

TEA PARTY PATRIOTS ACTION



WEEKLY REPORT FROM WASHINGTON

November 18, 2019

CALENDAR:

The House and Senate will both return Monday and stay in session through Thursday.

LAST WEEK ON THE HOUSE FLOOR:

The House returned to work on Tuesday, and took up and passed two bills under Suspension of the Rules.

On Wednesday, the House took up and passed another two bills under Suspension of the Rules.

On Thursday, the House took up and passed the Rule governing consideration of H.R. 4863, the United States Export Finance Agency Act of 2019.

On Friday, the House took up H.R. 4863, the United States Export Finance Agency Act of 2019. After considering a number of amendments, the House voted to pass H.R. 4863 by a vote of 235-184.

And then they were done.

THIS WEEK ON THE HOUSE FLOOR:

The House will return Monday, with the first vote set for 6:30 PM. At that time, the House is scheduled to consider six bills under Suspension of the Rules.

On Tuesday and for the remainder of the week, the House is scheduled to consider another nine bills under Suspension of the Rules.

In addition, the House will vote on H.R. 1309, the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act, and the House will vote on a Continuing Resolution that pushes government funding through mid-December.

LAST WEEK ON THE SENATE FLOOR:

The Senate came back to work on Tuesday, and voted to invoke cloture on the nomination of Chad Wolf to be Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans at the Department of Homeland Security.

On Wednesday, the Senate voted to confirm Wolf to that position. Now that he holds that position, he can serve as Acting Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

Later Wednesday, the Senate voted to invoke cloture on the nomination of Steven J. Menashi to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. On Thursday, by a vote of 51-41, the Senate voted to confirm him to that position.

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 Robert J. Luck to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

Then, based on the Majority Leader's cloture filings, I'd say the Senate schedule for this week is going to have more confirmations on tap:

- Robert J. Luck to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals
- Barbara Lagoa to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals
- Adrian Zuckerman to be Ambassador of the United States to Romania

In addition, I expect the Senate will vote on a Continuing Resolution that comes over from the House.

DACA:

On Tuesday, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a case to determine whether or not the Trump Administration had the authority to terminate President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. Most analysts seemed to think that, based on the questions asked by the justices during the arguments, the court will likely rule in favor of the Trump Administration next summer, when it issues its final ruling in the case.

IMPEACHMENT:

Week eight of the House Democrats impeachment inquiry, and two things happened – first, the Democrats stopped talking about “quid pro quo” and started talking about “bribery,” and, second, we finally got public hearings.

Democrats made the decision to change their rhetoric because polling paid for by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee showed that “quid pro quo” wasn’t moving people, and “bribery” might. Besides, their thinking apparently went, “bribery” is actually mentioned as one of the reasons to impeach a president. The problem for the Democrats, of course, is that the bribery discussed in the impeachment clause of the Constitution is different from what the Democrats allege happened in this case. The founders were worried about foreign governments trying to bribe the chief executive, not the other way around, so it will be interesting to see how far this gets them.

On Wednesday, the House Intelligence Committee heard from former U.S. Ambassador William Taylor and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Gordon Kent. The big news to come out of this hearing is that Taylor testified that one of his staffers told him that the staffer had overheard a phone call on July 26 between Ambassador to the European Union Gordon Sondland and President Trump, in which the president was heard to ask about “the investigations,” a reference to the investigations he wanted into Joe and Hunter Biden’s activities in 2016.

But the critical exchange of the five-hours-plus testimony was this dialogue between Republican Jim Jordan and Ambassador Taylor, regarding the addendum to the testimony offered earlier, in closed session, by Ambassador Gordon Sondland:

JORDAN: “Ambassador Taylor recalls that Mr. Morrison told Ambassador Taylor that I told Mr. Morrison that I conveyed this message to Mr. Yermak on September 1st, 2019, in connection with Vice President Pence’s visit to Warsaw, and a meeting with President Zelensky.’ Now, this is his clarification. I’m going to read it one more time. ‘Ambassador Taylor recalls that Mr. Morrison told Ambassador Taylor that I told Mr. Morrison that I conveyed this message to Mr. Yermak on September 1st, 2019, in connection with Vice President Pence’s visit to Warsaw, and a meeting with President Zelensky.’

