

PA-01 Member of Congress Tracking Report - 12/06/20

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. We want to offer a big thank you to the Demcast and Pennsylvania Indivisible organizations who host our report and help us share it out to the residents of our Commonwealth!

Tracking Congress in the Age of Trump

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

Member of Congress	This week's score	Change from last report
Senator Bob Casey (D)	29.0%	0.0%
Senator Pat Toomey (R)	88.2%	0.0%
PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)	62.9%	0.0%

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. No bills were scored this week.

The last vote that the FiveThirtyEight folks have tracked is the Amy Coney Barrett confirmation. It is possible that they are retiring this number, now that Trump's tenure as our president is ending. We will keep this number up for the time being, and in the 117th Congress, we will establish a new metric for assessing MOC voting records.

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Votes of Interest

The House Votes to Decriminalize Cannabis

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 3884](#): MORE (Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement) Act

This week the House passed a bill that would decriminalize marijuana. Pennsylvania's own Rep. Dwight Evans (D-PA-03) shared [a recap of the bill and why he supports it](#), so we will include that text in lieu of our own recap:

Rep Evans notes, "the MORE Act would make several important reforms:

- Remove marijuana, or cannabis, from the list of federally controlled substances;
- Authorize the provision of resources, funded by an excise tax on marijuana, to address the needs of communities that have been seriously impacted by the War on Drugs, including increasing the participation of communities of color in the booming cannabis market; and
- Provide for the expungement of federal marijuana convictions and arrests.

The MORE Act would also establish an Opportunity Trust Fund to provide funding for:

- Services to individuals, including job training, reentry services and substance use disorder services;
- Loans to assist small businesses that are owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals; and
- Programs that minimize barriers to marijuana licensing and employment for individuals adversely impacted by the War on Drugs, including in states like Pennsylvania that currently have only legalized medical marijuana. This provision is because of the inclusion of Evans' Homegrown Act."

Rep. Evans also said, "The MORE Act is a jobs bill and a criminal justice reform bill. And with the pandemic-fueled recession, America needs jobs! Legal cannabis sales totaled \$9.5 billion in 2017 and are projected to reach \$23 billion by 2022. Let's get the federal government out of the way by decriminalizing cannabis at the federal level... The MORE Act would represent a major change once we can get it enacted into law, and I'm pleased the House has taken this important, bipartisan step that shows the bill can pass. The two-thirds of Americans who want these reforms should let their senators know."

Vote date: Friday, December 4, 2020

Vote Tally: 228-164

Party Breakdown: Most Republicans voted NO, while the lone Libertarian and most Democrats voted YES. Six Democrats and five Republicans crossed party lines. The only Pennsylvanian MoC to do so was  PA-17's Rep. Conor Lamb, who voted NO.

Additional Reading:

- ["House passes historic bill to decriminalize cannabis,"](#) from *NBC News*
- ["House votes to decriminalize marijuana at federal level,"](#) from *Action News 6*, Philadelphia's ABC affiliate
- ["Speaker Nancy Pelosi's Statement on House Passage of MORE Act to Federally Decriminalize Marijuana,"](#) from *The Sierra Sun Times*

Rep. Fitzpatrick voted NO.

The Senate Votes to Change Disability Rules for People with ALS

[Senate Vote](#) on [S. 578](#): ALS Disability Insurance Access Act

The process for most people to receive Social Security Disability benefits is long and complicated. And even after one is approved - which can take one to two years, or more - current rules impose a five month wait period before one can receive medical insurance coverage.

The bill that passed in the Senate this week would eliminate that wait period for people with amyotrophic

lateral sclerosis, or ALS. That disease, a progressive neuromuscular disorder, is incurable and most people die within two to five years of diagnosis. Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), one of the original co-sponsors of the legislation, observed, "families in Michigan coping with an ALS diagnosis already endure tremendous hardships. The last thing they should deal with is unnecessary waiting periods for their Social Security Disability Insurance."

