help us out? Please email [KierstynPZ@gmail.com](mailto:KierstynPZ@gmail.com) and put "MoCTrack Help" in the subject. Thanks!