
OLYMPIA INDIVISIBLE

Research Report: September 16, 2017

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1. Stop Trumpcare! Protect Obamacare!

Summary:

- Graham and Cassidy trying to pass ACA repeal before the end of September, unveiling their legislation this week.
- Senators Alexander and Murray are trying for a ACA market stabilization compromise.

Talking Points: Graham – Cassidy Bill

- The reconciliation bill for health care, which allows a bill to pass the Senate with only 50 votes, expires September 30th. The bill cannot be voted on without a Congressional Budget Office (CBO) score. In addition, the Senate parliamentarian must review it to see if it meets reconciliation requirements.
- Although final details have not been released, the Graham-Cassidy bill destroys Medicaid by fundamentally and permanently transforming the program into a per-capita cap. The proposal would take all money going out the door to help people afford and access insurance and bundle it into one “block grant” given to states. This “block grant” includes money for the Medicaid expansion and marketplace subsidies while deeply cutting the total amount of money. In addition, it has no accountability that the money will actually help people get affordable health care. And last, but not least: Every. Last. Dollar. Disappears. After. 2026.
- The bill also still undermines protections for people with pre-existing conditions and people who need treatment for opioid abuse by allowing states to waive essential health benefits. And it takes away the funding that helps people afford insurance.
- Senator John McCain, who opposed TrumpCare in July, said that he would support the Graham-Cassidy bill, under certain conditions. If all other Republicans hold, that would give Mitch McConnell the 50 votes plus Vice President Pence’s tie breaker that he needs to jam TrumpCare through the Senate.

Talking Points: Market Stabilization

- Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee chair Alexander and ranking member Murray are trying to negotiate a bipartisan deal to stabilize the ACA exchange marketplaces. They have a Sept 27 deadline, because insurers must sign contracts for the coming year for the exchanges by the end of the month, with enrollment opening November 1.
- Many insurers are raising premiums and dropping out of exchange markets because of uncertainty, largely caused by the Trump Administration sabotage and Republican efforts to repeal the ACA. A key issue is an agreement on cost-sharing reduction (CSR’s) payments. They are negotiating the length of a CSR appropriation guarantee (Alexander wants one year, Murray three). They are negotiating over how much more flexibility states would get to manage the program and for how long and under what legal framework. Even if there is a Senate deal, it is far from certain it would pass the House.

Our MoCs:

- Murray is working with Alexander to stabilize the ACA market.

To Do: (from Indivisible National)

- Thank Senator Murray for her hard work on preserving Obamacare and her efforts to stabilize the market.
- **Stop the Return of TrumpCare:** TrumpCare is back and Republicans are as close as they’ve ever been to passing it. There are just 14 days left for the Senate to ram healthcare through reconciliation with just 50 votes. This is TrumpCare’s last stand. Call your senators ASAP and tell them to vote no on “Graham-Cassidy” [using all the latest resources at TrumpCareTen.org](http://TrumpCareTen.org).

- **Democrats aren't in control, but they can still resist.** They need to slow down Senate business in order to run out the clock on TrumpCare. Here's how: Resist through procedure. Your Democratic Senator can slow down Senate business through a combination of filibustering and "withholding consent." The rules of the Senate are so complicated that Senators have to regularly consent to waiving some of them so that they can actually get work done. That includes shortening time for debates, expediting consideration of amendments, and scheduling committees. Your Senator can slow the Senate down to a crawl and focus attention to TrumpCare by withholding his or her consent on legislative business.
- Call our Senators with the following script:
 - Hello! My name is [name] and I'm calling from [place in state]. I'm asking Senator [name] to use whatever means are available to her to slow down the process on the Graham-Cassidy bill, such as withholding her consent on all Senate business until this bill is dead, placing holds on nominations, objecting to all unanimous consent requests until the reconciliation instruction expire, and offering as many amendments as it takes to draw out Senate debate on this bill. Will the Senator do that?
- **Host an event at our MoCs' offices as soon as possible.** Graham-Cassidy is a *major threat*. We must put pressure on MoCs immediately. BIG pressure. LOUD pressure. And that means showing up. [Schedule an in-district office event now](#). It's important that you register your event so we can widely promote it via email to people nearby this coming week.
- **Tune in to Facebook Live on Monday September 18th at 5:30 pm PT.** Indivisible National team will discuss new details about TrumpCare and what you can do to defeat it once again.

2. DACA Update

Encourage Your MoCs to Lead the Congressional Charge to Protect the DACA Program

Summary: Democrats in Congress announced that have reached an agreement with Trump on legislation that will preserve the protections of the DACA program in exchange for increasing border security and greatly increased funding for border security (but not a wall). Trump appeared to confirm that information on Twitter, although he insisted that no deal had been made, but then later seemed to confirm a deal. (Surprised that he was so contradictory? No, me neither).