Vote date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Vote Tally: 96-1

Party Breakdown: The only lawmaker to vote NO was Republican Mike Lee of Utah.

Additional Reading:

- "[Senate passes ALS Disability Insurance Access Act](#)," from *WLNS 6 News*
- "[Sen. Stabenow on Passage of ALS Disability Insurance Access Act in U.S. Senate](#)," from *Insurance News Net*
- "[96-1 Senate vote OKs bill to speed up ALS benefits](#)," from *The Northwest Arkansas Democrat Gazette*

Bob Casey voted YES and Pat Toomey voted YES.

Suspension of the Rules Votes in the House

All of the other votes taken in the House were expected to pass by wide margins and were considered under a [suspension of the rules](#), requiring a $\frac{2}{3}$ supermajority to pass. The lame duck session is often used to consider this sort of legislation. Rep. Fitzpatrick voted YES on all of these uncontroversial bills.

[House Vote on S. 2981: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act](#)

According to the [Library of Congress](#) bill summary, this legislation updates requirements for the commissioner officers serving with NOAA, to change "service requirements, training and physical fitness, education loan assistance, recruitment, hiring and promotions, separation and retirement, sexual harassment and assault prevention, and other workforce issues."

Vote date: Friday, December 4, 2020

Vote Tally: 265-124

[House Vote on H.R. 1380: Big Cat Public Safety Act](#)

[GovTrack](#) notes that this bill "revises requirements governing the trade of big cats (i.e., species of lion, tiger, leopard, cheetah, jaguar, or cougar or any hybrid of such species). Specifically, it revises restrictions on the possession and exhibition of big cats, including to restrict direct contact between the public and big cats."

Vote date: Thursday, December 3, 2020

Vote Tally: 272-114

[House Vote on H.R. 7995: Coin Metal Modification Authorization and Cost Savings Act](#)

This bill allows the US Mint to perform a study to see if changing the metal composition of coins will reduce costs to taxpayers while not causing a disruption in the production of coinage. A more detailed summary from the *Library of Congress* can be found [here](#).

Vote date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Vote Tally: 343-41

*[Starting on November 15th](#) and continuing on [November 22nd](#), we discussed Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's big push to confirm a final batch of Trump judges to lifetime appointments in our nation's country. He shoved through two judges in that first week of lame duck confirmations, and another five in the next week. As the Senate took off for Thanksgiving, we now pick up with judges eight through eleven, as well as a pair of bureaucratic confirmations. For more on this judicial action, see the *Courthouse News Service* article "[Republicans Confirm More Trump Judges Amid Pandemic Relief Talks](#)."*

Lame Duck Judicial Confirmation #8 - Mississippi

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Taylor B. McNeel to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Mississippi

Mr. McNeel is a graduate of the University of Mississippi for both his undergraduate and legal education, and he has spent his entire legal career at the firm of Brunini, Grantham, Grower & Hewes, PLLC in Biloxi, Mississippi. According to *The Vetting Room*, he is an experienced attorney who has “handled both bench and jury trials in federal and state court, as well as appeals in the Mississippi Supreme Court and the Mississippi Court of Appeals, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.”

Vote date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020

Vote Tally: 53-39

Party Breakdown: All Republicans present voted YES, and they were joined by four Democrats - Doug Jones of Alabama, Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, Ben Cardin of Maryland and Joe Manchin of West Virginia. Thirty-eight Democrats and one Independent voted NO.

Additional Reading:

- [“Taylor McNeel – Nominee to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi,”](#) from *The Vetting Room*
- [“Attorney confirmed as federal judge in South Mississippi,”](#) from *The San Francisco Chronicle*
- [“Wicker, Hyde-Smith Celebrate Confirmation of Taylor McNeel to serve as U.S. District Judge,”](#) from *Y’All Politics*

Bob Casey voted NO and Pat Toomey voted YES.

