

Tea Party Patriots Weekly Report from Washington for 7/31/17

CALENDAR:

The House has left for its August recess, and will not return until Tuesday, September 5.

The Senate will return on Monday, with the first vote set for 5:30 PM. The Senate will remain in session through Thursday.

LAST WEEK ON THE HOUSE FLOOR:

The House returned on Monday, and took up H.R. 3180, the Intelligence Authorization Act, under Suspension of the Rules. It failed by a vote of 241-163. Remember, under Suspension of the Rules, it requires a two-thirds vote to pass a bill, so even though the bill garnered a majority vote, it failed.

Then the House took up S. 114, the Department of Veterans Affairs Bonus Transparency Act, a bill to amend Title 38 of the U.S. Code, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to submit an annual report regarding performance award and bonuses awarded to certain high-level employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Like the Intelligence Authorization Act, it got a majority – 219-186 – but because it had been brought up under Suspension and needed a two-thirds majority, it failed.

Then the House took up and passed H.R. 409, the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act, under Suspension, and it passed.

On Tuesday, the House took up and passed H.J. Res. 111, a CRA Resolution of Disapproval of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to Arbitration Agreements. The bill disapproves a CFPB rule that prohibits class action waivers in contracts for goods and services between certain financial firms and consumers.

The House also took up H.R. 3364, the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act. That's the bill that rolled sanctions against Russia, Iran, and North Korea all into one bill. It was brought up under Suspension of the Rules, and it passed by a vote of 419-3, with 11 Members not voting.

On Wednesday, the House began debating H.R. 3219, the "Make America Secure Appropriations Act of 2018," the so-called "security minibuss," an appropriations bill that rolled the appropriations bills for Defense, Legislative Branch Affairs, Energy and Water Development, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs into one bill. After dealing with 16 amendments – four of which passed – the House voted to approve the bill on Thursday. The vote in favor was 235-192.

Then the House returned to H.R. 3180, the Intelligence Authorization Act, and S. 114, the Department of Veterans Affairs Bonus Transparency Act. Both bills passed with simple majorities.

And then they were done.

THIS WEEK ON THE HOUSE FLOOR:

The House stands in recess until Tuesday, September 5.

LAST WEEK ON THE SENATE FLOOR:

The Senate returned last Monday and voted to confirm David Bernhardt to serve as Deputy Secretary of the Interior.

On Tuesday, the Senate began consideration of H.R. 1628, the American Health Care Act, the House's ObamaCare repeal reconciliation bill.

On Tuesday afternoon, the Senate voted for what's called the "motion to proceed." This is a procedural vote – in the Senate, to formally begin consideration of a bill on the floor, a majority of the Senate must agree that it wants to debate. So even though it's just a procedural vote, it's very important. Without passing it, the Senate cannot consider the legislation.

The Democrats, who want to keep ObamaCare in place, were all set to vote against it. They don't even want to debate ObamaCare.

That meant that the Republicans would have to muster at least 50 votes for the motion, so the Vice President, presiding over the Senate, could cast a tie-breaking vote.

There were several Republican Senators who were known to be undecided on whether or not they should vote to proceed. The vote on the motion to proceed was going to be a nail-biter.

So when Senate Majority Leader McConnell brought up the motion to proceed to consideration of H.R. 1628, the House-passed American Health Care Act, no one was sure what the outcome would be.

Ultimately, the vote passed, by 51-50, with Vice President Pence presiding over the Senate and casting the tie-breaking vote.

Two Republican Senators – Susan Collins of Maine, and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska – voted against the motion to proceed. Like the Democrats, they did not even want to begin debating the bill.

Once the debate officially began, Majority Leader McConnell immediately laid down a first-degree amendment (numbered #267, for those keeping score at home). It was a replay of the 2015 ObamaCare Repeal Reconciliation Act, essentially the same bill that passed both houses of Congress in 2015 and was vetoed by President Obama.

