
OLYMPIA INDIVISIBLE

Research Report: July 24, 2017

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1. Stop TrumpCare in the Senate!

Summary:

- The Republican appetite to snatch health care from millions of Americans and doom thousands to premature deaths appears to be insatiable.
- **The next week is critical to whether we can retain the ACA and prevent massive cuts** in coverage to millions, lower health insurance quality for millions more and harm to the elderly, disabled, young and poor, all to provide a massive tax cut to the rich. **Calls and e-mails now are urgent.** Usually, the best focus is on our own members. But in this moment, we also need to contact more moderate Republicans whose votes will determine the fate of the ACA.

Talking Points:

- On July 17, the Senate Republican ACA “repeal and replace” bill collapsed when two conservative senators said they would not vote to move the bill to the floor. Majority Leader McConnell then said he would bring up a bill that would repeal all ACA provisions that could be eliminated under Senate reconciliation rules with a two-year delay.
- On July 18, that bill died when three relatively moderate Republican Senate women said they would not vote for it. On July 19, after a meeting with Trump, 20 Republican senators met to see if they could draft a bill they could all live with. Leadership said they would bring up the House bill early next week with an open amendment process, forcing members to state their positions in public. At this point, there are not enough votes to bring that bill to the floor, but it is unclear where things will stand when the vote takes place.
- Trump’s tweet on July 18 said that he would wait and see the ACA collapse, which he says will be blamed on the Democrats. The Administration does have options for sabotaging the bill, including not enforcing the individual mandate, and not funding cost sharing benefits, leaving insurance companies liable for paying for deductibles and copays for lower income people on the exchanges with no way to be paid for those costs. This cost shifting would lead to higher premiums for other exchange participants and to insurers leaving the exchanges. Within 24 hours, he contradicted this statement by asking the Senate to again repeal and replace the ACA.
- The CBO said that the current version of the Senate Republican ACA bill would result in 15 million fewer people with insurance next year and 22 million in 2026. While average premiums would be lower, deductibles and co-pays would be higher. The CBO said that the repeal with a delay bill would result in 17 million fewer people with insurance next year, 27 million after 2020 and 32 million after ten years. Premiums would roughly double by 2026 and about ¾ of people would live in places where no insurer would be willing to sell coverage in the private market.
- In the House, right-wing Freedom Caucus members are trying to force a floor vote on a full repeal of the ACA. The Administration will continue to pay cost-sharing subsidies for July, but made no promises for future months.
- On July 21, the Senate Parliamentarian ruled that certain elements of the bills, including eliminating Planned Parenthood for one year and banning insurance coverage of abortion in Obamacare insurance plans, do not comply with Senate rules on reconciliation. These elements would have to be removed for the Senate to vote on a strict 51-person majority.
- The revised BCRA would do the following:
 - *Uninsured will soar:* The Congressional Budget Office found the bill would increase the number of uninsured by 15 million in 2018 and **22 million** over 10 years.
 - *Medicaid cuts:* It would dramatically cut Medicaid spending, phasing out the ACA expansion over six years and ending Medicaid as an entitlement. It would cut Medicaid spending by 24% in 2026.

However, these cuts accelerate over time and, by 2036, Medicaid funding under the Senate bill would be **35% below** what it would be under current law. States will be forced to cut people from Medicaid, cut benefits, or cut provider reimbursement. Since most Medicaid spending is for disabled and elder enrollees, they will be the most adversely affected. In Washington State, about 10% of Washingtonians would lose coverage.

- *Insurance:* Average monthly premiums even after tax credit would be 74% higher in 2020 AND copays and deductibles would rise sharply. However, the changes hurt lower income enrollees more: those with incomes below 200% of poverty would see an average increase in their premium costs of 177%, while higher income enrollees would see an increase of 57%. Deductibles will also rise – a single person buying a typical plan with inexpensive premiums could potentially confront a deductible of \$13,000 a year after a decade.

