

TEA PARTY PATRIOTS ACTION



WEEKLY REPORT  
FROM  
WASHINGTON

May 3, 2021

## CALENDAR:

The House and Senate are both in recess this week. The House will return on Tuesday, May 11, while the Senate will return on Monday, May 10.

## LAST WEEK IN THE SENATE:

The Senate came back to work on Monday, and voted to invoke cloture on the nomination of Jason Scott Miller to be Deputy Director for Management at the Office of Management and Budget.

On Tuesday, the Senate voted to confirm him to that position. Then the Senate voted to invoke cloture on, and then to confirm, the nomination of Janet Garvin McCabe to serve as Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Then the Senate did the same with the nomination of Colin Hackett Kahl to serve as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy. And then the Senate voted to invoke cloture on the Motion To Proceed to S. 914, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize programs under those Acts.

On Wednesday, the Senate voted to invoke cloture on, and then to confirm, the nomination of Samantha Power to serve as Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development. Then the Senate took up and passed S.J.Res. 14, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8, title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to "Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Emission Standards for New, Reconstructed, and Modified Sources Review." The CRA resolution was approved by a vote of 52-42.

On Thursday, the Senate took up S. 914. Two amendments were considered but rejected. Then the Senate voted by 89-2 to pass the bill.

And then they were done.

## EDUCATION AND THE 1619 PROJECT:

On Thursday, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, along with 38 fellow Republican senators, sent a letter to Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona urging him to withdraw *The New York Times'* "1619 Project" from federal education grant programs.

"We write to express grave concern with the Department's effort to reorient the bipartisan American History and Civics Education programs, including the Presidential and Congressional Academies for American History and Civics and the National Activities programs, away from their intended purposes toward a politicized and divisive agenda," said the letter. "Actual, trained, credentialed historians with diverse political views have debunked the project's many factual and historical errors, such as the bizarre and inaccurate notion that preserving slavery was a primary driver of the American Revolution," the letter continued. "We request that you withdraw these Proposed Priorities and refocus on civic education and American history programs that will empower future generations of citizens to continue making our nation the greatest force for good in human history," the letter concluded.

The Department of Education is accepting comments from the public on their Proposed Priorities until May 19. If you'd like to post a comment for the Department of Education, you can find the appropriate link in the Suggested Reading.

## KERRY AND IRAN:

Last Sunday, *The New York Times* reported that Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a leaked audio tape of a conversation from March that as foreign minister, he had been kept in the dark on many matters pertaining to Iranian national security, and that the real power in Iran was found in the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps. "Former Secretary of State John Kerry," said the newspaper, "informed him that Israel had attacked Iranian interests in Syria at least 200 times, to his astonishment, Mr. Zarif said."

"Kerry has to tell me that Israel has attacked you 200 times in Syria?" says Zariff on the tape, who uses this purported conversation with Kerry as an example of being kept in the dark by Iran's military. "You did not know?" the interviewer asks Zarif, not once but twice. Both times, Zarif responds, "No, no."

The Iranian foreign ministry did not dispute the contents of the tape, or try to deny that the foreign minister had said what he was quoted saying.

Former Secretary of State John Kerry, now serving as President Biden's "U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate," with a seat on the National Security Council, on the other hand, disputed Zarif's claim vigorously. On Monday, Kerry said he had never discussed covert Israeli airstrikes in Syria with Zarif. In a tweet on Monday evening, Kerry wrote, "I can tell you that this story and these allegations are unequivocally false. This never happened – either when I was Secretary of State or since."

I don't buy that, for the simple reason that I cannot fathom why Zarif would lie about Kerry, with whom he is close and with whom he negotiated the Iran nuclear deal. It does not serve Zarif's purpose, and it does not serve Iran's purpose, for Zarif to lie about this matter. And if it serves neither his nor his country's interest to make Kerry out to be a liar, I will have a hard time believing it's a lie.

On Wednesday, three Republican members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee demanded an investigation.

