

PA-01 Member of Congress Tracking Report - 08.02.20

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

| Member of Congress | This week's score | Change from last report |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Senator Bob Casey (D) | 29.3% | no change |
| Senator Pat Toomey (R) | 88.1% | no change |
| PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R) | 64.0% | no change |

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 no votes scored this week.

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.

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Words from Our Nation's Sages

In honor of National Women's Suffrage Month



“... in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation, —in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of these United States....”

— an excerpt of the [Declaration of Sentiments](#), composed by [Elizabeth Cady Stanton](#) and voted upon by the attendees at the [Seneca Falls Convention](#) in July 1848

Votes of Interest

The House Passes Defense Appropriations for 2021

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 7617](#): Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2021

This is a continuation of the 2021 Defense funding process that has been going on for the past several weeks. Last week's featured legislation was an Authorization that establishes what funds may or may not be spent on. An appropriation, like this bill, actually sets the funding levels and directs the money to go from our coffers and into the indicated departments and programs. This Defense appropriation was for about \$700 billion.

As with many other large spending packages, it was the amendments process that was more interesting than the final bill vote itself. One item that did not even get a floor vote was an amendment to withhold any funds used to implement the transgendered serviceperson ban, effectively overturning it. That passed by a voice vote. But other items that did get roll call votes are detailed below, with the voting breakdown of our Pennsylvania delegation:

- Rep. Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) introduced [Amendment 863](#), to prohibit the use of funds for military recruitment via popular online venues like Twitch and e-sports activities. This failed 126-292. Here in PA, we saw a 6-11-1 vote, with PA-02's Brendan Boyle, PA-02's Dwight Evans, PA-04's Madeleine Dean, PA-05's Mary Gay Scanlon, PA-07's Susan

Wild and PA-19's Mike Doyle voting YES. PA-14's Guy Reschenthaler was out for all of the voting on these amendments.

- Rep. Blumenauer (D-OR) introduced [Amendment 864](#), to keep the Department of Justice from “interfering” with any programs that states may introduce to legalize cannabis, or support said legalization (like access to banking). This passed, with a 254-163 vote. The Pennsylvania delegation split 7-10-1. All of the Republicans present voted NO, and they were joined by PA-08's Matt Cartwright and PA-17's Conor Lamb.
- Rep. Underwood (D-IL) introduced [Amendment 865](#), which would forbid any Department of Justice funding from being used to pursue “litigation that undermines the Affordable Care Act.” This passed, 234-181. Our PA MoCs voted 10-7-1, with Rep. Fitzpatrick joining the Democrats in voting YES.
- Rep. Allen (R-GA) introduced [Amendment 869](#), to reduce a portion of the budget for the Department of Housing and Urban Development and Department of Transportation by 5%. This failed, 123-292. Our MoCs from PA voted 5-12-1 on this amendment. The MoCs who voted YES are PA-09's Dan Meuser, PA-10's Scott Perry, PA-11's Lloyd Smucker, PA-12's Fred Keller and PA-16's Mike Kelly.

Before the final vote, there was a vote on a Motion to Recommit. According to [Congress.gov](#) the instructions that went along with the motion to recommit would have sent the bill back to committee to increase a grant program by \$15 million and decrease funding for “legal representation to immigrants arriving at the southwest border seeking asylum and other forms of legal protection in the United States” by a similar amount. That last ditch attempt to sink this appropriations package failed, in a 197-219 vote. All Republicans present voted YES, to send this bill back to committee, and they were joined by 12 Democrats. Our delegation voted 9-8-1, with PA-17's Conor Lamb joining the GOP MoCs in voting YES. Then this Defense Appropriation package moved to a final vote.

Vote date: Friday, July 31, 2020

Vote Tally: 217-197

Party Breakdown: All Republicans present voted NO on this bill, and they were joined by Libertarian Justin Amash and twelve Democrats. The Democrats voting NO represented both far ends of the political spectrum, with the Squad, Pramila Jayapal and Ro Khanna from the left; and Collin Peterson, Anthony Bindisi and Ben McAdams from the right.

Additional Reading:

- [“House votes to end military ban on transgender troops,”](#) from *Roll Call*
- [“Defense appropriations bill on tap this week,”](#) from *Politico*
- [“Overnight Defense: House passes \\$695B Pentagon spending bill as part of broader package,”](#) from *The Hill*

Brian Fitzpatrick voted NO.

Two Child Care Rescue Bills Pass the House

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 7027](#): Child Care Is Essential Act

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 7327](#): Child Care for Economic Recovery Act

“We cannot talk about reopening our economy without having a conversation about how families will care for their children.”

Those were the words of Rep. Haley Stevens (D-MI) as the House took on a pair of bills to stabilize the childcare industry. To provide context, the [Pennsylvania Capital Star](#) reports that “in many parts of the country, child care costs rival the cost of college tuition.” They added that the cost burden falls more heavily on families of color, where the average cost of childcare for a family with 2 children below school age was roughly 40% of the median income for a black family. Childcare is a gender justice issue as well as an economic justice issue for working families.

The two bills introduced to provide assistance to the childcare industry go at two different angles. The first bill provides \$50 billion in block grants to the care providers so that they can re-tool operations to meet the needs of the pandemic environment and re-open. The second bill “would invest up to \$10 billion per year through 2024 in the nation’s childcare infrastructure, change federal tax policy to help workers access childcare and help providers cover expenses” (also per the *Capital-Star*).