Our MoCs:

- Our members of Congress have all stated their strong belief in retaining and improving the ACA.
- [Cantwell on Senate Floor: Republicans Must Come to the Table on Health Care, not Throw “Another Hail Mary Pass”](#)
- [TRUMPCARE: Sen. Murray Calls on Republicans to Stop Sabotaging Families’ Health Care and Work With Democrats](#)

To Do:

- This is what is the most important thing to do this week. Make calls and send emails to Republicans who have come out in opposition to the bill or who might be on the fence, often in Medicaid expansion states and/or with upcoming elections. Urge them to vote against bringing any of the Senate Republican bills to the Senate floor. Ask them to refuse to vote to bring to the floor any bill that makes radical cuts to Medicaid in order to fund tax cuts. Encourage them to try to develop bipartisan efforts to correct the real problems with the ACA, not to sharply cut benefits to pay for a tax cut for the rich and well-connected.
 - Susan Collins (Maine) (202) 224-2523 www.collins.senate.gov/contact - Thank Senator Collins for saying she will not vote to bring the Senate Republican “Better Health Care” bill to the floor for a vote, and for saying she would not vote to bring a bill that repeals the ACA but does not replace it. Both of these stands took political courage.
 - Shelley Moore Capito (West Virginia) (202) 224-6472 www.capito.senate.gov/contact/contact-shelley - Thank Senator Capito for saying she would not vote to bring a bill that repeals the ACA but does not replace it. This stand took political courage. As Senator Capito said this week, “I wasn’t sent here to hurt people...”
 - Lisa Murkowski (Alaska) (202) 224-6665 www.murkowski.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact - Thank Senator Murkowski for saying she would not vote to bring a bill that repeals the ACA but does not replace it. This stand took political courage.
 - Rob Portman (Ohio) 202-224-3353 www.portman.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact?p=contact-form
 - Dean Heller (Nevada) (202) 224-6244 www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact-form
 - Bill Cassidy (LA) (202) 224-5824 www.cassidy.senate.gov/contact
 - Jeff Flake (AZ). (202) 224-4521 www.flake.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact
- Call and Email Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell.
 - *Script:* Please thank Senator _____ for opposing the Senate Healthcare bill, and continuing to raise her voice denouncing the repeal of the ACA and the Trump administration efforts to sabotage the ACA. Tell her that I support bipartisan efforts to fix real-world problems with the ACA, but oppose efforts to cut benefits to fund a tax cut for the rich and well-connected.

- Senator Murray - (253) 572-3636 or 206-553-5545 or (202) 224-2621.
www.murray.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contactme
- Senator Cantwell – (253) 572-2281 or (206) 220-6400 or (202) 224-3441.
www.cantwell.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-maria
- Contact the media (The Olympian and local TV stations) with letters and emails denouncing the bill, and Trump Administration attempts to sabotage the ACA. Letters should be hand-delivered or sent via email. The Republican bills and Trump sabotage will lead tens of millions of people to lose health coverage, raise health care premiums and degrade the quality of health plans, all to provide hundreds of billions in tax cuts for the rich. Tell them that the ACA has provided health insurance to millions, ended lifetime and annual caps, covered millions with pre-existing conditions. It should be improved, not destroyed.
 - [Indivisible Guide - How to Write Letters to the Editor that Really Get Attention](#)

Articles:

- [Huff Post - The Senate Health Care Bill Is Still Not Dead](#)
- [WaPo - Break-in reported at office of GOP senator considered swing vote in health-care bill](#)
- [Reuters - Eight to 10 Republicans have concerns on healthcare bill](#)
- [NYT - McCain's Surgery Will Delay Senate Votes on Health Care Bill](#)
- [Politico - Parliamentarian rules against key provisions in Obamacare repeal bill](#)
- [WaPo - Cloud of confusion hangs over health-care bill](#)
- [Indivisible Guide - Healthcare Resources](#)

2. Russian Interference in our Election

Summary: Trump's lawyers are exploring ways to limit or undercut Robert Mueller's Russia investigation. They are also exploring Trump's ability to grant pardons to his family, his staff and himself. In his New York Times (NYT) interview, Trump attacked every independent person involved in the Russia investigation. In the interview, Trump said the FBI should report directly to him, not to the Justice Department (DOJ). Banking regulators and federal investigators are reviewing some loans made to Trump businesses. Manhattan district attorney (DA) issued subpoenas for Manafort bank records. There were at least eight people in the Donald Jr. June meeting with Russians and Mueller is investigating it. Trump had an additional undisclosed meeting with Putin at the G-20 summit.

