

PA-01 Member of Congress Tracking Report - 12/13/20

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)	28.8%	-0.2%
Senator Pat Toomey (R)	87.5%	-0.7%
PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)	62.2%	-0.7%

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. The Defense Authorization bill was scored this week in both the House and the Senate, as Trump opposed it.

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Votes of Interest

Shutdown averted... for a week

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 8900](#): Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021, and Other Extensions Act

Late on Friday night President Trump signed this continuing resolution, after its passage by the House and the Senate. This delaying bill, which extends the deadline for funding by just one week, through December 18, 2020, is necessary because Congress cannot come to an agreement about 2021 spending and a Covid relief package.

A number of lawmakers have tried to broker a bipartisan deal, but Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell will not budge on two key items. He insists upon the inclusion of liability protections for corporations (so they can force employees back to work in potentially unsafe conditions and face no consequences over transmission of the coronavirus). And McConnell has expressed that he will not support financial relief for states and municipalities, who are bearing the burden of increased service costs (like emergency medical services) and decreasing revenue.

As Rachel Maddow says, “keep your eyes on this space.” We will know more about both Covid relief and government funding by next Friday.

Vote date: Wednesday, December 9, 2020

Vote Tally: 343-67

Party Breakdown: All Democrats present voted YES and they were joined by 111 Republicans. Libertarian Justin Amash of Michigan voted NO along with 66 Republicans.

Additional Reading:

- [“House passes stopgap funding bill to avert shutdown,”](#) from *CNN Politics*
- [“House Passes One Week Stopgap Spending Bill,”](#) from *Government Executive*
- [“Senate Majority Leader McConnell Says He Expects One-Week Continuing Resolution to Keep Government Open,”](#) from *C-SPAN (video clip of floor speech)*
- [“Trump signs one-week spending bill to avert midnight shutdown,”](#) from *The Washington Post*

Representative Fitzpatrick voted YES.

Note: News outlets have reported that the Senate has passed the measure, presumably by unanimous consent, and that President Trump has signed it into law. However, the Congressional clerk has not yet updated the bill information on any of the tracking websites, so we cannot provide a link, or confirm without question that both senators supported the measure. But since we know that the Senate did not take any roll call votes yesterday, it is safe to assume that this continuing resolution had the support of Senators Casey and Toomey.

Congress Passes the 2021 Defense Authorization Package

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 6395](#): National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021

[Senate Vote](#) on [H.R. 6395](#): National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021

The 2021 National Defense Authorization Act passed with veto-proof margins in both houses of Congress, despite [veto threats from President Trump](#). This 740 billion package funding our military operations for the next year. A summary of the bill from the Library of Congress can be found [here](#), but some of the key provisions included are:

- a 3% pay increase for members of the armed services
- expanded civilian federal employees' access to paid leave benefits
- authorization to [rename military bases](#) named for Confederate military figures
- an increase of more than 5,000 military troops
- “funding for a new initiative aimed at checking China’s military power in southeast Asia,” per [Stars and Stripes](#), the new \$2.2 billion Pacific Deterrence Initiative
- restrictions on a president’s authority to withdraw troops from Germany and Afghanistan
- construction projects at military bases
- the purchase of two Virginia-class attack submarines

This package does NOT include any content related to the repeal of Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, a section of law that protects social media corporations from liability for content provided by users. President Trump demanded that this be shoe-horned into the NDAA, but members of both parties

refused, indicating that changes to the Communications Decency Act have nothing to do with the military budget. The refusal to include this content prompted the veto threat from the President. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said that the House would be called back into session after Christmas if the President did veto the military funding.

House Vote date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Vote Tally: 335-78

Senate Vote Date: Friday, December 11, 2020

Vote Tally: 84-13

Party Breakdown: This is one of those bills that creates a situation where people of both parties will vote NO to signal disapproval of different portions of the package.

In the House, the Democrats split with 195 voting YES, 37 voting NO and 1 person voting Present. The Republicans split with 140 voting YES, 40 voting NO and 16 people not voting at all. Libertarian Justin Amash voted NO.