So that became the underlying bill. All the votes you read about since Tuesday regarding Senate attempts to repeal ObamaCare in various ways were nothing more than votes on amendments to the 2015 repeal bill, which was itself an amendment.

(By the way, there were a total of 458 amendments introduced.)

Once that first-degree amendment was laid down, the Senate took up a second-degree amendment (that is, an amendment to an amendment), numbered #270. That was an amendment offered by Leader McConnell that combined the text of the Better Care Reconciliation Act (the McConnell-drafted bill that's been under discussion for the last several weeks) with a provision from Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio and a provision from Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas.

That amendment failed, by a vote of 43-57.

On Wednesday, the Senate moved to consider another second-degree amendment, numbered #271, offered by Budget Committee Chairman Mike Enzi of Wyoming and Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky.

That amendment was a replay of the 2015 ObamaCare Repeal Reconciliation Act – a clean, up-or-down vote on straight repeal of many of the essential elements of ObamaCare.

That amendment, too, failed, by a vote of 45-55. Seven Republicans crossed party lines to vote with the Democrats to kill it.

The seven Republicans were Susan Collins of Maine, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, John McCain of Arizona, Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia, Dean Heller of Nevada, and Rob Portman of Ohio.

All but Collins voted for essentially the same bill in 2015. That means the other six Republicans flip-flopped and broke their promise to repeal ObamaCare.

Through the course of the day Thursday, there were several more votes on amendments and “motions to commit,” which is the minority’s way of getting the bill off the floor and sending it back to committee for a rewrite. They all failed.

One in particular was rather interesting, though, and warrants mention. Republican Sen. Steve Daines of MT offered an amendment to allow the Democrats to go on record with their views on a single-payer system – essentially, he took a bill Democrat John Conyers had introduced in the House and offered it up as an amendment. Democrats weren’t biting. All but four of them, plus Independent Angus King of ME, voted “present.” The other four – Joe Donnelly of IN, Heidi Heitkamp of ND, Joe Manchin of WV, and Jon Tester of MT – all voted against it. Not surprisingly, all four of the Democrats who voted against socialized medicine are running for reelection next year in states that Donald Trump won by double digits. So the final tally was 0-57, with 43 Democrats voting “present.”

Just after 6 PM, the Senate took a break from ObamaCare repeal and took up H.R. 3364, the House-passed sanctions bill against North Korea, Iran, and Russia. The bill passed by a vote of 98-2.

Then the Senate went back to ObamaCare repeal. Minority Leader Chuck Schumer offered another motion to commit, but it fell by 43-57.

An amendment offered by Sen. Dean Heller was agreed to, by a vote of 52-48, and then Budget Committee Ranking Member Patty Murray offered one last motion to commit, which failed by a vote of 48-52.

The Senate leadership kept that vote open for an hour, not because they were worried about that vote, but because everyone knew what the NEXT vote would be – it would be the vote on Leader McConnell’s so-called “skinny” repeal bill, which he only revealed at 10 PM. The “skinny” bill repealed the individual mandate permanently, repealed the employer mandate for eight years, delayed the imposition of the medical device tax for three years, allowed increased contributions to health savings accounts for three years, and offered some increased waivers. It was meant to be the lowest common denominator, something that could generate 50 votes on the floor, so the Senate could pass it and go to conference with the House.

Earlier in the day, even though he had not yet seen the details of what exactly was in the bill, Sen. McCain had objected to the bill, saying its passage into law would be disastrous. He wanted guarantees it would never become law. At about 5 PM, three GOP Senators – Ron Johnson of WI, Lindsey Graham of SC, and McCain – held a press conference where they demanded assurances from the Speaker of the House that he would not simply bring that bill to the floor, and would instead go to conference with the Senate.

Remember, the House always has two options for any bill that comes from the Senate – it can either go to conference with the Senate to work out the differences between the two chambers, and come to agreement in what’s called a “conference report,” which then goes back for consideration on the floor of both houses, or it can simply take the bill the Senate sends it and put it on the floor of the House as is, and if it passes, it goes straight to the President for his signature.