Lame Duck Judicial Confirmation #9 - Ohio

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on J. Philip Calabrese, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio

J. Philip Calabrese graduated from Harvard Law School in 2000 before clerking for a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. He then worked in private practice for most of two decades before he was appointed to an Ohio county court in 2019.

Some of the cases he handled during his time in private practice caused concern during his confirmation hearings. For those of you who watch *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, the now-bankrupt coal company Murray Energy and its litigious founder/owner [Bob Murray](#) (link contains a magnificent musical number that has some NSFW language) will be familiar. Murray often filed [‘SLAPP’ lawsuits](#), “strategic lawsuit against public participation,” filed to keep people from offering any criticism. Newly confirmed Judge Calabrese represented Bob Murray in SLAPP suits against a local news outlet that criticized Murray for firing hundreds of employees.

Vote date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020

Vote Tally: 58-35

Party Breakdown: All Republicans present voted YES, and they were joined by eight Democrats. Thirty-four Democrats voted NO along with one Independent. Ohio’s Senators - Republican Rob Portman and Democrat Sherrod Brown - still work cooperatively on the judicial nomination process (as do our own pair of Pennsylvania senators), so Sen. Brown’s involvement in the choice of Judge Calabrese may explain why he has more than the normal handful of Democratic senators supporting his confirmation.

Additional Reading:

- [“Judge J. Philip Calabrese – Nominee to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio,”](#) from *The Vetting Room*
- [“New federal judge for Ohio's Northern District is confirmed,”](#) from *The Toledo Blade*
- [“Senate approves judgeship for Cuyahoga County’s Judge J. Philip Calabrese,”](#) from *Cleveland.com*

Bob Casey voted NO and Pat Toomey voted YES.

Lame Duck Judicial Confirmation #10 - Federal Claims

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Kathryn C. Davis to be a Judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims for a term of fifteen years

The Federal Claims Court is a special segment of the judiciary that deals with “complex factual and statutory construction issues in tax law,” according to their website. They also handle bid and contract law disputes and “intellectual property, Indian tribe, and various statutory claims against the United States.” Unlike many other judicial positions, confirmed judges do not get lifetime appointments, but instead serve for 15 years. [The Vetting Room](#) outlined the problems facing this special court, observing “the U.S. Court of Federal Claims (CFC) is facing a vacancy crisis. One of the factors exacerbating the situation is the Trump Administration’s slow pace in nominations and their predilection for naming young attorneys with little background in the court’s specialized docket.”

Ms. Davis most recently worked at the Department of Justice, where she defended the Trump Administration in cases relating to student loans, the border wall, and immigration policy. Prior to that, she defended the Obama and Bush Administrations in cases relating to detainees held in the Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility. Davis has some roots in Pennsylvania, as she attended Temple University’s Law School and worked at the private firm of McKissock & Hoffman P.C. in Philadelphia.

Vote date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Vote Tally: 51-45

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

Additional Reading:

- [“Kathryn Davis – Nominee to the U.S. Court of Federal Claims,”](#) from *The Vetting Room*
- [“Senate Confirms Veteran DOJ Litigator To Claims Court,”](#) from *Law 360*
- [“Trump Taps 4 For Federal Claims, Trial Courts,”](#) from *Law 360*

Bob Casey voted NO and Pat Toomey voted YES.

Lame Duck Judicial Confirmation #11 - Armed Forces Appeals

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Liam P. Hardy to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces for the term of fifteen years

There is very little information available about this confirmation. *Law360.com* (A subscription site) has the tiniest of blurbs available to the public, calling this nominee a “Trump Administration lawyer” and “former Kirkland partner.” They also note that the position to which Mr. Hardy was confirmed is one where civilian judges review decisions made by the military legal system.

Vote date: Thursday, December 3, 2020

Vote Tally: 59-34

Party Breakdown: All Republicans present voted YES, and they were joined by eleven Democrats and one Independent. Thirty-four Democrats voted NO.

Bob Casey voted NO and Pat Toomey voted YES.