“We got six people having four conversations in one sentence, and you just told me this is where you got your clear understanding. Which, I, I mean ... even though you had three opportunities with President Zelensky for him to tell you, ‘You know what? We’re going to do these investigations to get the aid.’ Didn't tell you three different times. Never makes an announcement, never tweets about it, never does the CNN interview. Ambassador, you weren’t on the call, were you, the president, you didn’t listen in on President Trump’s call, and President Zelensky’s call?”

TAYLOR: “I did not.”

JORDAN: “You never talked with Chief of Staff Mulvaney?”

TAYLOR: “I never did.”

JORDAN: “You never met the President.”

TAYLOR: "That's correct."

JORDAN: "You had three meetings again with Zelensky and it didn't come up."

TAYLOR: "And two of those, they'd never heard about it, as far as I know. So there was no reason for it to come up."

JORDAN: "And President Zelensky never made an announcement. This, this is what I can't believe. And you're their star witness. You're their first witness. You're the guy. You're The Guy. Based on this, based on, I mean, I've seen, I've seen church prayer chains that are easier to understand than this. 'Ambassador Taylor recalls that Mr. Morrison told,' now again, this is, 'I hereby swear and affirm,' from Gordon Sondland, 'Ambassador Taylor recalls that Mr. Morrison told Ambassador Taylor that I told Mr. Morrison I conveyed this message to Mr. Yermak on September 1st, 2019 ...' This all happens, by the way, this all happens, by the way, in Warsaw, where Vice President Pence meets with President Zelensky and guess what? They didn't talk about any linkage, either."

Friday, the Intelligence Committee heard from former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch. She is a career foreign service officer who was removed from her position in Ukraine two months before the July 25 phone call at issue, so there's a question as to what she was doing there at all, what kind of helpful testimony she could offer.

In the end, it turned out the most exciting part of her testimony wasn't her testimony at all, it was a tweet President Trump sent about half an hour after she began her testimony. In the tweet, President Trump threw shade on her, and Democrats immediately refocused the hearing on the tweet and how it represented what they called "witness intimidation."

Later Friday, after the public hearing, the committee reassembled in private to hear closed-door testimony from David Holmes, the staffer for Ambassador Taylor who claimed to have overheard a Sondland-Trump phone call on July 26. According to leaks of his testimony, he confirmed Taylor's Wednesday testimony about the July 26 Sondland-Trump phone call.

This could be a problem. President Trump has denied this phone call took place, and Ambassador Sondland did not say anything about this phone call during his earlier closed-door testimony. I imagine this is going to be a matter of some interest for Congressman Schiff and his colleagues during Sondland's public hearing testimony on Wednesday.

On Saturday, the House Intelligence Committee released the transcript of the closed-door testimony offered by former NSC official Tim Morrison. This is testimony that Congressman Jim Jordan and Mark Meadows had been pushing to have released, and it's easy to see why – Morrison's testimony countered an awful lot of what the Intelligence Committee had heard earlier.

Morrison testified to the following:

- He did not believe anything improper occurred on the July 25 call between the two presidents.
- He said that the electronic record of the call was complete and accurate.
- He was not concerned about the substance of what was discussed on the call, only that the transcript might leak.
- He was told by NSC lawyer John Eisenberg that the July 25 call record mistakenly ended up on the highly classified system, thereby rejecting the Democrats' allegations of an attempted "cover up."
- He said that he purposefully kept Lt. Col. Vindman out of the loop on this matter because he had concerns about Vindman's judgment.

Also on Saturday, the House Intelligence Committee heard closed-door testimony from Mark Sandy, a career OMB official.

On Sunday, GOP Rep. Lee Zeldin appeared on FOX News' "Sunday Morning Futures," hosted by Maria Bartiromo. Zeldin spoke of the closed-door testimony provided a day earlier by OMB official Mark Sandy. Zeldin said the transcript of the deposition should be made public immediately, and went so far as to say there should not be another hearing until everyone has had a chance to hear Sandy's testimony:

"There was a lot of coverage, obviously, for the open hearing of Ambassador Yovanovitch on Friday. But once that was done, even though we thought we were in this new open public part of this impeachment inquiry, we went back into this SCIF in the basement of the United States capitol for two more depositions. On Friday, it was David Holmes who was an assistant for Ambassador Taylor, and then Saturday, yesterday, we were there for several hours for Mark Sandy, who is a dedicated career staffer at the Office of Management and Budget, who came in to answer the question on why there was a hold on aid to Ukraine. His answer was one that I don't believe there should be another open hearing until that transcript is released because it's going to change some of the answers that would be given by say Lt. Col. Vindman Tuesday morning.