H.R. 7027 Vote date: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 **Vote Tally: 249-163**
Party Breakdown: All Democrats present voted YES, and they were joined by 18 Republicans. Libertarian Justin Amash and 162 Republicans voted NO.

H.R. 7327 Vote date: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 **Vote Tally: 250-161**
Party Breakdown: All Democrats present voted YES, and they were joined by 20 Republicans. Libertarian Justin Amash and 160 Republicans voted NO.

Additional Reading:

- [“WATCH: Pelosi holds news conference ahead of vote on child care economic relief bills,”](#) from *PBS NewsHour*
- [“Pa.’s Fitzpatrick votes with Dems as House passes package to rescue child care industry,”](#) from *Pennsylvania Capital-Star*
- [“Rep. Stevens: Childcare rescue package is critical for the economy,”](#) from *The Michigan Advance*

Brian Fitzpatrick voted YES on both bills.

Legislation for Change passed the House

[House Vote](#) on [S. 2163](#): Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys Act

This bill creates bipartisan commission would be created from policy experts and lawmakers, and would work under the framework of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. As per the [Congressional Black Caucus](#), the group would examine “such issues as mortality and homicide rates, arrest and incarceration rates, poverty, violence, fatherhood, mentorship, drug abuse, disparate income and wealth levels, school performance at various grade levels, and health. The commission will be required to produce an annual report of recommendations and solutions that will be submitted to the president and cabinet secretaries, Congress, the chairs of the appropriate committees of jurisdiction, and the public.”

The Senate bill was sponsored by Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) and the identical House bill was sponsored by Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-FL). Rep. Wilson said [this](#) of the legislation:

“It’s not easy being black and male in America. Despite historic gains made in the last 50 years, black males from all walks of life continue to face challenges and hardships that have created significant disparities in the areas that are most critical to ensuring that our boys have equal opportunities to develop the skills required to become successful men. The commission and its work will provide the atomic blast of long overdue support that this issue merits and desperately needs.”

Vote date: Monday, July 27, 2020 **Vote Tally: 368-1**
Party Breakdown: This vote was taken under a suspension of the rules, so it needed a $\frac{2}{3}$ supermajority to pass. There was only one NO vote, from GOP Rep. Mo Brooks of Alabama.

Additional Reading:

- [“House Passes the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys Act,”](#) from *The Chicago Crusader*
- [“Marco Rubio’s, Frederica Wilson’s Proposed Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys Clears Congress,”](#) from *Florida Daily*

- [“Congress passes bill to examine how systemic racism affects Black men and boys,”](#) from *Revolt*

Brian Fitzpatrick voted YES.

This bill was part of MoCTrack’s [Legislation for Change](#) collection of bills highlighted in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and the ensuing protests. We are delighted that it has now passed both houses of the legislative branch!!

Bureaucratic Confirmation #1 - Housing and Urban Development

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Dana T. Wade to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

Dana Wade has served in several senior staff roles in the Senate, including deputy staff director for the Senate Appropriations Committee under Sen. Richard Shelby (D-AL) and deputy staff director for the Senate Banking Committee. She served as the acting Federal Housing Administration commissioner for part of 2017 and 2018 before being moved to the Office of Management and Budget.

Her confirmation means that the top three roles at the Department of Housing and Urban development are being held by Senate-confirmed leaders for the first time in nearly two years.

Vote date: **Tuesday July 28, 2020** **Vote Tally:** **57-40**

Party Breakdown: All 53 Republicans voted YES. They were joined by four Democrats (Doug Jones of Alabama, Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, Chris Murphy of Connecticut and Joe Manchin of West Virginia). All other Democrats and Independents voted NO.

Additional Reading:

- [“HUD finally gets top three confirmed again,”](#) from *Dodd Frank Update*
- [“Senate confirms Dana Wade as new FHA commissioner,”](#) from *Housing Wire*
- [“Industry Reaction: Dana Wade Confirmed as Federal Housing Commissioner,”](#) from *DS News*

Bob Casey voted NO and Pat Toomey voted YES.

Bureaucratic Confirmations #2 & #3 - a new pair of National Labor Relations Board Members

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Marvin Kaplan, to a five-year NLRB term expiring August 2025
[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Lauren McGarity McFerran, to a five-year NLRB term expiring December 2024

The National Labor Relations Board is a five-member independent board, tasked with protecting the rights of employees and their freedom to create unions. Members serve five-year terms, and the custom has been to have three positions go to the party of the president and two positions go to the minority party.

As custom is rarely respected by the Trump Administration, both of the seats on the NLRB to be held by Democrats have been left vacant for months, leading to several unanimous, three-person pro-corporate decisions by the NLRB. [One such decision](#) related to union election rules, and was [partly overturned by a federal court](#) for skipping the required note-and-comment period mandated for all major administrative rules changes. That same pro-corporate trio of board members has

decided to appeal that court finding.

One of the confirmations from this week (McGarity McFerran) is filling one of the long-vacant Democrat seats. The other (Kaplan) is providing a new term to a current board member. One of the takeaways from the voting on the McGarity McFerran nomination is that there are only seven Republican senators who respect the custom of providing the minority party with NLRB seats.