In the Senate, the Independents split 1-1, with Maine's Angus King voting YES and Vermont's Bernie Sanders voting NO. The Republicans split 43-7, with the NOs coming from libertarian leaning folks like Kentucky's Rand Paul and Utah's Mike Lee as well as fiscal conservatives like Arkansas's Tom Cotton. And the Democrats split 40-5, with the NO votes coming from the leftmost side of the party - Massachusetts pair Ed Markey and Elizabeth Warren, New Jersey's Cory Booker, and Oregon's pair of Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden.

Additional Reading:

- ["House Overwhelmingly Passes Defense Bill With Leave Benefits, Setting Up Confrontation with Trump,"](#) from *Government Executive*
- ["Defying Trump, House approves defense bill with veto-proof majority,"](#) from *Defense News*
- ["Senate passes \\$740 billion defense bill with enough support to override threatened Trump veto,"](#) from *Stars and Stripes*
- ["Senate Passes FY 2021 NDAA 84-13, As Lawmakers Wait to See If President Makes Good on Veto Threat,"](#) from *USNI News*

Representative Fitzpatrick voted YES.

Senator Casey voted YES and Senator 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. Since these bills are uncontroversial, we will only note those lawmakers from Pennsylvania who voted NO.

HBCUs are promised better communication from federal agencies

[House Vote](#) on [S. 461](#): HBCU PARTNERS (Propelling Agency Relationships Towards a New Era of Results for Students) Act

According to [Diverse](#), a publication centered on issues of diversity in higher education, this measure "requires federal agencies with relevant grants and programs to, on an annual basis, develop plans to expand the participation of HBCUs in their agency activities and track their progress towards engagement-related goals."

Vote date: Monday, December 7, 2020

Vote Tally: 388-6

Party Breakdown: All NO votes were placed by Republicans and the lone Libertarian.

Representative Fitzpatrick voted YES.

Veterans and Servicemembers to receive improved assistance from the DOJ

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 8354](#): Servicemembers and Veterans Initiative Act

This bill is designed to help members of the military in their interactions with the Department of Justice. El Paso's NBC affiliate, [KTSM 9](#), explains that it "will assign specific duties to the Department of Justice (DOJ) to represent the legal interests of service members, veterans and their families that include serving

as legal and policy advisor to the attorney general, developing policy recommendations, serving as a liaison between the DOJ and military departments and more.”

Vote date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020 **Vote Tally:** 400-1

Party Breakdown: The only NO vote was placed by Libertarian Justin Amash of Michigan.

Representative Fitzpatrick voted YES.

Energy Standards for Ceiling Fans

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 5758](#): Ceiling Fan Improvement Act

This bill sets new energy standards for ceiling fans, especially large ones used in warehouse and industrial settings.

Vote date: Wednesday, December 9, 2020 **Vote Tally:** 396-2

Party Breakdown: The pair of NO votes were placed by Republicans.

Representative Fitzpatrick voted YES.

Drone Usage on Federal Lands to be Studied

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 5040](#): AIR (Aerial Incursion Repercussion) Safety Act of 2020

[Utah Policy](#) explains the intent behind this bill. “Drones flown in a wildfire suppression area create additional hazards to firefighting personnel and increase risk to structures and lives on the ground. When people fly drones into the firefighting area, fire manager must ground their own drones and helicopters until the air space is clear.” In light of this, the AIR Safety Act authorizes a number of federal agencies (like the Bureau of Land Management, USDA Forest Service, and Federal Aviation Administration) to conduct a study on how drone usage and trespassing affects firefighting efforts, and how to address the issue.

Vote date: Thursday, December 10, 2020 **Vote Tally:** 382-6

Party Breakdown: The pair of NO votes were placed by Republicans.

Representative Fitzpatrick voted YES.