Talking Points:

- Trump's legal team is compiling alleged potential conflicts of interest of Robert Mueller investigators to potentially limit or end his investigation. A conflict of interest is one of the possible grounds for an attorney general to remove a special counsel from office. Such alleged conflicts are being played up on pro-Trump right-wing media now. Trump and his legal team are trying to keep Mueller's investigation from Trump's business dealings. Mueller's office is already investigating Trump's, his family's and his campaign aides' business dealings with Russians.
- Trump's legal team is exploring Trump's legal authority to pardon his family, his staff and himself in any legal proceedings that might come up as a result of the Russia investigation.
- In his NYT interview, Trump attacked every person who has or had independent authority over the Russia investigation, in most cases alleging conflicts of interest. They include: Deputy Attorney General (AG) Rod Rosenstein (who has authority over Mueller and is the only one who can fire him); acting FBI director Andrew McCabe; Comey; and Special Counsel Robert Mueller. He also attacked AG Sessions. If Sessions is fired, a new AG would not be recused from the Russia investigation, and could fire Mueller. [NYT Interview with Trump](#)
- In the interview, Trump said that the FBI should report directly to the president, not report to the DOJ and be kept at arms-length from the president, as under current law, regulation and practice.
- According to press reports of intelligence intercepts of the Russian ambassador reporting to Moscow, during the campaign Jeff Sessions talked about campaign-related matters, contradicting sworn testimony to Congress. However, given the fact that if Sessions resigns, a new AG would not be recused and could limit or fire Robert Mueller, and given Trump's attacks on Sessions to the NYT this week, it is an open question of who leaked the intelligence intercepts and why they were leaked.
- Bipartisan congressional negotiators are near agreement on a bill that would allow Congressional action before any sanctions on Russia, North Korea or Iran are loosened or eliminated. The bill would not reflect any White House concerns. An earlier version of the bill passed the Senate 98-2.
- Banking regulators are reviewing \$300 million in loans to Trump businesses from Deutsche Bank. Federal investigators have also been examining the accounts and the bank is expected to provide information to Robert Mueller.
- The Manhattan DA has issued a subpoena for Paul Manafort's bank records regarding \$16 million in loans to him and his wife received from a Chicago bank in November and January, which was equal to 24% of that bank's equity. The CEO of the bank was then seeking to be Secretary of the Army.
- There were at least eight people in the June meeting between Donald Jr., Jared Kushner, Paul Manafort and a Russian lawyer, ostensibly to get negative information on Hillary Clinton provided by the Russian government. Each few days, another name leaks out. The latest is Ike Kaveladze, a US employee of Aras

Agalarov's firm. Agalarov is a Putin-connected Russian billionaire who co-sponsored the 2013 Miss Universe Pageant with Trump. Mueller is investigating that meeting.

- Trump had an additional undisclosed meeting with Putin at the G-20 summit at the closing dinner. The meeting lasted an hour and involved only Trump, Putin and Putin's translator.

Our MoCs:

- Both senators called for a special prosecutor to be appointed by the DOJ, and praised appointment of Robert Mueller to that post. Senator Cantwell released a statement after the Comey testimony that ended "We have to make sure that the White House is not trying to obstruct the investigation. No one is above the law, not even the president." Congressman Heck has call for an independent commission for some months and signed discharge petition to move HR 356 (which would establish a commission) to the House floor.