"So, let's release all of the remaining transcripts including Mark Sandy and David Holmes because Mark Sandy's answer that he gave yesterday to that question made for a very bad day for those who are pushing for this impeachment charade."

This week, the Intelligence Committee will hear from eight different witnesses in five different hearings – two on Tuesday, two on Wednesday, and one on Thursday.

On Tuesday morning, the witnesses will be Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman, who works on the NSC staff, and Jennifer Williams, who works as a foreign policy aide to Vice President Mike Pence. On Tuesday afternoon, the witnesses will be Ambassador Kurt Volker and former NSC aide Tim

Morrison. On Wednesday morning, the witness will be Ambassador Gordon Sondland. On Wednesday afternoon, the witnesses will be Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Laura Cooper and Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs David Hale. On Thursday, the witness will be former NSC staffer Fiona Hill.

The fundamental facts have not changed: At the time of the call between the two presidents, there was no explicit linkage made between launching of any investigations and delivery of U.S. military assistance; both presidents insist there was no pressure placed on President Zelensky by President Trump during their phone call; at the time of the presidents' phone call, Ukrainian leaders did not know the aid had been delayed; and Ukraine received the military aid without any Ukrainian making any kind of public announcement regarding the launching of any investigations.

SPENDING:

On Thursday, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin met with Speaker Pelosi and top appropriators in what both sides later said was a productive meeting aimed at broaching the conflict over spending.

Reported Politico, "Leaders of both parties are now discussing ways to punt a decision on Trump's border wall for as long as possible, while starting work on funding bills besides the contentious Department of Homeland Security bill. 'Republicans appear willing to set aside discussing the wall for now in hopes of achieving the bipartisan goal of finalizing the allocations,' a senior Democratic aide said after the meeting. One idea is to use emergency cash to pay for bipartisan initiatives like the VA Mission Act — a new veterans program that Trump himself has championed — that could free up some money for DHS."

SUGGESTED READING

JENNY BETH MARTIN/TEA PARTY PATRIOTS:

[ConservativeHQ: Conservative Action Items: Schiff Show Trial Begins Tomorrow](#)

[NYT: On The Right, Impeachment Is A Distraction, Not A 'Witch Hunt'](#)

[VN: Inside the Final Conservative Push To Thwart Trump's Health Care Bill](#)

[TSGS: Jenny Beth Martin, Tea Party Patriots Reacts to Impeachment Hearing as They Lead Conservative Support for President](#)

DACA:

[Hill: Five Things To Watch At The Supreme Court's DACA Hearing](#)

[Hill: Supreme Court Sharply Divided Over Trump's DACA Repeal](#)

[Bloomberg: Supreme Court Justices Seem Inclined To Let Trump Cancel DACA](#)

IMPEACHMENT:

[WE: Democrats Have A Col. Vindman Problem](#)

[Politico: What Cooper, Croft And Anderson Told Impeachment Investigators](#)

[Politico: Republican Memo](#)

[Hill: Pelosi: Trump Bribed Ukraine: Makes Nixon's Offenses Look Almost Small](#)

[NRO: Hunter Biden: The Most Comprehensive Timeline](#)

[WaPo: Correcting A Media Error: Biden's Ukraine Showdown Was In December, 2015](#)

[Politico: McConnell Suggests He Will Not Cut Short Senate Impeachment Hearing](#)

[WSJ: The Banality Of Impeachment](#)

[Politico: Democrats Land Damning Evidence In Impeachment Testimony](#)

[WE: GOP Senator Names Alleged Whistleblower Eric Ciaramella, Needs To Be Pulled In For Testimony](#)

[Hill: Trump Denies Knowledge Of Call Mentioned In Impeachment Hearings](#)

[WSJ: The Case For The Impeachment Defense](#)

[Politico: Mulvaney Is Isolated In White House At Critical Moment For Trump](#)

[Politico: House Intelligence Committee Announces Additional Witnesses For Public Impeachment Hearings](#)

[Fox News: Trump Impeachment Hearings Will Be A Farce, Democrats Desperate To Hurt His Re-Election Chances](#)

[Politico: White House Official Is Prepared To Testify On Frozen Ukraine Aid](#)

[NYT: Impeachment Hearings: Live Update Of Marie Yovanovitch's Testimony](#)

[Politico: Defiant Yovanovitch Says She Was 'Kneecapped' Amid Trump's 'Smear Campaign'](#)