Lame Duck Bureaucratic Confirmation #1 - Federal Reserve

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Christopher Waller to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of fourteen years

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* wrote [an excellent piece](#) about the confirmation for Mr. Waller. They note that Waller taught economics for over two decades before joining the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank in 2009, where he now serves as the research director. About that research, it concerns, “how the Fed’s communications affect financial markets and the benefits of an independent central bank.”

The *Inquirer* also notes that the confirmation of Waller should do little to change the current philosophy of the Fed. They explain:

Waller is a top aide to James Bullard, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, and a well-known “dove.” Doves are policymakers who are generally thought to

favor lower interest rates to help boost job growth and who tend to worry less about the risk of inflation. Those who worry more about the threat of inflation, by contrast, are generally referred to as “hawks”... Waller’s economic tilt won’t likely make much difference to the Fed’s policy, because the Fed is almost as dovish as they can be.

The Fed seats are normally confirmed in pairs, with one seat going to each party. The Democratic seat is still vacant and will likely be left to the Biden Administration to fill.

Vote date: Thursday, December 3, 2020

Vote Tally: 48-47

Party Breakdown: Almost all Republicans voted YES, but Rand Paul of Kentucky voted NO. Sen. Paul was joined by all forty-five Democrats and one Independent.

Additional Reading:

- [“Trump nominee Christopher Waller confirmed to Fed board,”](#) from *Axios*
- [“Senate confirms Christopher Waller to serve on Federal Reserve board,”](#) from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*
- [“Christopher Waller confirmed as Federal Reserve governor; Judy Shelton nomination likely dead,”](#) from *CNBC*

Bob Casey voted NO and Pat Toomey voted YES.

Lame Duck Bureaucratic Confirmation #2 - National Credit Union

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Kyle Hauptman to be a Member of the National Credit Union Administration Board for a term expiring August 2, 2025

The [National Credit Union Administration](#) does what its name indicates - it oversees and performs rulemaking as it relates to our country’s credit unions. It has a three-member board, where no more than two members may be of the same party. The other two members are currently one Democrat and one Republican, so the confirmation of the Trump Administration’s nominee means that the Gp will maintain control of the NCUA for the first two years of the Biden Administration.

Prior to his confirmation, Mr. Hauptman worked for Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR) as an economic advisor, and he also served as the Staff Director on the Senate Banking Committee’s Subcommittee on Economic Policy. Before that, he served on the SEC and on the 2016 Presidential Transition Team for President Trump.

Vote date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Vote Tally: 56-39

Party Breakdown: All Republicans voted YES. They were joined by Independent Angus King of Maine and (and unusual line-up of) four Democrats - Doug Jones of Alabama, Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, Maggie Hassan of New Hampshire and Mark Warner of Virginia.

Additional Reading:

- [“Senate confirms Kyle Hauptman to NCUA board,”](#) from *American Banker*
- [“Hauptman confirmed by Senate for NCUA board,”](#) from the *Credit Union National Association*
- [“It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like ‘Crunch Time’ for Congress,”](#) from the *Credit Union 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/months and other ceremonial activities.

- [S.1153](#) - Stop Student Debt Relief Scams Act
- [H.R.1044](#) - Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act
- [H.R.3349](#) - Republic of Texas Legation Memorial Act
- [H.R.3465](#) - Fallen Journalists Memorial Act