Wasteful, Indiscriminate Fishing Method to be Phased Out

[House Vote](#) on [S. 906](#): Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act

This is a bill that passed the Senate unanimously in the summer and now received its vote in the House. The good folks at the [Turtle Island Restoration Network](#) provided the best recap for this bill. “Large mesh driftnets more than a mile long are left in the ocean overnight to catch swordfish and thresher sharks but also indiscriminately capture, injure, and kill other marine species including whales, dolphins, sea lions, sea turtles, fish, and sharks. Most of these animals, referred to as “bycatch,” are then discarded. The use of driftnets by a single fishery in California is responsible for 90 percent of the dolphins and porpoises killed along the West Coast and Alaska. At least six endangered, threatened, or protected species are harmed by driftnets off the California coast...[This bill will] phase out harmful large mesh drift gillnets utilized in the federal waters off the coast of California, the only place the nets are still used in the United States.”

Vote date: Thursday, December 10, 2020 **Vote Tally:** 283-105

Party Breakdown: All Democrats present voted YES, along with 56 Republicans and Libertarian Justin Amash. All 105 NO votes were from Republicans.

Representative Fitzpatrick voted YES.

Mitch McConnell’s Lame Duck Judicial Confirmation EXTRAVAGANZA

For the past several weeks we have been tracking the Senate Republicans taking this last opportunity to pack the courts with young, conservative and sometimes unqualified judges in these last weeks of the Trump Administration. The first two judges were confirmed in the week ending [November 15th](#), and judges three through seven were confirmed in the week ending [November 22nd](#). After a week off for Thanksgiving, the judicial confirmation blitz continued with judges eight through eleven getting confirmed in the week ending [December 6th](#). We pick up there this week and one more lame duck judge. For an overview on this judicial action, see the Politico article, [“Republicans seek to stymie Biden with final Trump nominees.”](#)

Lame Duck Judicial Confirmation #12

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Stephen Sidney Schwartz 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.”

This new judge, Stephen Schwartz, is a key example of all the issues with Trump nominees. First, he is exceedingly young, barely out of law school ten years. That alone makes him unqualified for the federal judiciary, according to the American Bar Association. He also has political ties, having worked at a law firm that represented Senator Ted Cruz. And the new judge’s past legal work makes clear his opposition to the very nature of the federal office where he will be employed. Much as past nominees to bureaucratic positions have opposed their roles (Betsy DeVos, and opponent to public schools leading the Department of Education; or Andrew Wheeler, a coal lobbyist tasked to lead the Environmental Protection Agency), [The Vetting Room](#) notes that Schwarz exhibits “a background of legal resistance to agency determinations,” while the mandate of his new position is to decide on just those agency determinations.

The legal minds at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights are vehemently opposed to this confirmation, and they penned a [detailed letter](#) explaining all the ways that Stephen Schwartz has shown himself to be inappropriate for the judicial role. Among the subject headers in that letter are that Schwartz has:

- Worked to Restrict Voting Rights
- Sought to Undermine LGBTQ Equality
- Worked to Limit Reproductive Freedom
- Worked to Diminish Environmental Protections

The Leadership Conference also outlined Schwartz’s anti-immigration efforts and his membership in the far-right Federalist Society, along with his lack of experience.

Let’s leave the final word to our new, supposedly unbiased member of the federal judiciary. In 2005, Stephen Schwartz [declared](#), “...abortion is wrong, that racial preferences in college admissions are dangerous, that gay marriage should stay illegal, that immigration should be curtailed, that school vouchers are an excellent idea, that communism is a bad idea, that Lawrence Summers makes a good point, that drug use is immoral, that religion is indispensable to a moral system, and many, many other things that I believe.”

Vote date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Vote Tally: 49-47

Party Breakdown: This was a straight party line vote. All Republicans voted YES, while the Independents and Democrats voted NO.

Additional Reading:

- [“Stephen S. Schwartz – Nominee to the U.S. Court of Federal Claims,”](#) from *The Vetting Room*
- [“Senate Confirms 8th Trump Nominee To Federal Claims Court,”](#) from *Law 360*
- [“Oppose the Confirmation of Stephen Schwartz to the U.S. Court of Federal Claims,”](#) from *The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights*

Senator Casey voted NO and Senator Toomey voted YES.