To Do:

- Continue to ask our senators to push for an independent commission with subpoena power. Thank Cong. Heck for doing so. Only an independent commission can conduct an independent investigation that can also share facts with the public.
- Encourage our senators to continue to support an aggressive Senate Intelligence Committee investigation. Encourage Cong. Heck to continue to push for an aggressive House Intelligence Committee investigation. In the absence of an independent commission, the congressional investigations are the best way to get information on Russian involvement in the election and possible collusion out to the public. Members should not to let the appointment of a special prosecutor end or impede the congressional investigations.
- Urge moderate and concerned Republican senators to be vigilant regarding the congressional Russia investigations. They may include Burr, McCain, Collins, Murkowski, Sasse, Flake. While not all of these members are certain to support aggressive investigations, all have shown concern about the Russian connection at one time, or are seen as more moderate.
- Urge our members and the relatively moderate and concerned Republicans to support Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation, and to oppose efforts by Trump, his legal team and conservative media to limit, end or delegitimize that investigation.
- Thank our members of Congress for continuing to stand up for democratic accountability and public transparency in this investigation.

3. Senate Bill 1460 – Energy and Natural Resources Act of 2017

Summary: Senate Bill 1460 provides for the modernization of the energy and natural resources policies of the United States. It has a wide variety of provisions, centered on energy efficiency, infrastructure and cyber security, as well as federal land management and sportsmen’s access. It has been decades since the energy policies were updated. The bill is a compromise with fossil fuel and clean energy policies. [_congress.gov - Senate bill 1460](#)

Talking Points:

- The previous version of the legislation passed the Senate with 85 votes last year but got bogged down in the House. [The Hill - Senators introduce new bipartisan energy bill](#)
- McConnell fast-tracked the bill on June 29th by putting it on the floor calendar.
- Bill is opposed by 350 national grassroots groups because it increases our dependence on fossil fuel and continued fracking. [Organizational Sign-on Letter Opposing Senate Bill 1460](#)
 - Will give Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) more power to approve natural gas pipelines and spend \$200 million researching how to access methane: [The Hill - Senate energy bill would fan the flames of climate change](#)

Additional information from Rosa McLeod, Senator Cantwell’s local outreach director:

Senator Cantwell has been a long time champion of legislation that promotes the production of renewable energy, incentivizes energy efficiency, develops clean technology industries, and protects our environment. The Energy & Natural Resources bill is a bipartisan effort that works on the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. energy efficiency | 6. National Park System management and funding |
| 2. energy infrastructure | 7. sportsmen’s issues |
| 3. energy supply & accountability | 8. water infrastructure |
| 4. conservation | |
| 5. federal land management | |

- Conservation – To advance environmental stewardship, the bill permanently reauthorizes the Land and Water Conservation Fund. LWCF is the nation’s most successful conservation program, spurring billions in revenue and supporting more than 6 million jobs. LWCF is otherwise set to expire next year. This provision creates a new National Park maintenance fund to address the \$12 billion backlog.
- The bill includes provisions to save energy, expand supply, prioritize innovation, modernize and secure the electric grid, boost energy trade, protect sportsmen’s access, strengthen mineral security, bolster and train the energy workforce, reauthorize certain conservation programs, facilitate better management of federal lands, and minimize risks from natural hazards.
- Efficiency – Energy efficiency provides significant benefits for consumers, the economy, and the environment. The ENRA includes everything from energy savings performance contracts to the reauthorization of the weatherization assistance and state energy programs. Homes, buildings, and manufacturing facilities would stand to become more efficient as a result of this bill.
- Grid Security –ENRA will help modernize our electric grid, enhance cybersecurity safeguards, and ensure a qualified, well-trained workforce.
- In response to the following article: [EcoWatch - Does Maria Cantwell Stand With the Environment or Stand With Donald Trump?](#)

- The bill codifies Obama policies regarding LNG exports and pipelines. Does that directly promote fracking? No. (Does it support natural gas markets? Yes, which are also driving coal plants out of business.)
- The bill reauthorizes a research program on methane hydrates that has already existed since 2000. It authorizes \$35 million a year for 5 years, for activities including research to assess environmental impacts. (Its last authorization level was in FY10, for \$50M.)
- By comparison, the legislation invests \$290 million in marine energy; \$475 million in geothermal technology; more than \$1.75 billion in ARPA-E, which promotes advanced technologies including solar, batteries, building efficiency; increases by more than 20 percent funding for basic science on topics like materials for advanced clean energy technologies; it invests another \$2 billion in smart grid for projects like microgrids and another \$500 million in energy storage, which help smooth integration of renewables into the distribution grid at higher rates of market penetration. It also promotes efficiency in buildings and starts a new Smart Buildings Initiative, to drive carbon savings of 43 million tons in 2030--equivalent to taking 9 million cars off the road.
- It withdraws from minerals development land at the headwaters of the Methow, now under threat from mining. It designates Wild and Scenic rivers in MT and CT, and adds wilderness status in NM. It includes the Yakima Water Basin bill which will help reintroduce salmon into parts of the basin where they have been absent for decades.
- This bill has many provisions from the Senator's signature energy legislation from the last Congress. Every single Democratic senator supported that Cantwell-Murkowski legislation, which ENRA is based on.