McCain was so concerned about how bad he thought the “skinny” bill was going to be that he wanted ironclad assurances that the bill, if passed by the Senate, would go to conference, rather than straight to the floor of the House.

At 7:30, the Speaker replied with a press release, declaring, “If moving forward requires a conference committee, that is something the House is willing to do. The reality, however, is that repealing and replacing ObamaCare still ultimately requires the Senate to produce 51 votes for an actual plan. The House remains committed to finding a solution and working with our Senate colleagues, but the burden remains on the Senate to demonstrate that it is capable of passing something that keeps our promise, as the House has already done.”

Note: All Speaker Ryan said in that statement was that he was “willing” to go to conference. He did not promise McCain and other Senators that he would not put the “skinny” bill on the floor of the House. Ryan’s thinking was probably simple – if the “skinny” bill is all that can pass the Senate, why waste time with a conference committee? Let’s put whatever passes the Senate on the floor of the House, jam it through, send it to President Trump, and tee up tax reform. He figured nothing that would come out of a conference committee would generate 50 votes on the Senate floor, or they would have already done it.

That statement, not surprisingly, was not good enough for McCain. At 8:50 PM, he put out a statement saying Ryan’s statement was “not sufficient.”

At 10 PM, Leader McConnell officially released the text of the “skinny” bill. It was as bad as McCain feared, clearly nothing more than a placeholder, a vehicle to get to conference. At 11:25, the CBO released its official score of the bill. Since its various individual components had already been scored in earlier drafts, the CBO was able to quickly produce a score that projected the bill would cause 16 million people to lose their insurance over a decade, and CBO projected that premiums in the individual market would rise by 20 percent over that decade.

At 1:25 AM, the Senate began voting on McConnell amendment number #667, the “skinny” bill. As the roll call progressed, Collins and Murkowski cast their “no” votes, as everyone had anticipated they would; the rest of the GOP Senators in the chamber cast their votes in favor.

But McCain was not in the chamber when his name was called. He strolled in five minutes into the vote, got the clerk’s attention, and gave a “thumbs down” sign indicating his opposition. The McConnell “skinny” bill failed, by a vote of 49-51, with three Republicans – Susan Collins, Lisa Murkowski, and John McCain – crossing party lines to vote with the Democrats.

And then they were done.

THIS WEEK ON THE SENATE FLOOR:

The Senate will return Monday, with the first vote set for 5:30 PM. That will be a vote to invoke cloture on the nomination of Kevin Christopher Newsom to serve as U.S. Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Beyond that, I expect we'll see more action on confirmation votes, and, possibly, floor action on the National Defense Authorization Act.

APPOINTMENTS/CONFIRMATIONS:

On Wednesday, President Trump nominated Kansas Governor Sam Brownback to serve as U.S. Ambassador At Large for International Religious Freedom.

DEFENSE:

On Wednesday, to help House GOP leaders finesse their way out of a problem on the Defense appropriations bill, President Trump tweeted the news that by his direction, the U.S. military would ban transgendered people from any U.S. military service.

“After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military,” read the tweet. “Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming military victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail. Thank you.”

So, what does this have to do with helping House GOP leaders on the defense appropriations bill? You'll recall that a few weeks ago, when the National Defense Authorization Act was on the House floor, U.S. Rep. Vicky Hartzler of MO offered an amendment to overturn the military's current policy accepting transgenders for service, including paying for the pre- and post-operative medical care. That amendment was defeated when 24 moderate Republicans crossed party lines to vote with Democrats against it.

So conservatives in the House GOP Conference told the House GOP leadership in anticipation of this week's vote on the Defense appropriations bill that they wanted another bite at the apple. House GOP leaders were stuck – they had just held a floor vote on the issue a few weeks earlier, and didn't want to set a precedent that floor votes don't matter (because they can always be held again if they don't turn out the way you want), but they also knew that without the votes of the conservatives, they couldn't pass the minibus.