- [S.434](#) - A bill to require the collection of certain data relating to Bureau of Land Management land acquisitions
- [S.496](#) - Young Fishermen's Development Act
- [S.945](#) - Holding Foreign Companies Accountable Act
- [S.4054](#) - United States Grain Standards Reauthorization Act
- [H.R.306](#) - Kettle Creek Battlefield Survey Act
- [H.R.1049](#) - National Heritage Area Act
- [H.R.1819](#) - War Crimes Rewards Expansion Act
- [H.R.3682](#) - Land Grant-Mercedes Traditional Use Recognition and Consultation Act
- [H.R.4153](#) - Health Care Access for Urban Native Veterans Act
- [H.R.5517](#) - Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act
- [H.R.7045](#) - To require the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a study on lands that could be included in a National Forest in Hawai'i
- [H.R.7903](#) - To amend the Small Business Act to establish the Community Advantage Loan Program
- [H.R.8199](#) - 504 Credit Risk Management Improvement Act
- [H.R.8211](#) - 504 Modernization and Small Manufacturer Enhancement Act
- [H.R.8229](#) - Parity for HUBZone Appeals Act
- [H.R.8810](#) - National Landslide Preparedness Act
- [H.Res.17](#) - Expressing concern over the detention of Austin Tice and Majd Kamalmaz
- [H.Res.958](#) - Condemning the practice of politically motivated imprisonment and calling for the immediate release of political prisoners in the Russian Federation and urging action by the United States Government to impose sanctions with respect to persons responsible for that form of human rights abuse
- [H.Res.996](#) - Expressing the sense of Congress that the activities of Russian national Yevgeniy Prigozhin and his affiliated entities pose a threat to the national interests and security of the United States and of its allies and partners
- [H.Res.1115](#) - Calling for the immediate release of Trevor Reed, a United States citizen who was unjustly sentenced to 9 years in a Russian prison
- [S.199](#) - Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation Restoration Act
- [S.212](#) - Indian Community Economic Enhancement Act
- [S.914](#) - Coordinated Ocean Observations and Research Act
- [S.1342](#) - Great Lakes Environmental Sensitivity Index Act

Update on COVID relief and the looming shutdown

To recap the tortured process to get us to where we are today:

- On [March 6, 2020](#), the first bill to address the coronavirus pandemic was signed into law. This legislation, H.R. 6074: Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, divided about \$8 billion between the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the State Department, and small business loans.
- On [March 18, 2020](#), the second coronavirus package was signed into law. The bill, H.R. 6201: Families First Coronavirus Response Act, was a roughly \$8 billion package that included funds for testing, food security programs, limited emergency family and sick leave, limited unemployment insurance and Medicaid funding.
- On [March 27, 2020](#), the third coronavirus relief bill was signed into law. H.R. 748: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or the CARES Act, included direct payments to Americans, increased unemployment benefits, assistance to corporations/small businesses and hospital and health provider assistance. Some changes were made to increase the duration and utility of the "PPP" portion of this bill, the small business protection part, after votes taken in the [last week of May](#).

That's where the bipartisan cooperation ended. Now we get to the Senate Republican stonewalling portion of this process:

- On [May 15, 2020](#) the House passed the first version of the HEROES (Health & Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions) Act, \$3 trillion in funding and programs including extended unemployment insurance, new stimulus payments to families, more money for testing,

tracing and treatment, and a slew of other programs. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell refused to consider or schedule it.

- On [October 1, 2020](#), the House passed a new version of the HEROES Act, reducing the overall price tag from over \$3.4 trillion to \$2.2 trillion. package still included extended unemployment insurance and a new \$1,2000 stimulus check to families, but it reduced the level of aid provided to state, local and tribal governments by half. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell refused to consider or schedule it.

In the past several month, House Speaker Pelosi has worked with various Republicans, including Treasury Secretary Mnuchin, to come up with a compromise relief package, but that was cut off prior to the election. Now talks have resumed. The story of the negotiations can be told through these *CNBC* news headlines from each day of this past week:

- [Pelosi and Schumer back \\$900 billion coronavirus stimulus plan as basis for negotiations](#)
- [McConnell shoots down bipartisan \\$900 billion coronavirus stimulus plan as stalemate drags on](#)
- [Pelosi and McConnell resume talks as Congress rushes to strike a Covid stimulus deal](#)
- [Pelosi sees 'momentum' toward a Covid stimulus deal as job growth slows](#)

Complicating this situation is a December 11, 2020 deadline. Facing a funding deadline and looming shutdown back in late September, Congress passed a [continuing resolution](#). That's the mechanism that funding the government at existing levels until a specified date... and that date is this coming Friday. So the government needs to pass another funding bill, or another Continuing resolution, by Friday, December 11, 2020 or else we will have another government shutdown.