Kaplan Vote date: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 **Vote Tally:** 52-46

Party Breakdown: This was a straight party line vote, with Democrats and Independents all voting NO and the Republicans all voting YES.

McFerran Vote date: Wednesday, July 29, 2020 **Vote Tally:** 53-42

Party Breakdown: This nominee had the unanimous support of Democrats and Independents in the Senate and they were joined by seven Republicans. Those Republicans are Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan of Alaska, Susan Collins of Maine, Steve Daines of Montana, Lindsay Graham of South Carolina, Lamar Alexander of Tennessee and John Cornyn of Texas.

Additional Reading:

- [“Senate confirms 2 NLRB nominees,”](#) from *HR Dive*
- [“U.S. Senate To Vote On New NLRB Member,”](#) from *JD Supra*
- [“IN BRIEF: Senate confirms Kaplan, McFerran to new terms at NLRB,”](#) from *Reuters*

On Marvin Kaplan, **Bob Casey voted NO and Pat Toomey voted YES.**

On Lauren McGarity McFerran, **Bob Casey voted YES and Pat Toomey voted NO.**

Judicial Confirmation #1 - PENNSYLVANIA

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on William Scott Hardy to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania

Scott Hardy is a Pittsburgh native who practiced labor and employment law in western Pennsylvania. His career has been focused primarily on representing non-profit, corporations, universities and local government employers. He is a Republican and has donated to a number of Pennsylvania politicians, including Senator Toomey.

[The Vetting Room](#) made this interesting observation about Scott Hardy’s nomination process:

At a time of fierce partisanship over judicial nominations, Toomey and Casey have generally proven cooperative, plugging through the long list of Pennsylvania vacancies. Hardy is, thus, the product of a process that works.

That impression, that Senators Casey and Toomey have been fairly successful in working together to find qualified judges for our federal courts here in Pennsylvania, is bolstered by the [joint press release](#) the pair released this week upon the confirmation of Scott Hardy. In it, Senator Toomey applauded the nominee as “an impartial jurist who will serve the people of Pennsylvania with fairness and integrity.” Senator Casey echoed that sentiment, noting “his intellect, experience and character have prepared him well to faithfully and independently administer justice.” The statement ends by sharing “Since 2011, Senators Toomey and Casey have worked together, in a bipartisan fashion, to fill vacancies on the federal bench in Pennsylvania. Together they have now vetted, recommended, and confirmed 28 Federal District Court Judges for Pennsylvania.”

Vote date: Monday, July 31, 2020 **Vote Tally:** 65-30

Party Breakdown: All thirty NO votes were from Democrats. Thirteen democrats and one Independent joined the Republicans in voting YES.

Additional Reading:

- [“W. Scott Hardy – Nominee to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania,”](#) from *The Vetting Room*
- [“U.S. Senate approves Pittsburgh attorney for federal bench,”](#) from *The Pittsburgh Post Gazette*
- [“Trump nominates Scott Hardy to federal bench in Pittsburgh,”](#) from *TribLIVE*

Bob Casey voted YES and Pat Toomey voted YES.

Judicial Confirmation #2 - LOUISIANA

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on David Cleveland Joseph to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Louisiana

There are seven judicial seats in the Western District of Louisiana. When the Trump Administration began, there were five vacancies on the court, positions that Mitch McConnell held open during the Obama Administration. With this confirmation of David Joseph, the Trump Administration has now filled all five of those vacancies.

David Joseph has worked as an attorney in both the private and public sector. He is a former Army JAG officer, and he has worked in the Louisiana federal prosecutor’s office since 2014. In 2018 he was confirmed by the Senate to serve as the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Louisiana. [The Vetting Room](#) reports that “Joseph’s office prosecuted Lake Charles police officer Robert Hammac for using excessive force during an arrest.” It also quoted David Joseph directly. Of that prosecution, the new judge observed that “officers who betray the badge and the public’s trust, as the defendant did here, dishonor their profession and endanger the safety of their fellow officers.”

Vote date: Tuesday July 28, 2020 **Vote Tally:** 55-42
Party Breakdown: All 53 Republicans voted for this nominee, and they were joined by two Democrats (Doug Jones of Alabama and Joe Manchin of West Virginia).

Additional Reading:

- [“David Joseph – Nominee to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana,”](#) from *The Vetting Room*
- [“U.S. Attorney David Joseph confirmed as federal judge,”](#) from *The Ouachita Citizen*
- [“Kennedy, Cassidy praise David Joseph in confirmation as U.S. District Judge,”](#) from *The Shreveport Times*

Bob Casey voted NO and Pat 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.

- [H.R.2420](#) - National Museum of the American Latino Act
- [H.Con.Res.107](#) - Directing the Clerk of the House to make a correction in the enrollment of H.R. 4 (changing the name of the ‘Voting Rights Advancement Act’ to the ‘John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act’)
- [S.881](#) - PROSWIFT “Promoting Research and Observations of Space Weather to Improve the Forecasting of Tomorrow” Act
- [S.4346](#) - Antitrust Criminal Penalty Enhancement and Reform Permanent Extension Act
- [H.R.4686](#) - Sami's Law
- [H.R.7575](#) - Water Resources Development Act

- [S.2381](#) - Traveling Parents Screening Consistency Act
- [S.2638](#) - Friendly Airports for Mothers Improvement Act
- [H.R.7512](#) - COMMS “Communications Outreach Media and Mail Standards” Act
- [S.529](#) - National Landslide Preparedness Act
- [S.850](#) - Highly Rural Veteran Transportation Program Extension Act
- [S.914](#) - Coordinated Ocean Observations and Research Act
- [S.2336](#) - Department of Veterans Affairs Information Technology Reform Act

One other matter passed without objection. The House brought the matter of [H.Res.1074](#) - In the matter of Representative David Schweikert to the floor and it passed by voice vote. The resolution merely states “that the House adopt the Report of the Committee on Ethics dated July 30, 2020, In the Matter of Allegations Relating to Representative David Schweikert.”