Articles:

- [Dirty Distraction: The Energy and Natural Resources Act of 2017 Fact Sheet](#)
- [EcoWatch - Does Maria Cantwell Stand With the Environment or Stand With Donald Trump?](#)

Our MoCs:

- Cantwell is the only cosponsor of the bill.
- Cantwell's office referred me to her press release and said the bill offers support of updating the electric grid, enhance cyber security safeguards, and boosts carbon fiber recycling: [Cantwell Press Release](#)
- Cantwell said the legislation "will not only help modernize our energy infrastructure, but secure it from extreme weather, climate change, and serious cyber threats."

To do:

- Although not dream legislation for renewable energy sources, it does have bipartisan support. If you agree, let Senator Cantwell know you appreciate her bipartisan effort to modernize and reform our nation's energy and resource policies.

4. Trump Administration on Climate Change and Possible Joining of the Paris Climate Change Agreement

Summary: In 2015, nations came together to sign the Paris Climate Change Agreement in which the nations agreed to pursue efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. The US signed that agreement. In 2017, Trump withdrew the US from the Paris Agreement to the shock of all. There are only three sovereign nations that are not part of that agreement now – the US, Nicaragua, and Syria.

Talking Points:

- Since Trump walked the US away from the Paris agreement, there has been considerable criticism of the US decision both within our country and from other countries. The European countries have been particularly concerned with the US climate change position because they are caught between wanting to continue their trade agreements with the US but not wanting to compromise on climate change efforts.
- The British environmental secretary recently pointed out that international cooperation is crucial to resolve the problem of climate change, noting that the US is the 2nd biggest generator of carbon emissions.
- Trump was recently in France to celebrate Bastille Day. President Macron indicated that Trump said that Trump would find a solution that would allow the US to join the Paris Accord. But Trump, in a press conference with Macron, said that “Something could happen with respect to the Paris Accord. We’ll see what happens. We will talk about that in the coming period of time.” However, he followed up by saying “if it happens that will be wonderful, but if it doesn’t that will be okay, too.”
- FYI: NOAA reported that the 1st half of 2017 was the 2nd warmest on record, after 2016. Records date back to 1880. The average temperature of the globe was 1.64 degrees above the 20th-century average. Five continents had a top tenth warmest January-June period. Last week, NOAA announced that its index for tracking greenhouse gases was up 40% since 1990.

Our MoCs:

- Our MoCs are concerned about climate change and have advocated for measures to combat it.
- Denny Heck issued a statement that the “withdrawal from the Paris Agreement puts politics ahead of the wellbeing of our children and grandchildren.”
- Sen. Murray said that the State of Washington has much to lose from climate change and that we need to address this critical issue.
- Sen. Cantwell is a strong environmentalist and urges attention be paid to climate change in order to address its impacts now and in the future.

To Do:

- Send KUDOs to our MoC for their stance on climate change. AT THE SAME time, urge our MoCs to speak privately with the EPA, and publicly speak about the effect of carbon dioxide emissions on our environment and what effect unregulated carbon dioxide emissions will have on our environment in the future.

Articles:

- [WaPo - Macron tried to soften Trump's stance on climate change. Others have failed.](#)
- [Indivisible - Trump Against the Planet: Defending the Climate with Local Action](#)
- **What can individuals do to combat climate change?**

- [Climate Reality Project - Download your action kit - I Am Still In](#)
- [SumOfUs - The denim industry's dirty little secrets](#)
- [Global Citizen - 7 Eco-Friendly Alternatives to Plastic Straws to Help Save the Oceans](#)

5. Call on the Dept of Education to Dismiss Candice Jackson

Summary: The Department of Education (DOE) is showing many signs that it is planning on revising its policies on how it deals with campus sexual assault. The Obama DOE made many changes intended to hold rapists accountable and the the Trump DOE is poised to roll back those reforms.