President Trump very much wanted to see the minibus pass, because it included \$1.6 billion in funding for his proposed border wall. And he didn't want House Republicans stuck spinning their wheels on this one.

So Trump rode to their rescue. By issuing his tweets, he removed the issue as a live concern, and allowed the minibus to move forward.

One day later, Marine General Joseph Dunford, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, issued a statement saying nothing would change until he received direction from the Secretary of Defense.

JUSTICE:

The President continued his campaign of criticizing Attorney General Jeff Sessions this week, referring to him as “weak” for not prosecuting leakers or going after Hillary Clinton. Conservatives and Republican Senators stood by the Attorney General, with several – including Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles Grassley of IA – saying publicly that if Sessions were to be fired, and Trump were to nominate a new Attorney General, there would be no space on the calendar for a confirmation hearing.

The Attorney General gave an interview on Wednesday to Tucker Carlson of FOX News from El Salvador, where he allowed as how the President’s remarks were “kinda hurtful,” but he said he was not going to resign.

OBAMACARE:

Despite Senate Republicans’ failure to move ObamaCare repeal through the Senate last week, all is not lost. The reconciliation vehicle is still alive, because all those votes that you read about last week were votes on amendments. So the bill is still on the legislative calendar, and can be called up at any time the Majority Leader wants – which, presumably, he won’t do until he’s convinced he’s got a piece of legislation that brings at least 50 votes with it.

The President, according to his Twitter feed, is still committed. He met with three GOP Senators on Friday to discuss options for moving forward, and spoke with House Freedom Caucus Chairman Mark Meadows to see what could be done to build support in the House.

And on Saturday, the President tweeted about the possibility of ending the illegal congressional special exemption from ObamaCare. Tweeted he, “If a new HealthCare Bill is not approved quickly, BAILOUTS for Insurance Companies and BAILOUTS for Members of Congress will end very soon!”

We are told by those in the know that there is a serious discussion going on inside the White House right now over the possibility of raising the temperature on Congress by ending the special exemption for Congress. We are in it up to our eyeballs.

So we’ll keep our fingers crossed and our eyes peeled and let you know what we know when we know it.

RUSSIA PROBE:

Last Monday, speaking to reporters at the White House following his appearance behind closed doors before the staff of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Trump son-in-law and adviser Jared Kushner said he did not collude with any Russian to interfere with last year’s election, and rejected any suggestion Moscow was responsible for President Trump’s victory.

“I did not collude with Russia, nor do I know of anyone else on the campaign who did so,” he said in the most declarative tone he could muster.

He spoke Tuesday, also in private, with the House Intelligence Committee.

Before appearing before the Senate Intelligence Committee, he publicly released an 11-page statement that you’ll find in the Suggested Reading. In the statement, he explained the so-called “back channel” story, where The Washington Post reported breathlessly that Kushner had asked Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak during the transition if Kislyak could set up a secure

communications channel to Moscow, so the Trump transition team could engage in secret conversations with Moscow without having to worry about U.S. intelligence agencies surveilling them.

According to Kushner's statement, during a meeting with Kislyak, the Russian Ambassador said that Russian dictator Vladimir Putin wanted some Russian generals to have a discussion with appropriate Trump transition officials about the situation in Syria. Kislyak asked Kushner if Kushner had access to a secure communications channel at the transition team offices, and Kushner said he did not – then he turned the question around and asked Kislyak if it would be all right to use the secure communications facilities at the Russian embassy. Kislyak demurred, and the two agreed that the conversation would have to wait until after the inauguration.

As for the now-famous meeting with Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya, Kushner said he had no idea what the meeting was about or whom it was with when he walked into it a few minutes late. Within a few minutes, he realized it was a waste of his time, and he emailed his assistant to ask the assistant to call him on his cell because he needed an excuse to get out of the meeting. He said he never read the full email thread that identified the purpose of the meeting, and said the meeting had been entered on his calendar as a meeting between him and Donald Trump, Jr.