The Federal Communications Commission gets a new, last-minute Chairperson

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Nathan A. Simington, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2019

Nathan Simington was confirmed not just to serve as a member, but to be the chairperson of the FCC after the end-of-year departure of current chairman Ajit Pai. The reporters at *Tech Crunch* have a good recap of the behind the scenes shuffling that led to this confirmation:

Simington has been a senior adviser at the Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration, where recently he helped craft the public-relations effort there around Trump's attacks on Section 230, the law that prevents companies like Twitter and Amazon from being liable for things posted on them by users. (The outgoing president primarily objects to the frequent labeling of his tweets as misleading or outright false.)

The rush to confirm a new Commissioner follows the unceremonious dumping of Mike O'Rielly, a Republican Commissioner who has generally fallen in line with this administration's policies but made the fatal error of speaking out against the effort to change Section 230. Due to be nominated for another term, he was instead dropped in favor of Simington, who has demonstrated no scruple about using the FCC as a muzzle for social media.

During the confirmation process, Mr. Simington's deficiencies were highlighted. Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI) noted that his "only qualification is his eagerness to defend the president's attacks on the First Amendment and Sec. 230." And Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) noted that "during his confirmation hearing even the most basic questions about FCC issues seemed to trip [him] up."

Vote date: Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Vote Tally: 49-46

Party Breakdown: This was a straight party line vote. All Republicans voted YES, while the Independents and Democrats voted NO.

Additional Reading:

- ["Senate confirms Nathan Simington as FCC Commissioner, potentially setting up years of stonewalling,"](#) from *Tech Crunch*
- ["Senate confirms Trump's lame-duck FCC pick Nathan Simington,"](#) from *Fox Business*
- ["Senate confirms Trump nominee for FCC, threatening deadlock under Biden,"](#) from *The Washington Post*

Senator Casey voted NO and Senator Toomey voted YES.

Multiple Federal Elections Commission Vacancies Filled... Finally

The Federal Elections Commission is tasked with overseeing and enforcing elections finance and communication rules for federal elections. They have not had a full slate of members since February 2017, and the Trump Administration was all too pleased to leave seats vacant, particularly when they failed to achieve a quorum and were statutorily unable to issue any decisions. They have piled up over 440 cases during their time of forced impotence.

FEC rules do not allow more than three members of any one political party to be a party of the six-member board. So, this week's vacancies filled two GOP seats and one Democratic seat. [The Fulcrum](#) provides a concise recap of the backgrounds of the three new FEC members:

Trump quickly nominated Dickerson, the top attorney at the Institute for Free Speech, which advocates for almost total deregulation of money in politics as part of its agenda to promote unfettered First Amendment rights. A week from the election, Trump announced his two other picks: Cooksey, general counsel to GOP Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri and before that an aide to GOP Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, and Broussard, who has been a senior FEC attorney for 12 years and before that was an IRS lawyer and New Orleans prosecutor.

Most Senators had no issues with the exemplary experience and background of Shana Broussard, but the two GOP nominees received only party-line support.

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Sean J. Cooksey, of Missouri, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2021

Vote date: **Wednesday, December 9, 2020**

Vote Tally: **50-46**

Party Breakdown: All of the Republicans present along with Independent Angus King of Maine voted YES. All of the Democrats present, along with Independent Bernie Sanders of Vermont voted NO.

Senator Casey voted NO and Senator Toomey voted YES.

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Shana M. Broussard, of Louisiana, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2023

Vote date: **Wednesday, December 9, 2020**

Vote Tally: **92-4**

Party Breakdown: The four NO votes were all from Republicans - Rick Scott of Florida, Rand Paul of Kentucky, Josh Hawley of Missouri and Ted Cruz of Texas. All other senators present voted YES.

Senator Casey voted YES and Senator Toomey voted YES.

[Senate Confirmation Vote](#) on Allen Dickerson, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Election Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2025

Vote date: **Wednesday, December 9, 2020**

Vote Tally: **49-47**

Party Breakdown: This was a straight party line vote. All Republicans voted YES, while the Independents and Democrats voted NO.

Senator Casey voted NO and Senator Toomey voted YES.