In a *US News and World Report* article titled "[Pelosi Says Coronavirus Relief Could Come With Omnibus Funding Bill](#)," noted that Speaker Pelosi and Leader McConnell have discussed attaching "new coronavirus relief legislation to an omnibus funding bill lawmakers must pass in a week to avoid a government shutdown." So that means we all need to keep our eyes on the news this coming week to see if federal assistance will be coming soon or well into the first months of the Biden Administration.

Twitter Action - COVID and pandemic release

Senator Casey was the only one of our three MoCs to tweet about the pandemic in these last two weeks.

🌐 Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [11/25/20](#):

"My statement on Pennsylvania surpassing 10,000 COVID-19 deaths

Casey Statement on PA Reaching 10,000 COVID-19 Deaths

"COVID-19 has reached every corner of our Nation and every county in our Commonwealth. Today, I am thinking about the 10,000 Pennsylvanians who have lost their lives to this virus, and all those who loved them. We mourn for those we have lost and pray for those still suffering, as well as for their friends and families who are grieving.

Pennsylvanians, especially our frontline health care workers, have been fighting this relentless pandemic for more than eight months. COVID-19 has now claimed the lives of more than 10,000 Pennsylvanians, and over a quarter of a million Americans. We are now seeing the largest wave of cases to date, and I am saddened to know that there will be more deaths in the weeks to come. It is critical that we all follow the guidance from public health authorities to stay home, wear a mask and avoid gatherings with people outside our families, in order to protect each other and do our part to stop the spread of this vicious virus.

Furthermore, it is past time for Senate Republicans to work with Democrats, including the incoming Biden Administration, on robust legislation to provide states and the health care system with the resources they need to mitigate the spread of the virus. We must work together for the health and safety of the American people to protect frontline workers, implement a national testing strategy, advise people across all states to wear a mask and safeguard the seniors, people with disabilities and workers in nursing homes and other long-term care settings, who are among those put most at risk amid the pandemic. We must secure resources for state and local officials who are desperately in need of more resources and logistical support to prepare for vaccine distribution. Elected officials owe much more than condolences to the people who entrusted us with public office. The time to act is long overdue, and we cannot waste another day. We must mitigate the spread of this virus and prevent further senseless tragedy. It is far past time for Senate Republicans to get serious about saving lives."

Tweet of the Week...s (since we had no report last week)

● **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [12/03/20](#):**

“More than one billion people are living with a disability. On this International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we are reminded that not all disabilities are visible. We must take care to create an inclusive world for ALL people with disabilities. #IDPD2020”



● **Senator Pat Toomey, @SenToomey, has only tweeted twice since November 24th, both in celebration of holidays.**

● **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, [11/28/20](#):**

“Small businesses are the backbone of our nation's economy. This #SmallBusinessSaturday, be sure to shop online or safely in person at the amazing small businesses throughout our community!”



Casey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Linda Houk

“Families need funds to pay for rent, food and health care. Small businesses need support as they struggle to make payroll and keep their doors open. Workers need additional unemployment benefits.... And our state and local governments need help to keep health departments open, transit systems running, cops and firefighters in their communities and to prevent thousands of layoffs.”

“I hope that there's an opportunity to make it bigger.”

— from an article in *the Morning Call*, titled [“Will Pennsylvania get more federal coronavirus dollars soon? Toomey, Casey split shows it will be tough”](#)

“It's not in front of us, and I just don't think it's really something that's near-term and urgent for a lot of Americans.”

“Now if things change, if we get the majority, and the Supreme Court—not only the fight on the confirmation—but the cases that start to emerge from this court, I think it's a very corporate, right-wing court and it could be even more so now, and I think that's where the country will be engaged.”