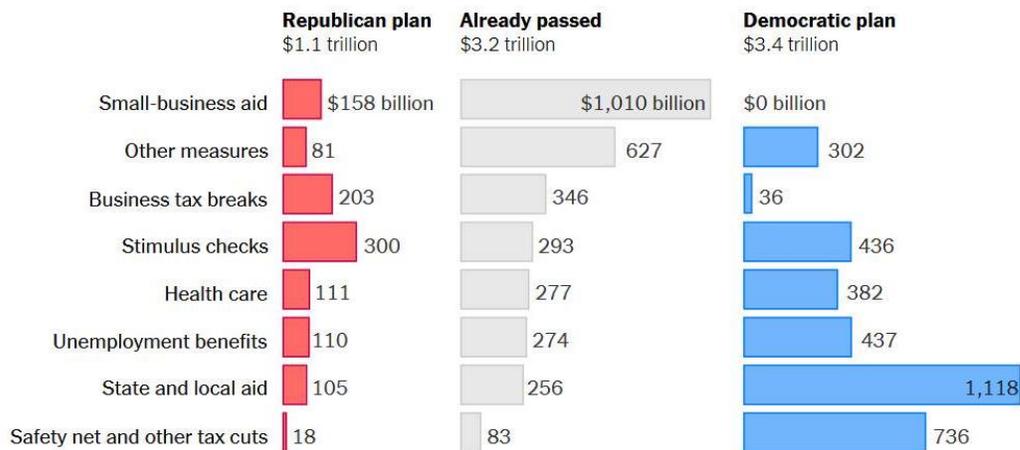
An article from *NPR*, titled “[House Unites To Reprimand GOP Lawmaker Tied To 11 Ethics Violations](#)” has additional details. Rep. Schweikert (R-IL) has admitted to 11 ethics violations and he will pay a \$50,000 fine. The Congressman failed to disclose over \$300,000 in loans and did not report around \$140,000 of campaign contributions.

Ethics Committee Chair Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL) took to the floor of the House to speak on his committee’s work in this case and others. He said, "one of our most basic obligations as members of Congress is to adhere to the principle that public office is a public trust. To uphold that trust, and to maintain civic confidence in the integrity of this body, we as members have bound ourselves by certain standards of official conduct."

The Failure to Pass the Next Coronavirus Rescue bill

As discussed in last week’s MoCTrack, the end of July marked the expiration of a number of provisions in the CARES Act, including mortgage and foreclosure protections, increased unemployment compensation, and expanded nutritional supplemental programs. While the House passed a relief bill over ten weeks ago, the Senate Republicans could barely come to consensus within their own party over what should be included in the next relief package, let alone conduct negotiations with the Democrats.

As of publication time, there was still mixed messaging about issues as important as corporate indemnification on employee claims (which Mitch McConnell has indicated is a red line, but the White House has said does not need to be included in the final bill). There has been talk from Republicans about the HEALS (Heath, Economic Assistance, Liability Protection and Schools) Act they have proposed as an alternative to the House HEROES Act, but there is no bill text available on either Congress.gov or Govtrack.us. Accordingly, we are reliant on analysis like this, from the [New York Times](#), to judge the content of the GOP bill:



Please note, a second round (post CARES Act) of additional small business aid funding already passed in June, which accounts for why there is no funding of that sort in the HEROES Act.

Bob Casey on the failure to pass phase 4 coronavirus relief

● **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, 07/31/20:**

"What we saw on the Senate floor this week was a disgrace to our democracy. It's an insult to working families that Senator McConnell and his allies blocked the Senate from passing relief for those impacted by the virus when R's are sitting in the muck of their own complacency.

Democrats passed the HEROES Act in MAY. Republicans sat on their hands for TWO MONTHS blocking relief for working families, and what did they come up with? A demand for corporate immunity and a skinflint proposal which would be catastrophic for our economy.

Millions of workers are unemployed and families are losing their paychecks through no fault of their own. Just last week 1.4 million Americans filed new claims for unemployment. And Republicans want to take \$1,600 out of their pockets every single month. Unemployment benefits expire today. One in four renters are at risk of evictions. Resources for state and local governments are dried up. Republicans have thrown away their own ideology to pander to a corrupt President.

If Republicans cared about the economy, they'd first be laser focused on getting the pandemic under control. But half will barely acknowledge the pandemic, and many of those remaining won't challenge the President because they are scared he will tweet at them. If Republicans cared about the middle class and the economy, why wouldn't they keep giving our unemployed workers the extra \$600 they need to cover their bills and pay for food?