Additional Reading:

- [“Federal campaign finance watchdog has full slate for first time in years,”](#) from *Politico*
- [“Senate confirms three FEC commissioners, restoring full slate for the first time since 2017,”](#) from *The Washington Post*
- [“Senate votes mean campaign finance agency can tackle 446-case backlog,”](#) from *The Fulcrum*

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.1503](#) - Orange Book Transparency Act
- [H.R.4761](#) - DHS Opioid Detection Resilience Act
- [H.R.5273](#) - Securing America's Ports Act
- [H.R.8428](#) - Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act
- [H.Res.189](#) - Supporting sustained United States leadership to accelerating global progress against maternal and child malnutrition and supporting United States Agency for International Development's commitment to global nutrition through its multi-sectoral nutrition strategy
- [H.Res.823](#) - Condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- [H.Res.1100](#) - Reaffirming the importance of the strategic partnership between the United States and Mongolia
- [S.1153](#) - Stop Student Debt Relief Scams Act
- [H.R.631](#) - For the relief of Arpita Kurdekar, Girish Kurdekar, and Vandana Kurdekar
- [H.R.683](#) - PRRADA (Puerto Rico Recovery Accuracy in Disclosures Act)
- [H.R.1375](#) - PAID (Provide Accurate Information Directly) Act
- [H.R.2477](#) - BENES (Beneficiary Enrollment Notification and Eligibility Simplification) Act
- [H.R.4225](#) - For the relief of Maria Isabel Bueso Barrera, Alberto Bueso Mendoza, Karla Maria Barrera De Bueso, and Ana Lucia Bueso Barrera
- [H.R.5663](#) - Safeguarding Therapeutics Act
- [H.R.7146](#) - For the relief of Victoria Galindo Lopez

- [H.R.7572](#) - For the relief of Median El-Moustrah
- [H.R.8161](#) - The One Stop Shop Community Reentry Program Act
- [H.R.8235](#) - Open Courts Act
- [H.Res.1250](#) - Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the principles that should guide the national artificial intelligence strategy of the United States
- [S.134](#) - Combat Online Predators Act (*a bill sponsored by Sen. Toomey, Sen. Casey and PA-01's Rep. Fitzpatrick*)
- [S.578](#) - ALS Disability Insurance Access Act
- [S.1014](#) - Route 66 Centennial Commission Act
- [S.1811](#) - Water Resources Development Act
- [S.2258](#) - Criminal Antitrust Anti-Retaliation Act
- [S.2904](#) - IOGAN (Identifying Outputs of Generative Adversarial Networks) Act
- [S.3325](#) - PARENTS (Providing Adequate Resources to Enhance Needed Time with Sons and Daughters) Act
- [S.3703](#) - Promoting Alzheimer's Awareness to Prevent Elder Abuse Act
- [S.3729](#) - Motor Carrier Safety Grant Relief Act
- [S.4138](#) - Telework for U.S. Innovation Act
- [S.4460](#) - State Veterans Homes Domiciliary Care Flexibility Act
- [H.R.1426](#) - Timely Review of Infrastructure Act
- [H.R.1570](#) - Removing Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening Act
- [H.R.1966](#) - Henrietta Lacks Enhancing Cancer Research Act
- [H.R.3361](#) - RIVER (Reliable Investment in Vital Energy Reauthorization) Act
- [H.R.3797](#) - Medical Marijuana Research Act
- [H.R.5541](#) - Tribal Power Act
- [H.R.7105](#) - Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act
- [H.R.7898](#) - To amend the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to consider certain recognized security practices of covered entities and business associates when making certain determinations
- [S.2315](#) - Whistleblower Act
- [S.3418](#) - STORM (Safeguarding Tomorrow through Ongoing Risk Mitigation) Act
- [S.3451](#) - FASTER (Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education, and Research) Act
- [S.4996](#) - Bankruptcy Administration Improvement Act
- [H.R.970](#) - Robert E. Lee Statue Removal Act
- [H.R.1240](#) - Young Fishermen's Development Act
- [H.R.1520](#) - Purple Book Continuity Act
- [H.R.5458](#) - Rocky Mountain National Park Boundary Modification Act
- [H.R.5459](#) - Rocky Mountain National Park Ownership Correction Act
- [H.R.7098](#) - Saguaro National Park Boundary Expansion and Study Act
- [H.R.7489](#) - Long Bridge Act
- [H.R.8906](#) - To amend title XXIX of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the program under such title relating to lifespan respite care
- [S.1031](#) - Duck Boat Safety Enhancement Act
- [S.1130](#) - Scarlett's Sunshine on Sudden Unexpected Death Act
- [S.1310](#) - Organization of American States Legislative Engagement Act
- [S.2730](#) - Drone Advisory Committee for the 21st Century Act