On Thursday, 19 Republican senators sent a letter to President Biden demanding an immediate investigation into Kerry's conversations with Zarif. In the meantime, they wrote, Kerry should be denied access to all sensitive government information. And regarding Zarif's trustworthiness, they cornered the Biden Administration, which is seeking to reengage with Iran in the nuclear deal that President Trump withdrew from – "If proven false," wrote the senators, "this narrative is yet further proof that Iranian officials are dishonest brokers and we ask that your administration be mindful of this as you continue discussions on the future of U.S. posture towards Iran."

Stay tuned. I think this story has legs.

## REAPPORTIONMENT:

On Monday, the Census Bureau released its initial state-by-state reapportionment counts for the 2020 U.S. Census. Of the 435 congressional districts, seven of them shifted: Texas gained two seats, and Florida, North Carolina, Colorado, Oregon, and Montana each gained one. On the losing side, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, West Virginia, and California each lost one seat. That seven-seat shift among 13 states represents the smallest change since 1941.

Keep in mind, shifts among states do not necessarily mean that a state losing a congressional seat is doing so because it lost population over the last ten years. It may simply be that the state had population growth, but it didn't grow as fast as other states. For instance, California continued to grow – it grew by 5.9 percent over the course of the last decade, from 37.3 million to 39.5 million residents – but that didn't keep pace with the national growth rate, which was 7.4 percent. That 7.4 percent growth rate, by the way, is the second smallest increase in the 240 years the U.S. Government has conducted a decennial census. (The smallest growth occurred in the ten years between 1930 and 1940.)

Republicans will control the line-drawing process for 187 congressional seats, while Democrats will control the process for 75 seats. The remaining seats will be decided by independent redistricting commissions or divided state governments. Redistricting experts suggest Democrats will be able to redraw lines to create 5-15 safe seats over what they have now, while Republicans will likely be able to pick up 20-30 reliable seats.

And always remember, when it comes to redistricting, sometimes the name of the game isn't creating new districts where one party has a new majority; often times, the better strategy is to

take seats that already have a partisan majority and make those seats have an even larger partisan majority, so they are effectively taken off the competitive battlefield, and resources that once would have had to be used to defend those seats can be redeployed on offense elsewhere.

So, here are a few takeaways:

First, this is not what we expected. We expected more movement. We expected Texas to pick up three seats, not two, and we expected Florida to gain two seats, not one, and we expected Arizona to pick up seat, and it did not. On the other side of the ledger, we expected Rhode Island to lose a seat, and Alabama to lose a seat, and Minnesota to lose a seat, and none of them did. It's too early to tell, based on the information that was released, but one possible explanation for why we did not see what we expected to see is that some Hispanic communities may have been undercounted.

Second, New York lost the last seat to Minnesota by 89 residents. That is, if New York's count had been 89 residents higher, it would have kept the congressional seat it just lost, and Minnesota would have lost it instead.

Third, California's decline continues. Since the Golden State joined the Union in 1850, it gained seats in every decennial reapportionment until 2011, when it remained constant at 53. Next year, and for the nine years after that, California will be represented by 52 members in the House of Representatives.

Fourth, oddly enough, at this point the only certainty we have regarding the effect on the partisan breakdown in the Congress is this – Republicans are guaranteed to lose at least one seat. That's because West Virginia, which is currently represented by three Republicans in the House of Representatives, will lose a seat, and will presumably be represented by two Republicans after the redistricting. That means the GOP needs to flip at least six seats in the midterm elections in order to recapture the House majority.

Fifth, don't make the mistake of thinking that a blue state that will lose a seat will necessarily lose a seat currently held by a Democrat. Just because Democrats control New York doesn't mean the seat it will lose will be a seat currently held by a Democrat. In fact, it's more likely that the exact opposite will happen – New York Democrats, who control the state government and therefore will control the line-drawing process there, will decide which Republican incumbent is going to be caught without a chair when the music stops. The same will happen in Illinois. In Ohio and West Virginia, the GOP controls both houses of the legislature and the governor's mansion, and will control the line drawing process. But in the other states that will lose a seat, the new district lines will be drawn by either an independent redistricting commission (as in California and Michigan) or by a divided government (as in Pennsylvania).