The news media and the Democrats were surprisingly silent through the course of the week following his statement.

RUSSIA SANCTIONS:

The House passed H.R. 3364, the joint Russia-Iran-North Korea sanctions bill, on Tuesday, and the Senate passed it on Thursday. It now goes to the President's desk for his signature.

On Sunday, in anticipation of the signing of this new sanctions regime, Russian dictator Vladimir Putin announced the expulsion of 755 U.S. diplomats.

In addition to the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, the United States maintains consulates in St. Petersburg, Vladivostok, and Yekaterinburg. Though we don't know for sure exactly how big the U.S. presence is – the State Department won't comment on that number – Putin said he believes current U.S. staff exceeds 1,000 people.

SPENDING:

Last Thursday, the House passed H.R. 3219, the "Make America Secure Appropriations Act of 2018," the so-called "security minibus."

The bill appropriates \$827 billion for fiscal year 2018 spending for four appropriations bills – Defense, Legislative Branch Operations, Energy and Water Development, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs.

You'll recall that when we discussed last week how House GOP leaders would add the \$1.6 billion in funding for the wall, I said one of their options was a self-executing rule, in which the Rule for floor consideration contained the border wall funding provision. That's the option they chose, so there was no separate stand-alone vote on the border wall funding provision.

In other spending, the bill includes a \$68 billion funding increase for the Pentagon, a \$3.98 billion increase for the Department of Veterans Affairs, and a \$29 million increase for the Capitol Police in the wake of the shooting at the Alexandria, VA baseball diamond back in June.

WHITE HOUSE:

A week ago last Friday, Sean Spicer was White House Press Secretary, and Reince Priebus was White House Chief of Staff. A week ago Friday, Spicer resigned, after learning that Wall Street financier Anthony Scaramucci would be joining the West Wing as the new Communications Director.

On Wednesday evening, Scaramucci had an on-the-record conversation with reporter Ryan Lizza of The New Yorker magazine. The result was the publication of an article Thursday that had the kind of language that would make New Jerseyans blush as Scaramucci talked about his new colleagues Reince Priebus and Steve Bannon. You'll find a link to the article in the Suggested Reading.

That night, Priebus offered his resignation to President Trump, and Trump accepted. Priebus' resignation was announced late Friday afternoon, following President Trump's tweet introducing his new White House Chief of Staff, current Secretary of Homeland Security, retired Marine General John Kelly. Kelly will take over as Chief of Staff on Monday.

SUGGESTED READING:

JENNY BETH MARTIN/TEA PARTY PATRIOTS:

[Hill: Jenny Beth Martin: Sessions Is The Nicest Man In Town: But Don't Mistake That For Weakness](#)

[WT: Jenny Beth Martin: The Future of Patent Protections](#)

[WSJ: 'Embarrassing' Health-Bill Defeat Casts Doubt on GOP's Can-Do Pledge](#)

[ABC: Reince Priebus Replaced: From Donald Trump Power Center to War with the Mooch](#)

[Hill: More Than 100 Conservatives Sign Letter Supporting Sessions](#)

[AP: For Sessions, Being Attorney General Is Chance To Make Mark](#)

[RC: Trump Threatens Congressional Health Insurance Benefits](#)

[WT: Trump Warns of Ending Health-Care 'Bailouts' for Congress, Pushes Senate for Majority Rule](#)

[McClatchy: Party in Peril? Republicans Reel After ObamaCare Failure](#)

[Breitbart: Exclusive -- As Tea Party Patriots PAC Backs Mo Brooks in Alabama Senate Races, Leader Says Election Is 'Critically Important'](#)

AGENDA:

[Politico: House Democrats Stun GOP By Sinking Veterans, Intel Bills](#)

[Politico: Senate Democrats Plan To Drop Nomination Blockade If Health Bill Fails](#)

[WT: House GOP Leaders Go Back to Drawing Board on VA "Choice" Measure](#)