[John Solomon Reports: The Real Ukraine Controversy: An Activist US Embassy And Its Adherence To The Geneva Convention](#)

[WSJ: Impeachment As Usual](#)

[Hill: The President, Not Diplomats, Sets Official Foreign Policy](#)

[Politico: 'Waste Of Time' Senate Republicans Plan To Ignore Impeachment Hearings](#)

[NRO: Democrats Shouldn't Blame Latin](#)

[WE: Democrats Have A Col. Vindman Problem](#)

[Politico: Republican Memo Dated November 12th, Re Hearing](#)

[Politico: The Insiders Guide To The Impeachment Hearings](#)

[Politico: Republicans Plot Counterattack For Impeachment Hearings](#)

[Fox News: House GOP Assigns Jim Jordan To Intelligence Committee Ahead Of Impeachment Hearings](#)

[NRO: Mulvaney Informs House Democrats That He Will Defy Subpoena Just One Minute Before Hearing](#)

[Politico: White House Budget Official Is Prepared To Testify on Frozen Ukraine Aid](#)

[Hill: Pelosi: Trump Bribed Ukraine, Makes Nixon's Offenses 'Look Almost Small'](#)

[Politico: Trump Blows Up Effort To Blunt Impeachment Damage](#)

[Hill: Day One Impeachment Hearings Draw 13.1M Viewers, Down 32 Percent from Comey Hearings](#)

[WaPo: Democrats Sharpen Impeachment Case, Decrying 'Bribery' as Another Potential Witness Emerges Linking Trump to Ukraine Scandal](#)

[WSJ: Schiff's 'Obstruction' Theory](#)

[WSJ: Adam Schiff, Founding Father](#)

[Hill: New Witness Claims Firsthand Account of Trump's Push for Ukraine Probes](#)

[NYT: Embassy Official Confirms Trump Asked About Ukraine Investigation](#)

[Politico: White House Budget Official Appears for Testimony on Ukraine Aid Hold Amid Impeachment Inquiry](#)

[AP: Ex-Ambassador's Testimony Shines Light on Conservative Media](#)

[NYT: The Man Trump Trusts for News on Ukraine](#)

[NYT: Barr Suggests Impeachment Inquiry Undermines Voters' Intent](#)

[Hill: Top NSC Aide Puts Sondland at Front Lines of Ukraine Campaign, Speaking for Trump](#)

[Axios: State Department Official Confirms Trump Asked Sondland About Ukraine Investigation](#)

[Axios: Trump Denies Discussing Ukraine Investigations with Sondland in July Phone Call](#)

[CBC: White House Budget Official Tells Impeachment Probe About Holdup of Ukraine Military Aid](#)

[NRO: McCarthy: Trump vs. the Policy Community](#)

[NRO: McCarthy: Breaking Down the Fallout from Marie Yovanovitch's Testimony](#)

[WSJ: White House Official Feared Trump Transcript Leak Could Be Politically Damaging](#)

[Politico: Sondland Said He Was Acting on Trump's Orders, Aide Told Investigators](#)

[HPSCI: Tim Morrison Testimony Key Points](#)

[Hill: Impeachment Hearings Don't Move Needle with Senate GOP](#)

[RS: Rep. Zeldin: Testimony of OMB's Mark Sandy Made Saturday a 'Very Bad Day' for Democrats Pushing Impeachment Charade](#)

SPENDING:

[Hill: Congress Hunts For Path Out Of Spending Stalemate](#)

[Politico: House Plans Vote To Stave Off Shutdown This Month](#)

[Hill: Mnuchin: White House Has No Intention for a Shutdown](#)

[Politico: 'We're Very Close': Pelosi and Mnuchin Meet To Break Border Wall Impasse](#)

STAFFING:

[NYT: Before Joining White House, Stephen Miller Pushed White Nationalist Theories](#)

[Hill: White House Backs Stephen Miller Amid White Nationalist Allegations](#)

2020 DEMOCRATS:

[Hill: Bloomberg Officially Files To Run In Alabama Presidential Primary](#)

[WaPo: Republicans Discuss A Longer Senate Impeachment Trial To Scramble Democratic Primaries](#)

MISCELLANEOUS:

[Hill: Pro-Trump Group Hunts For Hidden Voters](#)

[Politico: McConnell Nukes House Ex-Im Bank Bill In Response To Waters](#)