This isn't just simply the right thing to do. It also increases demand and puts money back into the economy. There's absolutely no rhyme or reason. Republicans are turning their backs on working families. Can you imagine suddenly having your paycheck cut by 43%, in the middle of an economic crisis? That's exactly what Republicans are doing to the average unemployed worker by objecting to the extended benefits Democrats offered. Meanwhile the GOP bill is stuffed with \$2 billion for a new FBI building that even Senate Republicans acknowledge has nothing to do with COVID.

@SenateDems WANT to negotiate & reach bipartisan agreement but the White House & @SenateGOP don't even have a unified position among their own party. They won't lead, they won't follow, they won't get out of the way. They only agree on a maniacal obsession w/ blocking HEROES. Even with over 151,000 Americans dead and over 17 million unemployed,

Republicans in the Senate are fighting for corporate immunity & a big tax deduction for 'three martini lunches' instead of working people. The Republican majority is the Nation's most dangerous con artist."

Neither Senator Pat Toomey nor Representative Brian Fitzpatrick had anything to say this week about the fact that these coronavirus rescue programs have expired, or the failure of the GOP to come to the table to negotiate a new legislative package (or amend the HEROES Act to their satisfaction).

MoC Twitter Action

Courtesy of contributor Susan Vogel

Twitter Action - our lawmakers say farewell to John Lewis

● **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [07/30/20](#):**

"Today, the Nation says one last goodbye to John Lewis, an American hero and warrior for justice with unwavering optimism for the future of this country. John walked us across the bridge, now it's on us to carry forward his vision for civil rights, voting rights and equal justice."



● **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, [07/27/20](#):**

"Today, we said goodbye to John Lewis. An American hero, an icon, a colleague. 'Never become bitter. Never become hostile. Never hate. Live in peace. We're one. One people and one love.'

Rest in Peace, Congressman."

Twitter Action - MoCs on Legislation

● **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [07/29/20](#):**

“Last night on the Senate floor, I read, introduced and passed a resolution to recognize the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) while calling for further action to strengthen home and community living for people with disabilities. #ADA30”

● **PA-01’s Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, 07/30/20:**

“No veteran should be homeless, and we must do whatever we can to take care of those who served our country. By adding an option to donate to homeless veterans on tax returns, we will increase the number of donations to help our veterans in need.” *tweeted with a link to a Patch article titled “[Reps. Introduce Bipartisan Legislation to Help Homeless Veterans](#)”*

Tweet of the Week

● **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, 07/29/20:**

“A 1- or 2-year-old missing two meals has long-term consequences for health and development.”

#SNAP recipients in PA include about 750,000 children. Republicans are fighting harder to protect business lunch write-offs than they are to protect these kids from going hungry.” *tweeted with content from the Washington Post that reads “[Senate GOP won’t extend pandemic food stamps but doubled “three-martini lunch deduction”](#)”*

● **Senator Pat Toomey, @SenToomey, 07/30/20:**

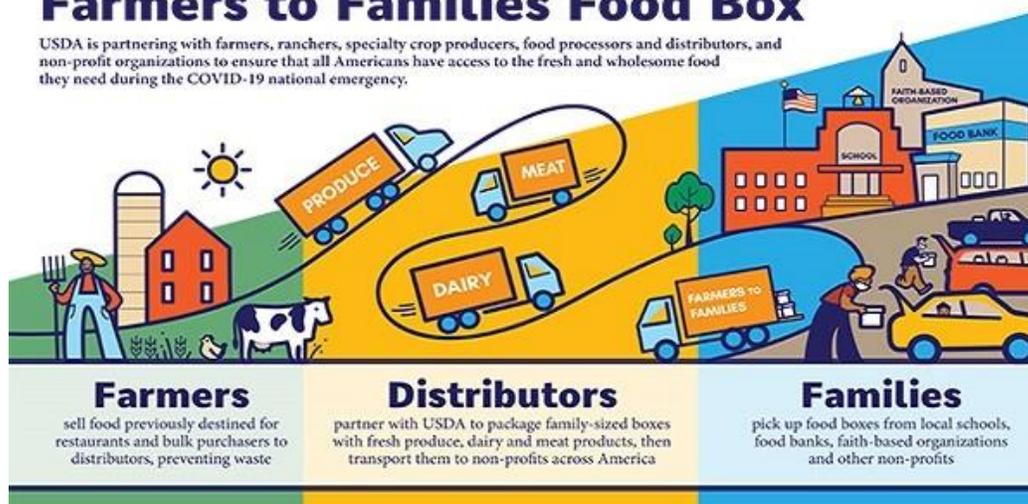
“Masks during a pandemic shouldn’t be controversial. Wearing them in public is our best way to protect each other. @SenatorBennet and I are teaming up and asking everyone to please, for the benefit of your neighbors, friends, and your community, #WearAMask. “Note - *this is Senator Toomey’s only tweet this week.*”

● **PA-01’s Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, 07/29/20:**

“Recently, @USDA announced that they will launch a third round of their Farmers to Families Food Box Program. This program has benefited struggling farmers and hungry families across the country, and I am happy to see the department working to increase food security.”

Farmers to Families Food Box

USDA is partnering with farmers, ranchers, specialty crop producers, food processors and distributors, and non-profit organizations to ensure that all Americans have access to the fresh and wholesome food they need during the COVID-19 national emergency.



Casey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Linda Houk

“Is this the United States of America? We can’t make enough gloves and masks and gowns?”