Talking Points:

- The head of the civil rights division of the DOE, Candice Jackson, said of sexual assaults in an interview with the New York Times, “The accusations — 90 percent of them — fall into the category of ‘we were both drunk,’ ‘we broke up, and six months later I found myself under a Title IX investigation because she just decided that our last [time] sleeping together was not quite right.”
 - [The Hill- Dem senator: Education Dept. must fire employee who made sex assault remarks](#)
- Betsy DeVos held meetings with so-called “Men’s Rights” organizations, which advocate victim blaming and rolling back investigations of sexual assault and sexual violence
 - [ABC News - Betsy DeVos' meetings with 'men's rights' groups over campus sex assault policies spark controversy](#)
 - [NYT - Campus Rape Policies Get a New Look as the Accused Get DeVos’ Ear](#)
- DOE Civil Rights Division
 - Expressed public intent to stop publishing a list of schools where sexual assault investigations are ongoing.
 - Internal Memo directing investigators to stop looking for systemic issues in how cases are handled on campus.
 - Proposing cutting 40 positions from the office for civil rights.
 - [NYT - Education Dept. Says It Will Scale Back Civil Rights Investigations](#)

Our MoCs:

- Murray has called for Candice Jackson to be fired.
 - [Time - Senator Murray Wants Education Official Fired After 'Egregious' Campus Sexual Assault Remark](#)
 - [The Hill - Dem senator: Education Dept. must fire employee who made sex assault remarks](#)
 - [WaPo - Key Democrat calls for ouster of DeVos’ civil rights chief in light of ‘egregious’ remarks about sexual assault](#)
- No statements from Heck or Cantwell.

To Do:

- Call Murray
 - Thank her for calling for Jackson’s removal.
 - Thanks her for standing up to this administration’s efforts to roll back protections for vulnerable populations
 - Ask her to pressure DOE to stop these changes to the civil rights division.
- Call Cantwell and Heck
 - Ask them to call for Jackson’s removal.
 - Ask them to publically oppose these changes to the civil rights division
- Contact the US Dept of Education's Office for Civil Rights at 800-421-3481 and/or OCR@ed.gov to demand that Candice Jackson be removed from her position due to her comments that demonstrate she is in no position to serve as a protector of students' rights.

6. Other Issues

a. Reform Needed to put Constitutional Limits back on Government Surveillance

- **Summary:** Under Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, the National Security Agency operates at least two spying programs, PRISM and Upstream, which threaten our privacy and violate our Fourth Amendment rights. Section 702 will expire in 2017, so Congress has to decide soon whether to reauthorize or replace it. We have a real chance at winning important reform to put constitutional limits back on government surveillance.
- **Articles:**
 - [ACLU Action - Reform Government Surveillance Now](#)
 - [Politico - How the government can read your email](#)

b. Senate Judiciary Committee Approves Wray Nomination

- **Summary:** The Senate Judiciary Committee voted unanimously to approve the nomination of Christopher Wray as the next FBI director to replace former director Comey, fired by Trump. Senate Majority Leader McConnell says he plans a floor vote to confirm Wray before the August recess.
- **Article:**
 - [PBS - Who is Christopher Wray, Trump's pick for FBI director](#)

c. Trump Ends Arms Aid to Moderate Syrian Rebels

- **Summary:** In a meeting a month ago, Trump decided to end the CIA's covert program to arm and train moderate Syrian rebels fighting the Assad regime, a central part of Obama's strategy in 2013 to try to put pressure on Assad to step aside.. This is a move long sought by Russia. Some critics said that the decision was likely to empower more radical rebels and damage US credibility. The program is to be phased out over a series of months.
- **Articles:**
 - [WaPo - Trump ends covert CIA program to arm anti-Assad rebels in Syria, a move sought by Moscow](#)