—from an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, titled [“Debate Looms on Supreme Court Expansion”](#)

"Once you get agreement, there's a kind of momentum that I hope will take over... Having [relief] for two months is a heck of a lot better than having zero..."

"I think we're gonna need a New Deal Works Progress Administration-like bill."

—from an article on WFMZ TV News, titled "[Capitol Hill appears ready to move forward on another stimulus](#)"

Senator Casey also did an interview with the *Bradford Era*, in an article titled "[Casey: Parties must work together for COVID relief](#)." Some of the key quotes from that piece are included below:

- "COVID-19 has reached every corner of our nation and every county in our Commonwealth. Today, I am thinking about the 10,000 Pennsylvanians who have lost their lives to this virus, and all those who loved them."
- "We mourn for those we have lost and pray for those still suffering, as well as for their friends and families who are grieving."
- "Pennsylvanians, especially our frontline health care workers, have been fighting this relentless pandemic for more than eight months. COVID-19 has now claimed the lives of more than 10,000 Pennsylvanians, and over a quarter of a million Americans."
- "We are now seeing the largest wave of cases to date, and I am saddened to know that there will be more deaths in the weeks to come."
- "It is critical that we all follow the guidance from public health authorities to stay home, wear a mask and avoid gatherings with people outside our families, in order to protect each other and do our part to stop the spread of this vicious virus."
- "It is past time for Senate Republicans to work with Democrats, including the incoming Biden Administration, on robust legislation to provide states and the health care system with the resources they need to mitigate the spread of the virus."
- "We must work together for the health and safety of the American people to protect frontline workers, implement a national testing strategy, advise people across all states to wear a mask and safeguard the seniors, people with disabilities and workers in nursing homes and other long-term care settings, who are among those put most at risk amid the pandemic."

Fitzpatrick in the News

Research provided by CC

"GT Thompson has been laser-focused on the Pennsylvania Delegation and advocating for Members in Region II. He has the experience, temperament, and generosity of spirit that is essential in any good leader. GT has always been there for our delegation, and he understands the unique priorities of Pennsylvania. GT is the consummate public servant, and Pennsylvania is lucky to have him leading us."

— from an article in *Gant News* titled "[Thompson Re-Elected to Republican Steering Committee](#)"

"This is personal to me. This is my hometown hospital... Stand strong. You're on the side of the angels."

— from a *Levittown Now* article titled "[Nurses Return To Work After St. Mary Medical Center Strike](#)"

"I am pleased to see the House passed our Big Cat Public Safety Act today. For too long, big cats have been mistreated, exploited, and abused in private roadside zoos. As a member of the bipartisan Congressional Animal Protection Caucus, I'm committed to ensuring our government is doing its part to promote animal welfare. It is crucial we stand up for animals, both as individuals and as a society, and our legislation takes an incredible step to protect all animals."

— from a *Globe Newswire* article titled "[House Votes to Ban Trade in Big Cats as Pets and as Props For Roadside Zoos](#)"

In their article "[Where Republicans in Congress stand on Trump's false claim of winning the election](#)," the *Washington Post* put Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick into the Joe Biden column, despite Fitzpatrick having ignored

their request for comment. They cite our representative's quote in the November 11th *Bucks County Courier Times* article "[Fitzpatrick: Allow legal challenges to presidential election to run their course](#)," when he said, "We have a president-elect and we have pending litigation. Let it run its way through the courts and we'll get a resolution in an open and transparent manner" as evidence that Fitzpatrick supports Biden's election. We at MoCTrack are a bit more skeptical than the *Washington Post*, and see that quote as just one more time our Congressman has said something vague to let others interpret it as they wish.

Toomey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker

"[I] will not be objecting to Pennsylvania's slate of electors."