“The same country that put a man on the moon more than 50 years ago ought to be able to produce enough gowns and masks and other protective equipment.”

“If you’re a commander-in-chief and you’ve got a war against a virus, you have to act like it every day,”

— from an article in [WAVY 10](#), titled “[Democrats and Republicans want to protect US medical supply chains](#)”

“He wasn’t just a prophet, he wasn’t just a brave American. He was a patriot... The way he would approach strangers and walking through the halls of Congress, instead of walking by people, he was always willing to talk. Just a really decent person in addition to being heroic.”

— from an article in [WENY News](#), titled “[Local lawmakers remember late Georgia Rep. John Lewis](#)”

“The economic crisis will continue until we get the public health crisis under control.”

—from an article in [the Morning Call](#), titled “[What will Congress do about the expired \\$600 federal boost to weekly unemployment benefits?](#)”

“I can’t believe Senate Republicans pretended like this would all just go away.”

— from an article on [KIT4 Island News](#), titled “[‘GOP, Democrats very far apart’ on stimulus talks, Mnuchin says](#)”

“The federal COVID-19 response has dramatically exposed the failures of outdated, legacy federal IT systems and shone a light on the need for agencies to more quickly modernize their networks...”

Congress authorized the TMF specifically to rapidly advance projects that can have an impact quickly, subject to oversight of a board of experts and specific criteria. We should provide a major funding allocation to the TMF now for projects that will provide the bandwidth, security, and functionality needed to make teleworking federal workers just as productive at home as in the office, and for other urgent COVID-19 response needs such as scaling claims processing systems, improving the security of citizen information, enhancing fraud prevention, and addressing long-delayed and well documented enterprise legacy IT systems modernizations...

As you are aware, the HEROES Act, passed by the House of Representatives on May 15, 2020, included \$1 billion for the TMF, to remain available until the end of Fiscal Year 2022. We urge you to include the same level of funding for TMF in the next COVID-19 supplemental spending bill to help address technology and related risks identified during the ongoing COVID-19 response.”

— excerpts of a letter from Senator Casey and a handful of his colleagues to the Appropriations Committee leadership, as reported in an article in [FedScoop](#) titled “[\\$1B boost to TMF draws support from Senate Democrats](#)”

“By ‘low-income housing’ President Trump means Black and Brown people. This is a racist tweet and a racist policy that would allow further discrimination in housing. President Trump’s cynical view of Americans in suburban communities is also an insult to those who live there.”

— from an article in [The Week](#) titled “[Democrats accuse Trump of ‘openly endorsing segregation’ with ‘Suburban Lifestyle Dream’ tweet](#)”

Fitzpatrick in the News

Research courtesy of contributor CC

“Only Congress can change the date of the election. And Tuesday, November 3rd will remain the date of the 2020 Election.”

— the content of a tweet from the Congressman, quoted in a [Levittown Now](#) article titled “[Congressman Says November 3 Should Remain Election Day](#)”

“No veteran should be homeless, and we must do whatever we can to take care of those who served our country. By adding an option to donate to homeless veterans on tax returns, we will increase the likelihood that Americans donate money to help our veterans in need. This legislation will make it easier for Americans across the country to help our veterans and their families when they need it most. Taking care of our veterans should never be a partisan issue, and I am proud to partner with Reps. Schneider and Deutch to continue to support our heroes.”

— from a [Patch](#) article titled “[Reps. Introduce Bipartisan Legislation to Help Homeless Veterans](#)”

“The NLRB must guarantee that workers across the country can exercise their right to organize during the COVID-19 pandemic and that fair elections are held.”

— from a [Competitive Enterprise Institute](#) article titled “[Electronic Union Elections: A Permanent “Temporary” Solution?](#)”

Toomey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker

“With a price tag exceeding \$1 trillion, the HEALS Act is not a narrow measure – and this is before Speaker Pelosi insists on her pound of flesh. Nonetheless, my staff and I will be reviewing the details of this bill in the coming days and the accompanying changes that will be made.”

— from a 07/31/20 [KITV](#) article titled “[Stimulus talks stall heading into the weekend](#)”

“Wearing a mask should not be controversial. Study after study affirms that wearing a mask reduces the spread of coronavirus. As our economy continues to reopen and until a vaccine is available, wearing a face mask when you venture out is the most practical and cost-effective manner in which we, as Americans, can do our part to protect one another. Please, for the benefit of your neighbors, friends, and those who live in your community, wear a mask.”

— from a 07/31/20 [MyChesCo](#) article titled “[Bipartisan Toomey and Bennet Resolution: “Please Wear a Mask”](#)”

“I do not support moving the presidential election and the president does not have the unilateral authority to do so. However, the president is right to point out that universally mailing ballots to people who don’t request them...would likely lead to voter fraud.”

— from a 07/30/20 article in [Lehigh Valley Live](#) titled “[“We will be voting in Northampton County in November”: Trump election tweet elicits pledge](#)”

Committee Corner - House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis

Courtesy of environmental contributor Andrea Wittchen, Partner, iSpring

On June 30, 2020, the majority members of the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis released their 547-page report on the committee's work. The report, entitled "Solving the Climate Crisis," is an ambitious and expansive roadmap for Congress to, in their words, "build a prosperous, clean energy economy that values workers, advances environmental justice, and is/ prepared to meet the challenges of the climate crisis."