[Hill: House Members Warned August Recess Could Be Delayed](#)

APPOINTMENTS/CONFIRMATIONS:

[NYT: Gov. Sam Brownback of Kansas Will Be Nominated as Religious Ambassador](#)

DEFENSE:

[Hill: Trump To Ban Transgender People From All Military Service](#)

[Politico: Ernst Opposes Trump's Ban On Transgender Troops](#)

[VF: The Military Is Officially Ignoring Trump's Transgender Order](#)

JUSTICE:

[NYT: Allies Warn Trump of Conservative Revolt Unless He Backs Off Sessions=](#)

[Politico: Giuliani: Sessions 'Made The Right Decision' To Recuse Himself](#)

[DC: Exclusive: Sessions Allies Are Furious With How Trump Is Treating The AG](#)

[AP: President Trump Is Making Clear On Twitter And Through His Press Secretary That He Is Disappointed With AG Sessions For Recusing Himself On The Russia Probe](#)

[WaPo: Trump Leaves Sessions Twisting in the Wind While Berating Him Publicly](#)

[The Resurgent: Cabinet Level Revolt Over Trump's Treatment Of Jeff Sessions. "A Clusterf**k" One Secretary Calls It](#)

[The Resurgent: Why The President's Treatment Of Jeff Sessions Is Generating Such A Strong Internal Reaction](#)

[Axios: Republican Lawmakers Defend Sessions From Trump Attacks](#)

[RC: Sessions On The Cusp Of Martyrdom Or Oblivion](#)

[Breitbart: Trump's Attacks On Sessions Over Clinton Prosecution Highlight His Own 'Weak' Stance](#)

[Politico: Republicans Rush To Sessions' Defense](#)

[WE: Despite Trump's Tweets Conservative Grassroots Want Jeff Sessions To Stay](#)

[WE: Republicans Warn Trump Don't Fire Jeff Sessions](#)

[Politico: Trump And Sessions Locked In Silent Battle](#)

[WaPo: The Standoff Between Trump And Sessions Escalates](#)

[US Govt: AG Sessions Announces Immigration Compliance Requirements for Edward Byrne Memorial](#)

[WT: How the Justice Dept. Is Forcing Sanctuary Cities To Cooperate with Immigration Agents](#)

[NRO: Jeff Sessions: Don't Resign](#)

[NYT: In Trump's World, 'Very Weak' Sessions Twists In The Wind](#)

[Fox News: Sessions To Announce Investigations Into Intelligence Leaks Source](#)

[WSJ: Trump Again Criticizes Sessions This Time Over FBI Leadership](#)

[Hill: Trump's DOJ Gears Up For Crackdown On Marijuana](#)

[WE: Trump's Attacks On AG Jeff Sessions Are Ominous](#)

[WaPo: Trump Talks Privately About Idea Of A Recess Appointment To Replace Sessions](#)

[WSJ: In Trump Sessions Impasse Aides Urge President To Back Off](#)

[FOX: Sessions Calls Trump Criticism Over Russia Recusal 'Kind Of Hurtful' In Tucker Carlson Tonight' Interview](#)

OBAMACARE:

[Politico: McCain Will Make A Dramatic Return for the ObamaCare Vote](#)

[Hill: McConnell To Pin Down Colleagues On Healthcare](#)

[NJ: How Medicaid Reforms Made ObamaCare Repeal Harder](#)

[USA Today: With Return Of McCain, Senate ObamaCare Repeal Efforts Get A Boost](#)

[WaPo: Trump's Tough Talk On Health Care Aims To Revive Flagging Senate Effort](#)

[WE: GOP Hurtles Toward Healthcare Vote Despite Questions On Bill Details, Vote Count](#)

[LifeZette: Trump: Senate GOP Has Not Upheld Solemn Promise To Repeal ObamaCare](#)

[Hill: McConnell To Pin Down Colleagues On Healthcare](#)

[WSJ: Can Republicans Govern?](#)