Sixth, one of the big takeaways is that the Sun Belt continues to beat the Rust Belt. Six of the seven states that will lose a seat – all but California – are in the Rust Belt. Five of those states, leaving aside West Virginia, have been losing seats for a long time. A century ago, after the

1920 Census, the eight states that border the Great Lakes sent 175 members to the Congress. Next year, those states will send 113 members, a decline of more than a third.

On the other hand, four of the six states that will gain a seat – all but Oregon and Montana – are in the Sun Belt, which has been gaining seats for more than a century. Texas has gained at least one seat in every reapportionment since 1950, and Florida has gained at least one seat in every reapportionment since 1910.

## D.C. STATEHOOD:

On Friday, West Virginia Democrat Sen. Joe Manchin said he did not support H.R. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act. “If Congress wants to make D.C. a state, it should propose a constitutional amendment ... and let the people of America vote,” he said on a radio interview with a West Virginia radio station.

During the radio interview, Manchin said he and his staff had taken what he called a “deep dive,” examining analyses conducted by the Department of Justice under both the Carter and Reagan Administrations, as well as comments from then-Attorney General Robert Kennedy. Each had come to the conclusion that adding D.C. as a state would require an amendment to the Constitution, he said. “Every legal scholar has told us that, so why not do it the right way and let the people vote to see if they want to change?” he said.

## BIDEN’S 100-DAY SPEECH:

On Wednesday evening, President Biden gave his first address in the chamber of the U.S. House of Representatives. I would call it an address to a joint session of Congress, but it wasn’t – of the 530 current members of Congress, no more than 200 (less than half) were in attendance. To put that in context, a typical State of the Union address sees the chamber host roughly 1,600 people.

I thought Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas summed it up best with a tweet: “For the millions of Americans who found something better to do tonight than listen to Joe Biden outline his socialist vision for our country, I can summarize his speech in three words for you: boring, but radical.”

Radical, indeed. Biden spent 65 minutes laying out a plan for a government takeover of American life so radical that even Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez were wide-eyed. In breadth, depth, and cost, Biden proposed the greatest expansion of American government since the creation of the American government.

But Biden does not have the votes for it – at least, not yet. Asked during an interview with CNN if he had concerns about Biden’s push for a more expansive role of government, West Virginia Democrat Sen. Joe Manchin replied, “Oh, most certainly.” Manchin has concerns about the cost of the proposals, and he has concerns about the proposed tax increases that would help pay for them. He reiterated his demand for bipartisanship and warned he would do what he could to block any effort by Democrats to go it alone – that is, to use the reconciliation process to bypass a need for GOP buy-in – prematurely.

“I’m not for that, I’ve never been for that and I’ve told them I’m not for that,” he said about the possibility of using reconciliation to pass massive infrastructure bills without GOP votes. “The bottom line is this place has got to have a chance to work ... So Joe Biden, the President of the United States, is going to give us a chance and he said, ‘OK, try to make it work.’ Can’t we at least try? Can’t we at least let the committee do its work? Let it go to the floor?”

Stay tuned. We’re going to be fighting this one for the duration of the first half of Biden’s term.

## TEA PARTY PATRIOTS/JENNY BETH MARTIN:

[Townhall: Jenny Beth Martin: If Personnel Is Policy, Biden's About To Send Us Off A Socialist Cliff](#)

[DC: Florida Passes Sweeping Voting Overhaul That Curbs Mail-In Voting, Drop Boxes](#)

## EDUCATION AND THE 1619 PROJECT:

[Hill: McConnell Wants '1619 Project' Removed from Federal Grant Programs](#)

[Regulations.gov: Proposed Priorities: American History and Civics Education](#)

## KERRY AND IRAN:

[NYT: Iran's Foreign Minister, In Leaked Tape, Says Revolutionary Guards Set Policies](#)

[NYT: John Kerry Denies Ever Having Discussed Israeli Strikes In Syria With Iran's Foreign Minister](#)

[WT: John Kerry Denies Sharing Secret Intelligence With Iran As Calls For Resignation Grow](#)

[NRO: John Kerry: The Former Secretary Of State's Denial On Leaking To Iran Doesn't Add Up](#)