The Select Committee was authorized on January 9, 2019, by the 116th Congress to prepare climate policy recommendations that would achieve substantial and permanent reduction in pollution and other activities that contribute to the climate crisis. The committee is comprised of Rep. Kathy Castor (D – FL), Chairperson, along with eight other Democratic members and Rep. Garret Graves (R – LA), Ranking Member, along with five other Republican members. They were tasked with providing a report by March 31, 2020, a date that was postponed due to the intervention of COVID. The Committee was not tasked with producing actual legislation. In fact, by their charter, they were not able to do that. Instead, they were to create policy recommendations, strategies and plans that Congress could consider in order to achieve the stated objectives.

What Does the Plan Cover?

Obviously at 547 pages, the plan covers an enormous amount of material. It identifies 12 key pillars under which are organized hundreds of recommendations for Congressional action. If you would like to review source materials, you have some options:

- You can read the full plan for yourself [here](#)
- You can read a 4-page fact sheet that outlines the 12 pillars [here](#)
- If you are interested in more details on sub-categories of the 12 pillars without reading the whole report, you can find them [here](#)
- Or there's a very helpful 2-page summary sheet from which much of this information is drawn [here](#)

For our purposes, the 12 pillars can be combined into four major focus areas:

1. Grow Our Economy and Put Americans Back to Work in Clean Energy Jobs. This includes:
 - a. Rapid deployment of all types of zero-carbon energy sources and new transmission infrastructure;
 - b. More domestic manufacture of clean energy, clean vehicles, and zero-emission technologies including throughout the supply chain;
 - c. Creating new economic sectors such as direct air capture and low-carbon building materials, and
 - d. Creating new, high-quality, good-paying clean energy economy jobs bolstered by the strengths of union representation
 - e. Protect the Health of All Families. This includes:
2. Prioritizing environmental justice communities for investment and enforcement of environment laws;
 - a. Strategic planning for community response to climate-related health risks and disasters;
 - b. Preparing for the effects of climate crisis by ensuring hospitals can withstand climate impacts, have secure supply chains and that state and local governments have climate crisis response plans, and
 - c. Protecting the health of workers by strengthening standards for all those exposed to severe heatwaves

3. Make Sure Our Communities and Farmers Can Withstand the Impacts of Climate Change. This includes:
 - a. Launching a National Climate Adaptation Program so that homes, businesses and critical infrastructure can withstand climate change;
 - b. Strengthening building codes for federally funded projects;
 - c. Accelerating resilient recovery by expediting disaster relief payments and rebuilding wisely, and
 - d. Helping farmers and ranchers implement soil health practices that support resiliency.
4. Protect America's Land and Waters for the Next Generation. This includes:
 - a. Protecting at least 30% of all U.S. lands and ocean areas by 2030;
 - b. Limiting fossil fuel extraction leasing;
 - c. Protecting and restoring vital ecosystems to sequester carbon and improve natural resilience, and
 - d. Creating jobs by reestablishing the Civilian Conservation Corps and creating a Climate Resilience Service Corps.

What Does It Accomplish?

As Committee Member Sean Casten (D-IL) has explained, the goal of the Committee was to first look at the science to determine what was needed to meet the challenges of the rapidly evolving climate crisis. After understanding that, the Committee then sought to identify what specific actions that were consistent with the science could be taken to meet those challenges.

To combat the worst effects of climate change, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded that in order to hold global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels it is necessary to reduce net anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions by at least 45% from global 2010 levels by 2030 and reach net-zero by 2050. Based on those scientific requirements, the Climate Crisis Action Plan calls for “reaching 100% clean, net zero emissions economy-wide in the U.S. by no later than 2050 and achieving net-negative emissions during the 2nd half of the century” along with the enabling objective of “establishing ambitious interim targets to assess progress and reduce pollution in environmental justice communities.”

After completing the Plan, the Committee then submitted it to the non-partisan think tank Energy Innovation for an independent analysis of what the plan could achieve. Energy Innovation concluded that, examining only a subset of the recommendations, the plan could achieve:

- Net-zero carbon dioxide emissions before 2050,
- 62,000 deaths avoided annually by 2050
- Nearly \$8 trillion in cumulative climate and health benefits through 2050
- Reduced net U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by at least 37% below 2010 levels in 2030 and 88% below 2010 levels in 2050.

What Doesn't It Do?

As mentioned above, the Plan does not create any legislation. It only provides the roadmap for legislation. The value of the Committee's charge to investigate the entire challenge of the climate crisis is that they could take a holistic view of the situation and develop wide-ranging recommendations for solutions. But Congress, as we know, is siloed and so every one of these recommendations will require slicing and dicing among a variety of committees with often overlapping jurisdictions. This will slow down a process that is inherently slow and seriously challenge our ability to achieve the objectives in the Plan.

Luckily, the Plan can serve as a benchmark to measure progress being made by each new piece of legislation so that we don't lose our way in the weeds.

A second concern, related to the first, is how to sequence the legislation. What do we do first, second, third? What can we do concurrently? What part relies on another part being completed? How much is already partially done? There has been some substantial environmental legislating

done in the House in this session, all of it stalled by McConnell in the Senate. How much of that can be resurrected and passed in a Senate under Democratic control?