— from a *Spotlight PA* article (with an headline that does NOT refer to Sen. Toomey) titled "[GOP leaders ask Congress to reject Pa.'s electors for Joe Biden](#)"

"As the Senate considers Dr. Yellen's nomination to lead Treasury, I look forward to discussing with her a variety of issues, especially the requirement for CARES Act temporary emergency lending facilities to shut down by year-end and remain shut down, absent congressional action."

— from a *Newsweek* article (with another headline that does NOT refer to Sen. Toomey), titled "[GOP Senator Suggests He May Oppose Biden's Treasury Pick, Says He 'Voted Against' Yellen for Fed](#)"

"Rape is an appalling, heinous crime and victims deserve justice and our support. The fact that there are backlogs in testing rape kits, which are often used in the fight for justice, is entirely inexcusable. This bipartisan bill helps lessen the ramifications of these backlogs by ensuring that victims can apply for and receive benefits and support services, even if their rape kit is delayed to a point that a victim missed the deadline to apply in their state."

— from an article in the *Times Observer* titled "[Sex assault survivors bill introduced](#)"

"I am sympathetic to the idea that people who are involved in [the] cannabis industry — in an entirely legal fashion, in the state in which they operate — ought to be able to have ordinary banking services. That's my starting point, and then there's a lot of details to work out, but I am open to that."

— from an article in *The Leaf Online* titled "[New hope for banking reform in Senate transition](#)"

"We've got a particularly attractive opportunity to expand trade with Taiwan. Strengthening those trade ties with Taiwan would benefit us both in security terms and in economic growth. For the U.S. and Taiwan certainly, but even the Indo-Pacific region, as a whole. Taiwan is already our tenth largest trading partner in goods...."

...Today, half of Taiwan's trade and eighty percent of its investment is with China or Hong Kong. The U.S. can provide an alternative path. One of the things that we need to bear in mind as we go down this road, I hope, of expanding our trade and liberalizing trade with Taiwan is we should have free trade, not managed trade. We should have a free trade agreement that is based on maximizing free trade in goods and services, as well as the movement of capital...

...The goal of the agreement should be to lower barriers to trade and investment, preferably to eliminate barriers to trade and investment, and we could do that. I intend to introduce this week a Senate resolution in support of a U.S.-Taiwan free trade agreement. Since the Economic Cooperation Framework of 2010, Taiwan has expressed a desire to pursue new free trade agreements. And we should credit Taiwan to coming to the table to negotiate with the U.S."

— from a *North Central PA* article titled "[Sen. Pat Toomey endorses U.S.-Taiwan trade agreement](#)"

“President Trump should accept the outcome of the election and facilitate the presidential transition process.”

— from a *Bloomberg News* article titled [“More Republicans Say It’s Time for Trump to Start Transition”](#)

Call to Action - COVID relief

It is not hyperbole to say that tens of millions of Americans will face hunger and/or homelessness if another phase of coronavirus relief legislation is not passed soon. The eviction and foreclosure moratorium is set to run out, and state and local governments are struggling under the weight of increased services and reduced revenue. Everyone needs help.

Regardless of the party of your Congressperson, please call them as well as BOTH of our senators to tell them that we are counting on them to pass a bill to help Americans impacted by this pandemic.

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 <lawmaker> to ask <him/her> to support efforts to help us all by supporting the extension of coronavirus rescue programs (1). We have been struggling these past months, I am scared of what will happen when the foreclosure moratorium ends (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. We need <lawmaker> 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 this week to put the pressure on all of our Members of Congress, because December 11, 2020 is when the continuing resolution funding the government ends... and there are indications that this is the last chance to get a relief package passed before the Biden Administration takes over... in which case a relief package would not be brought up for several more months.

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

CC	Linda Houk
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Gary Garb	Kierstyn Piotrowski Zolfo

We can always use extra help. 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. Would you be willing to listen to a committee hearing and transcribe a few quotes from Pennsylvania lawmakers? Or are you a topic specialist on an issue of concern to activists, and would you like to contribute an occasional column? Please email KierstynPZ@gmail.com and put "MoCTrack Help" in the subject. Thanks!