[Chicago Tribune: John McCain's Return To Senate Injects Momentum Into GOP's Health Care Battle](#)

[Hill: Senate GOP Floats Scaled Down Health Care Bill](#)

[WaPo: GOP Leaders Close To Securing 50 Votes On Key Health Care Vote](#)

[Analysis Of Healthcare Advertising Spending](#)

[Politico: Poll: Voters Oppose Straight ObamaCare Repeal](#)

[Politico: Republicans Vote To Move Ahead On ObamaCare Repeal](#)

[Politico: How The GOP Brought ObamaCare Repeal Back From The Dead](#)

[Politico: Republicans Get A Win In ObamaCare's Opening Round](#)

[Hill: Senate Rejects ObamaCare Repeal, Replacement Amendment](#)

[WSJ: Senate Votes To Begin Debate On Health Care Bill](#)

[Politico: What's Next In The Senate Repeal Saga? Good Question](#)

[WaPo: We're Getting Nothing Done McCain In Emotional Return Laments What The Senate Has Become](#)

[Politico: 'Skinny' ObamaCare Repeal Still Lacks Votes To Pass](#)

[RC: Senate Rejects ObamaCare Repeal And Delay Proposal](#)

[RC: Ron Johnson Targets Member Health Care ObamaCare Debate](#)

[WSJ: Senate GOP's Fallback Plan Gains Support After Vote To Repeal Health Care Fails](#)

[Breitbart: The Six Senate Republicans Who Flip Flopped In Favor Of ObamaCare](#)

[Hill: GOP Senator Forces Dems To Vote On Single Payer](#)

[Politico: 'Skinny' ObamaCare Repeal Still Lacks Votes To Pass](#)

[Politico: Dems To GOP: No Amendments Until You Show Us Your Bill](#)

[Politico: House GOP Wary Of 'Skinny' Repeal](#)

[Alaska Dispatch: Trump Administration Signals Retribution Against Alaska Over Murkowski's Health Votes](#)

[NYT: Senate Soundly Rejects Repeal-Only Health Plan](#)

[The Federalist: Binary Choice Behind Skinny Health Care Bill](#)

[RC: McConnell Reveals Skinny Bill Text As Midnight Vote Looms](#)

[Hill: 16 Million More Would Lose Coverage Under GOP 'Skinny' Repeal](#)

[Politico: House Weighs 'Martial Law' For ObamaCare Repeal](#)

[RC: How The 'Skinny' Bill Was Defeated, Play By Play](#)

[NYT: Senate Rejects Slimmed-Down ObamaCare Repeal As McCain Votes No](#)

[Hill: Senate ObamaCare Repeal Bill Falls In Shocking Vote](#)

[RC: John McCain's Dramatic 'No' Derails GOP Health Care Effort](#)

[Politico: How McCain Tanked ObamaCare Repeal](#)

[WSJ: Senate 'Skinny' Repeal Vote Was All About John McCain](#)

[LifeZette: Conservatives Blast ObamaCare Repeal Frauds In GOP Caucus](#)

[CNN: GOP ObamaCare Repeal Bill Fails in Dramatic Late-Night Vote](#)

[WaPo: The Week John McCain Shook the Senate](#)

[NYT: Behind Legislative Collapse: An Angry Vow Fizzles for Lack of a Viable Plan=](#)

[Hill: McCain Returning to Arizona To Start Cancer Treatment Monday](#)

[Politico: As Trump Steams, Senate Republicans Consider New Repeal Effort](#)

[WE: Mark Meadows: New Healthcare Bill Is Coming 'That Can Get to 51'](#)

[SN: Mike Pence: Trump Could Rescind Congressional Exemption from ObamaCare](#)

[BH: Trump Prescribes a Bitter Pill for Congress in Tweet](#)

RUSSIA PROBE:

[Politico: Statement Of Jared Kushner To Congressional Committees 7/24/2017](#)

[WSJ: Jared Kushner Details Russia Meetings, Denies Collusion](#)