Another thing to keep in mind is that the Committee's charge was climate change. It was not environmental justice (EJ). The charge included consideration of environmental justice issues, but it was not primarily focused on EJ. Therefore, issues such as those like the Flint water crisis are not dealt with directly since lead pipes are not a climate change issue although the Flint water crisis is clearly an EJ issue. While there is substantial consideration of environmental justice in the context of climate change, the bulk of recommendations are not focused primarily on EJ.

The other thing the Plan can't do is deliver us a new Administration. Without that, the Plan is virtually useless.

How Does It Relate to the Green New Deal?

This is obviously a pertinent question. The Green New Deal (GND) and "Solving the Climate Crisis" serve two very different purposes. The GND is a broad, aspirational statement of where we would like to see the country go. It topped out at 14 pages and was never designed to be a detailed roadmap to specific legislation. It also dealt with a much wider view of the landscape of "green". It did address the issue of climate change but also environmental and social justice. In many ways, the GND was the roadmap for "Solving the Climate Crisis." Re-reading the GND, one sees that many of the categories outlined in it are taken up in much greater detail in "Solving the Climate Crisis." If the Green New Deal stuck a stake in the ground, "Solving the Climate Crisis" strings the wire between the stakes and lays out the plots of ground that need to be plowed.

Remember also, that the Green New Deal was only a resolution to indicate a sense of the Congress, both chambers. It proposed no new specific legislation and it was voted down by the Senate.

What's Next?

In order for this thorough, far-sighted and amazing piece of work to have any impact at all, 3 things have to happen:

1. We need a Democratic President
2. We need Democratic control of both chambers of Congress
3. Even with complete Democratic control, we need the political will to make it happen.

That will require a high degree of commitment to the future and a willingness to jettison commitments to corporate interests, particularly those in the fossil fuel industries. One example from the Plan – we need to spend at least \$800 billion on energy infrastructure PER YEAR to get to the goals outlined. Where do we find that kind of money? Hint: \$650 billion in direct and indirect fossil fuel subsidies are paid out each year. Do we have the political will to end them?

Call to Action - Coronavirus Relief bill pressure, take two!

A number of programs to help Americans weather this unprecedented pandemic, like expanded nutrition assistance (SNAP), the \$600 unemployment boost, and eviction and foreclosure protections have expired as of July 31st. These are programs that are helping millions of Pennsylvanians, and keeping over ten million Americans from falling into [poverty](#).

Since the Congressional Republicans have still not come to the table to negotiate a phase 4 relief package, we need to stick to last week's action. We must call Senator Toomey and put emotional pressure on him to support a relief package.

“It's not obvious to me that we need to load the money cannon and fire

that off again,” - [Pat Toomey](#) on June 18th

“For us to load the money cannon again and say, ‘Let’s spend literally trillions more,’ that’s a tough sell.” - [Pat Toomey](#) on July 25th

Senator Toomey is one of the Republican senators who has been the most outspoken in his desire to NOT see another rescue bill. So, it is our job to make him FEEL otherwise.

Since we need to appeal to emotions, a script is not going to cut it. These messages need to come from the heart. But here are some tips you can use to making a successful emotional appeal:

1. Start off the message with what you want.
2. Tie your request to how you are feeling - anxious, scared, fearful, hopeless, etc.
3. Give a personal example of what you are experiencing that is causing your emotional state; OR
4. Include info about a person you love, and how this situation is affecting them.
5. Close by reiterating your request of the Senator.

Here is an example message, using these tips:

I have contacted the Senator to ask him to support efforts to help us all by supporting the extension of coronavirus rescue programs (1). I know that they end in less than a week, and I am scared of what will happen then (2). My husband’s industry has been affected by this downturn, and I am terrified that without the boost of these programs, he will lose his job (3, 4). We can’t just be left high and dry on July 31st. We need Senator Casey to help Pennsylvanians and support the renewal of the SNAP and unemployment programs, as well as foreclosure and eviction protections. (5)

Emotional pleas work best when they are crafted out of personal experience, so please take a moment and craft your own message. We only have a short time to work on Senator Toomey, so please contact him each day this week via one of these methods:

Option ONE: CALL

TOLL FREE - (855) 552-1831
Erie - (814) 453-3010
Johnstown - (814) 266-5970
Pittsburgh - (412) 803-3501
Wilkes Barre - (570) 820-4088

Allentown - (610) 434-1444
Harrisburg - (717) 782-3951
Philadelphia - (215) 241-1090
Washington - (202) 224-4254

Option TWO: RESISTBOT

Text RESIST to 50409 or on Twitter, direct message “Resist” to @Resistbot
Then follow their directions. It takes about one to two minutes to complete a full letter

Option THREE: FAX

Send a free FAX straight to Toomey
https://faxzero.com/fax_senate/T000461

Option FOUR: TWEET

Use the Hashtags #HEROESAct, #COVID19, and #Coronavirus
Or search for those hashtags, and like/retweet content people have already composed to amplify their messaging.

Option FIVE: Senator Toomey’s Website Contact Form

Use this site - <https://www.toomey.senate.gov/?p=contact> - to send an email to the Senator.

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

CC

Linda Houk

Elayne Baker

Kierstyn Piotrowski Zolfo

Gary Garb

Susan Vogel

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 and put "MoCTrack Help" in the subject. Thanks!