[Politico: GOP Tears Into Kerry Amid Iran Controversy](#)

[Hill: Kerry Faces Calls To Step Down Over Leaked Iran Tapes](#)

[WT: 19 GOP Senators Call For Investigation Into John Kerry's Alleged Intel-Sharing With Iran](#)

## REAPPORTIONMENT:

[WaPo: Republican States Gain House Seats And Electoral Votes, New Census Determines](#)

Hill: Six States To Gain House Seats, Seven To Lose Seats

RC: 8 Takeaways From The 2020 Census Reapportionment Of The House

Hill: Lawmakers Brace For Battles With Colleagues As Redistricting Kicks Off

Politico: Redistricting Kicks Off Ruthless Year Of House Infighting

AP: What's Behind The Growth Slump? Takeaways From Census Data

Politico: Census Data Leaves Latinos Wondering: Were We Counted?

Cook Political Report: 2020 Census: What The Reapportionment Numbers Mean

Hill: Census Shifts House Seats: Five Takeaways

Bloomberg: Once-A-Decade Census Numbers To Redraw U.S. Political Landscape

Politico: The Redistricting Cycle Is About To Begin

WT: Census Population Shifts Favoring Blue States Under Biden Raise Alarm

Politico: Which States Are Gaining House Seats in 2022 -- and Which Are Losing Out

## **IMMIGRATION:**

WE: Byron York's Daily Memo: Biden's Quiet Immigration Move

Politico: The Border Turned Out To Be A Better Attack On Biden Than Even Republicans Thought

Hill: Biden Cancels Military-Funded Border Wall Projects

## **EARMARKS:**

WSJ: Senate Earmarks Are Back, Democrats Make It Official

## **COURT-PACKING:**

WE: Democratic Efforts To Pack The Supreme Court Would Trigger 'Nuclear War' In The Senate, Thune Says

Politico: Liberal Push To Expand Supreme Court Is All But Dead Among Hill Dems

## D.C. STATEHOOD:

[Politico: Manchin Says He Does Not Support D.C. Statehood Bill](#)

## BIDEN'S 100-DAY SPEECH:

[Politico: Biden Just Gave The Most Ideologically Ambitious Speech Of Any Democratic President In Generations](#)

[WSJ: Biden Cites Progress, Pushes Economic Agenda](#)

[Politico: Biden Embraces His Inner Robin Hood](#)

[WaPo: At 100 Days, Biden Seeks To Leverage Narrow Majorities To Reverse The Reagan Era](#)

## INFRASTRUCTURE:

[Hill: Here's What's In Biden's \\$1.8T American Families Plan](#)

[Hill: Manchin Pumps Brakes On Biden Infrastructure Plans](#)

[Hill: Democratic Scramble Complicates Biden's Human Infrastructure Plan](#)

[Hill: Democrats Face Big Headaches On Biden's \\$4T Spending Plan](#)

[WaPo: Biden's \\$1.8 Trillion Families Plan' Would Make Sweeping Changes To Spending, Taxes](#)

[Hill: White House Sees GOP Proposal As Legitimate Starting Point](#)

[Hill: Democrats Face Big Headaches On Biden's \\$4T Spending Plan](#)

[Hill: Democrats Push To Add Drug Pricing, Medicare Measures to Biden Plan](#)

[CNN: 'Most Certainly': Manchin Raises Concerns About Biden's Push for More Expansive Government](#)

## MISCELLANEOUS:

[Sacramento Bee: Gavin Newsome Recall Has Signatures To Trigger CA Election](#)

[Politico: Democrat's Surprising 2-Man Team To Hold The Senate](#)

[WE: Senate Votes To Cancel Trump EPA Deregulation In Effort To Reinstate Methane Emissions Curb](#)



House: Bob Good Letter To Nominee Chapman

Politico: Lawmakers Reveal -- and Dispute -- FBI Conclusion About 2017 Baseball Field Shooting

Politico: FBI Defends 'Suicide by Cop' Designation for 2017 Baseball Field Shooting

NYT: Florida Republicans Pass Voting Limits in Broad Elections Bill