MoC Quotes - Social media and traditional press

Twitter Action - the pandemic and the state of COVID relief

🌀 **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, 12/08/20:**

"President-elect Biden has chosen a health team of proven leaders with decades of experience in medicine, public health, government and crisis management. This diverse team will be ready to lead on day one, control the COVID crisis and build back better."

● **Senator Pat Toomey, @SenToomey, 12/09/20:**
“Wishing @GovernorTomWolf a full recovery. I am glad to hear he isn’t currently experiencing any symptoms. COVID-19 can infect anyone. Don’t forget to wear a mask when you venture out and wash your hands regularly!”

● **PA-01’s Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, 12/09/20:**
“My @ProbSolveCaucus colleagues and I have put together a comprehensive, common sense, bipartisan, and bicameral #COVID19 relief package to deliver real results for the American people. We cannot afford to wait any longer. #LetsWork” *tweeted with embedded video from a press conference. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has since dismissed this proposal.*

Tweet of the Week

● **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, 12/11/20:**
“The principles enshrined in the Declaration of Human Rights are as relevant today as in 1948. We must stand up for our rights and those of others—and with COVID-19 fueling injustices at home and abroad, #humanrights must be at the center of recovery efforts. #HumanRightsDay

As a global leader, the U.S. has a responsibility to remember that disability rights ARE human rights. This summer I introduced legislation to establish an Office of International Disability Rights within the @StateDept to advocate for disability rights around the world.

Promoting international human rights also means taking a hard look at our systems at home. In addition to cosponsoring the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, my LEAD Initiative aims to ensure someone’s ethnicity or mental ability does not preclude them from fair treatment.

President John F. Kennedy once said, “The rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened.” All people—at home and around the world—deserve to be treated with dignity, have their basic needs met and live in a society that values equal justice.”

● **Senator Pat Toomey, @SenToomey, 12/09/20:**
“No child should ever experience the trauma Madison Zezzo did. At age 13, her best friend’s father stalked and harassed her online. From posting thousands of doctored, horrifying images to sending her unceasing explicit messages, her early teenage years were consumed by a monster. At first, despite all the horror and grief, her stalker was only sentenced to probation and counseling. When the behavior escalated thereafter, he was ultimately sent to prison. The horrifying experience that Madison and the entire Zezzo family were subjected to is proof that we need tough penalties to punish online predators.

@SenBobCasey, @RepBrianFitz and I have fought to make sure that we do. Last night, Congress passed our bipartisan bill which will enhance federal criminal penalties on those who stalk or cyberstalk minors. I look forward to the president signing it into law. No legislation can return to Madison the time and innocence she lost at the hands of a stalker, but it can aid in preventing such horrible experiences for others in the future. [Read more on @abc27News.](#)”

● **PA-01’s Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, 12/11/20:**
“My Rosie the Riveter Congressional Gold Medal Act could not have become law without the efforts of Levittown’s Mae Krier.

Thank you Mae for your tireless advocacy on behalf of your fellow Rosies, and for your service to our country.” *tweeted with a link to the Bucks County Courier Times article titled [“Levittown ‘Rosie the Riveter:’ Mission accomplished with Trump signature on medal honor”](#)*

Casey in the News

Courtesy of contributor Linda Houk

“The problem is this: Protecting people with disabilities to connect them with the resources that they need and also to reduce demands on police, on law enforcement, to address non-criminal complaints.”

“It’s easy to describe this problem. It’s exceedingly more difficult to solve it, but we’ve got to try.”

— from an article in *the Philadelphia Inquirer*, titled [“Sen. Bob Casey cites shooting of Walter Wallace Jr. in pushing bills to divert 911 calls for mental health crises”](#)

“We’ve got to figure out better ways to assure tens of millions of Americans about the vaccine’s efficacy.”