d. House Budget Plan

- **Summary:** The Washington Post reported that the House Republican leadership announced a budget plan July 18 intended to provide the funding needed for major tax changes. The bill is to be heard in the House Budget Committee on July 19
- **Talking Points:**
 - It is unclear at this point whether enough Republicans will support the bill for it to pass. The House Republicans cannot afford to lose more than 22 votes to pass the bill. At this point, opponents have more than twice that number unwilling to vote for the budget proposal. Enacting a budget bill that does not increase the deficit is required to if the Senate is to use reconciliation to pass a major funding bill with only 50 votes rather than the usual 60. The Freedom Caucus are pushing for more aggressive long-term cuts in spending of \$400 billion over ten years. They are also pushing for more details on tax changes. Twenty moderates in the Tuesday Group objected to the \$200 billion in mandatory spending cuts. They are pushing for budget talks with Democrats. House Republicans are proposing to exceed the defense spending cuts in the 2011 Budget Control Act, in effect until 2021. Adjusting the caps would require a bipartisan vote to pass the Senate because it cannot be considered under reconciliation.
 - The budget would be built around spending cuts of \$203 bill over ten years. The draft budget would include a rollback of Dodd-Frank financial industry regulations, reduce federal employee benefits,

reduce welfare spending and cut Medicaid spending sharply. It would and reduce funding for Medicare, basing it on a Medicare Advantage model. It would also cut Social Security.

- Under the plan, defense spending would increase over ten years while non-defense discretionary spending would decline to \$424 billion, down 23% below the \$554 billion in the budget for the current federal fiscal year. The House assumes 2.6% growth, below the 3% in the Trump budget but far higher than the 1.9% used by the CBO.
- The bill would direct the Ways and Means Committee to find \$52 billion in deficit savings over the coming ten years and the savings would have to come from Medicare, SSI, TANF and unemployment compensation. The Oversight and Government Reform Committee would be required to find \$32 billion in cuts from areas such as federal workforce cuts and federal employee benefit cuts. The Financial Services Committee would be responsible for \$14 billion in savings, which would allow repeal of much of the Dodd-Frank law. The Judiciary Committee would be responsible for \$45 billion in deficit reduction, approximately the amount of savings produced by a House bill to alter medical malpractice law.
- The Washington Post reports that the House Appropriations Committee voted on July 19 on amendments to bills to fund the government next year, though the bills are inconsistent with the just-released budget plan. In addition, the committee only plans to pass four of the twelve annual appropriations bills before the August recess. This reflects the fact that House Republicans still are so divided over spending (with Freedom Caucus demanding cuts far larger than most Republican members support) that Democratic votes are required for any House spending bill to pass.
- The plan to move the bills was directed by House leadership. Under the House Republican leadership plan, the military, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Energy and Congress would be funded, along with \$1.6 billion toward a border wall. Funding the rest of the government would be left for the fall, likely requiring negotiations with Senate Democrats.

- **Articles:**

- [NPR - Here's What's In The House Republican Budget \(And Why It Matters\)](#)

e. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)

- **Talking Points:**

- Politico reports that Richard Cordray, director of the CFPB, plans to run for governor of Ohio next year to replace John Kasich (who is not running again). The move is not imminent, but preparations are under way. Cordray previously served a term as Ohio Attorney General. If Cordray left the CFPB, it would allow Trump to nominate his successor. Trump can't fire Cordray except with cause.
- Cordray's departure would end the CFPB's so-far successful efforts to rein in financial institution practices that victimize consumers. Congressional Republicans have opposed the CFPB from the start, in part under pressure from financial interests, but have so far been unsuccessful in limiting its actions. Congress can't change the CFPB budget because it is funded through the Federal Reserve and not subject to appropriations. Senate Democrats have blocked numerous Republican efforts to alter the CFPB.

f. Department of the Interior's Reassignment of Scientists

- **Articles:**

- [WaPo Op Ed - Opinions I'm a scientist. I'm blowing the whistle on the Trump administration.](#)
- [The Hill - Democrats Want Probe of Interior Scientists' Reassignments](#)