[Hill: Senate Judiciary Subpoenas Manafort](#)

[Politico: Kushner Defends His Russian Contacts: 'I Did Not Collude](#)

[Politico: Senate Judiciary Committee Drops Manafort Subpoena In Russia Probe](#)

[WSJ: Who Paid For The Trump Dossier?](#)

[WaPo: The Quest To Prove Collusion Is Crumbling](#)

RUSSIA SANCTIONS:

[Politico: GOP Moves Toward Solution On Russia Sanctions Bill](#)

[Politico: House Approves Russia Sanctions Bill That Handcuffs Trump](#)

[Hill: Senate Sends Russia Sanctions Bill To Trump's Desk](#)

[RC: Trump Will Sign Sanctions Bill with Tougher Russia Penalties](#)

[Politico: Putin Expelling 755 U.S. Diplomats from Russia](#)

SPENDING:

[Politico: Freedom Caucus Chairman: Border Wall Fight Unlikely To Cause Shutdown](#)

[Politico: Unhappy GOP Appropriators Press Leadership To Delay Recess](#)

[Politico: Republican Study Committee Chief: Ryan Promises Budget Vote In September](#)

[RC: House Defeats Amendment To Cut One Third Of CBO Staff](#)

[NJ: Trump, GOP Leaders Seek To Quell Approps Rebellion](#)

[Hill: House Approves Spending Bill With Funds For Trump's Border Wall](#)

[NYT: House Approves Spending Package, Border Wall And All](#)

[Politico: House Passes Spending Package With Border Wall Money](#)

TAX REFORM:

[WSJ: Health-Care Collapse Points to Challenges in GOP's Upcoming Tax Effort](#)

[Hill: White House, House GOP Closes To Releasing Joint Tax Reform Principles](#)

[WSJ: Trump Eyes Tax Code Overhaul With Emphasis On Middle Class Tax Break](#)

[Hill: Ryan Drops Border Tax Proposal As GOP Unifies Around Principles](#)

[Axios: Republicans Take Border Tax Adjustment Off The Table](#)

[Politico: Tax Reform. Is That All There Is?](#)

[WSJ: Tax Reform Principles](#)

WHITE HOUSE:

[WaPo: New Communications Director Moves Toward Possible Staff Purge At White House](#)

[Axios: White House Staffers On Edge After First Scaramucci Firing](#)

[Hill: Scaramucci Fast Accruing Power In White House](#)

[Hill: Scaramucci Priebus Feud Reaches Boiling Point](#)

[Hill: Scaramucci: Priebus Is A Paranoid Schizophrenic', Will Be Asked To Resign](#)

[Hill: Scaramucci Goes After Bannon In Explosive Phone Call](#)

[New Yorker: Anthony Scaramucci Called Me To Unload About White House Leakers, Reince Priebus, And Steve Bannon](#)

[Politico: Scaramucci Declares War On Priebus, Bannon](#)

[BuzzFeed: Reince Priebus's Days Are Numbered, Trump Allies Say](#)

[Politico: Priebus Out As Chief Of Staff, Gen. John Kelly To Replace Him](#)

[NYT: Reince Priebus Out As Chief Of Staff; Kelly To Replace Him](#)

[NYT: Reince Priebus Pushed Out After Tenure As Trump Chief Of Staff](#)

[WaPo: Trump Names Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly as White House Chief of Staff, Ousting Reince Priebus](#)

[Politico: Inside the End of the Priebus Era](#)

[Blaze: Here's How a FOX News Host Cost Reince Priebus His Job at the White House](#)

[Politico: Who Will Replace Kelly at Homeland Security?](#)

MISCELLANEOUS:

[WE: Freedom Caucus Chairman Mark Meadows Takes A Seat At The Top Table](#)

[Axios: Scoop: Jim DeMint To Launch Support System For Conservative Members](#)

[CNN: A Chill Emanating From The White House Reaches State Department](#)

[WT: IRS Finally Agrees To Clear Last Tea Party Case](#)