— from an article in *Homeland Preparedness News*, titled [“Successful U.S. mass vaccination campaign requires targeted preparedness, experts say”](#)

“Dollars that will prevent layoffs of police officers and firefighters and teachers. There’s already been too much of that. There have already been a lot of layoffs because state and local governments have not had any help in many, many months now,”

— from an article in *WGAL 8 NBC*, titled [“US Sen. Bob Casey remains optimistic about COVID-19 relief package”](#)

“I commend Governor Wolf and Secretary Levine for taking this difficult, but necessary, action to contain COVID-19 in Pennsylvania, in an effort to protect lives and prevent our hospitals from being overwhelmed. There’s no question that these measures will result in real challenges for restaurant owners, workers and families. That’s why it’s vital that Congress do its part to come together and pass a COVID-19 relief bill to help those impacted by this pandemic”

—from an article in *Erie News Now*, titled [“Reaction to New COVID-19 Restrictions from Around Pennsylvania”](#)

“I like the framework of it.” ... “I don’t like the dollar amounts because none of them are high enough.”

— from an article in *WENY News*, titled [“Two relief proposals are up for debate in Washington. Here are some of the differences.”](#)

Fitzpatrick in the News

Research performed by CC

This week, Rep. Fitzpatrick’s and his communications staff were quoted in articles about:

- [Criminal punishments for online stalkers](#)
- [Gun violence](#)
- [Phasing out fossil fuels](#)
- [Big Cats](#)

But more important than any of those topics is the threats to democracy coming from the Republican lawmakers here in Pennsylvania. Representative Fitzpatrick did NOT join in the amicus brief from Republican Members of Congress, joining in on the meritless Texas lawsuit designed to disenfranchise every voter in our state and three others; but neither did he join Senator Toomey in denouncing such actions. In fact, Brian Fitzpatrick has not said much of anything on this critical issue affecting every American.

And so, in lieu of quoting the staffers in Fitzpatrick’s office who work so hard at crafting messaging on behalf of our Congressman, let’s look instead to the *Levittown Now* and their 12/12/20 article titled [“Congressman Largely Silent On Election Outcome”](#):

Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick hasn't always been one to hold his thoughts back, but recently he's gone mostly silent on one topic.

Since the general election on November 3 and the results in the days and weeks after, the Republican congressman has been unusually quiet.

Over the past month, LevittownNow.com has reached out to Fitzpatrick directly, his office, and his campaign looking for his comments on the election that saw him win reelection with a strong lead and Democrat Joe Biden earn more votes than President Donald Trump.

The election was one of the most divisive in recent history and has showcased a rift in the nation. Trump and his allies have claimed the president won, but the widespread fraud they claim and their legal challenges have almost entirely fallen apart under the scrutiny.

In the weeks since the election, Trump, who is expected to be a major political powerbroker for the GOP after he leaves office, has called out Republicans who haven't gone along with his claims about the election and called for states to overturn Biden's win.

The congressman, who brands himself as an independent voice and talks about calming the heated rhetoric, is often generous with his time during interviews with the press. On the topic of the election, he only appears to have provided comment in a Bucks County Courier Times article published on November 11.

Following a Veterans Day event, the congressman told the newspaper there was a president-elect and that Trump's legal challenges should "run its way through the courts and we'll get a resolution in an open and transparent manner."

"I have thus far seen no direct evidence of pervasive irregularities that would lead me to think the determination will be any different. Let this make its proper way through the courts and either clear evidence will be presented or not. If not, this will be dismissed. If there is, then we should definitely want to know that," he said.

Since, the congressman, a former FBI special agent and an attorney, appears to have been silent on the issue as other Republicans and Democrats have spoken out.

The Washington Post noted that Fitzpatrick's office also did not respond to their request for comment on the election recently."

MoCTrack encourages the constituents in PA-01 to continue to contact our Representative's office to get him to speak out about the attacks on democracy and in general, and the votes of his fellow Pennsylvanians in particular.

Toomey in the News

Most coverage of Senator Toomey in traditional media this week centered around his acceptance of President-elect Biden as well as the first quote below, uttered this week in response to President Trump's attempts to influence state-level lawmakers to overturn the results of the election. Despite that quote being repeated in dozens of articles, we have only cited it once.

"It's completely unacceptable and it's not going to work and the president should give up trying to get legislatures to overturn the results of the elections in their respective states."

— from an article in *Bloomberg* titled "[Trump Presses State Republicans to Overturn Biden's Victory](#)"

"[Senator Chris Coons of Delaware] has excellent relationships with a tremendous number of senators, including many Republicans. And I would include myself in that."

— from a *Politico* article titled [“Biden’s ambassador to the GOP”](#)

“Nearly 700 women died last year in the United States as a result of complications from pregnancy and childbirth, but we know that as many as two-thirds of these deaths may be preventable. This legislation will help improve health outcomes for pregnant women and mothers enrolled in Medicaid by increasing information and resources to better monitor and treat at-risk pregnancies, as well as inform Congress on policies that may assist states in reducing maternal deaths.”

— from a *North Central PA* article titled [“Sens. Toomey and Brown propose pregnancy care improvements for Medicaid recipients”](#)

“House passage of the Combat Online Predators Act speaks to the remarkable dedication of the entire Zezzo family for keeping children safe and ensuring there are strong penalties for monsters who stalk and cyberstalk children. Madison and her parents, Erin and Tony, deserve our gratitude for helping get this legislation through Congress, and I look forward to the president signing it into law.”

— from an article in *The Bradford Era* titled [“Bill to combat stalking of children goes to President for signature”](#)

Preview to the 117th Congress - leadership positions

Please find below a list of the announced leadership roles for the upcoming 117th Congress. As of now, we only know about the positions for the House. Information on Senate positions will need to wait until after the Georgia special election on January 5th.

Democrats

Position	Lawmaker	State
Speaker of the House, nominee	Nancy Pelosi	California
Majority Leader	Steny Hoyer	Maryland
Majority Whip	Jim Clyburn	South Carolina
Assistant Speaker	Katherine Clark	Massachusetts
Democratic Caucus Chair	Hakeem Jeffries	New York
Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee	Sean Maloney	New York

Republicans

Position	Lawmaker	State
Minority Leader	Kevin McCarthy	California
Minority Whip	Steve Scalise	Louisiana
Republican Conference Chair	Liz Cheney	Wyoming
Republican Policy Committee Chair	Gary Palmer	Alabama
National Republican Congressional Committee	Tom Emmer	Minnesota

While no Pennsylvanians are in any of the most powerful positions, two of the more senior lawmakers from Pennsylvania were given secondary positions. ● **PA-08's Rep. Matt Cartwright** was named the House Democratic Policy and Communications Committee Co-Chair. And ● **PA-15's Rep. Glenn W. Thompson** was elected by the Republican Steering Committee to serve as Republican Leader of the House Agriculture Committee.

Call to Action - Pennsylvania lawmakers undermining democracy

By now you will know that the Supreme Court of the United States has [decided against](#) hearing the meritless lawsuit filed by the state of Texas against Pennsylvania and three other states. While that decision comes as a relief, we cannot let it pass without comment that seven Republican Members of Congress joined in on an [amicus brief](#) that would have stripped their own constituents and all of the people of our entire commonwealth of their votes.

Those seven Republican lawmakers are:

- **PA-09's Rep. Dan Meuser**
- **PA-10's Rep. Scott Perry**
- **PA-12's Rep. Fred Keller**
- **PA-13's Rep. John Joyce**
- **PA-14's Rep. Guy Reschenthaler**
- **PA-15's Rep. Glenn W. Thompson**
- **PA-16's Rep. Mike Kelly**

Representative Fitzpatrick did not join in with the efforts of his colleagues (nor did PA-11's Rep. Smucker), neither has he said a word about their actions. Please consider calling Rep. Fitzpatrick's offices or contacting him in some other manner to express your feelings about his continued silence on this matter.

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

CC	Linda Houk
Elayne Baker	Susan Vogel
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!