Talking Points:

- The WA Post reported that House Speaker Ryan, House Majority Leader McCarthy, House Minority Leader Pelosi, House Minority Whip Hoyer and the leaders of the congressional Black, Asian and Hispanic caucuses plan to meet September 13 to begin discussing legislation that would provide protections to some 690,000 “dreamers” at risk of losing their legal status in six months if Congress does not act. [WA Po - Trump, top Democrats agree to work on deal to save ‘dreamers’ from deportation](#)
- It appears that congressional leaders are trying to pair some protections for dreamers with some effort to increase security along the southern US border. House Democrats are in agreement on a bill that would provide protections for the dreamers and put them on a years-long course to apply for US citizenship.
- Politico reported that Trump is unlikely to demand that DACA restoration be paired with border wall funding for him to sign it. He told Nancy Pelosi in private he needed some border security in such a bill. Trump is still seeking funding for a border wall, but is not insisting that it be paired with DACA extension. [Politico - Trump unlikely to demand border wall for Dreamers bill](#)
- There are 19,180 DACA recipients in Washington alone, and each year they contribute \$51,272,000 in State and local taxes. Now it’s up to your representatives in Congress to stand up to Trump’s hateful decision and secure the futures of DACA recipients with a legislative fix: The DREAM Act (S.1615 / H.R.3440). [Indivisible Guide - WA](#)
- The Trump Administration is considering whether to extend “temporary protected status” for several countries whose immigrants have lived in the US for as long as 20 years. There are a total of 440,000 people in the US in the program. The “temporary protected status” is a provision of immigration law that allows the government to grant temporary work authorizations and protection from deportation to immigrants from certain countries where life remains dangerous. Conditions that could merit the status include armed conflict and civil war, natural disasters, epidemics and other “extraordinary and temporary conditions”. The countries the Trump Administration is reviewing include Sudan (1,039 people here) and South Sudan (49) whose status is set to expire November 1. [CNN - The next DACA? Trump administration turns to another class of immigrants](#)
- A lawsuit was filed to protest Trump’s action to end DACA by the University of California system. The director of the system is Janet Napolitano, who began DACA as DHS secretary under President Obama.
- On September 11, California, Minnesota, Maryland and Maine sued the Trump Administration over his decision to end DACA. The suit is similar to that filed by 16 states last week. It describes the decision as discriminatory. It states that it will injure state residents, damage their states’ economies and harm their workplaces, among other claims.

To Do:

- Tell your MoC to include a clean DREAM Act in any must-pass legislative vehicles this month. The DREAM Act would give DACA recipients and others who arrived in the United States as children a path to permanent lawful status and eventual citizenship. Call your Representative and two Senators today and demand that they include a clean “DREAM Act” in any must-pass bill, such as the DREAM Act (S.1615 / H.R.3440).
- SCRIPT:
 - Hello! My name is [name] and I’m calling from [place in state]. Could you tell me what Senator/Representative xxxx’s position is on the recently reported efforts by Pelosi, Schumer, Ryan and others in the House and Senate to reach an agreement on the DACA program? I feel strongly that the children covered by the DACA program must be allowed to stay and to achieve citizenship. I urge Senator/Representative xxxx to join recently reported efforts to protect DACA and to work on rational, humane immigration reform.

3. Oppose the Nominations of Sam Clovis and Jim Bridenstine

Summary: The Trump Administration has nominated Sam Clovis to be US Department of Agriculture's Chief Scientist, and Rep. Jim Bridenstine to be the next leader of NASA. Spoiler Alert: [Neither are scientists!](#)

Talking Points: Sam Clovis

- Sam Clovis, the Trump administration's nominee to be the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Chief Scientist, is a former conservative radio host and the chairman of Donald Trump's Iowa campaign.
- Clovis has called the overwhelming consensus on human-caused climate change "junk science."
- In comments made between 2012 and 2014, Clovis has argued that homosexuality is a choice and that the sanctioning of same-sex marriage could lead to the legalization of pedophilia. [CNN - Sam Clovis: LGBT protections could lead to legalization of pedophilia](#)
- Clovis, whose early and loyal backing of Trump helped the president win in Iowa, has politics on his side. Not only does Trump owe him a job, but most major farm groups are now rallying behind his nomination. [Politico - Sam Clovis factor: Scientist? No. Skilled in the science of influencing Trump? Yes.](#)

Talking Points: Jim Bridenstine

- President Trump's pick for [the next leader of NASA](#) is a fighter pilot who wants Americans to return to the moon but doesn't believe that humans are causing climate change. [NPR - Trump Picks Oklahoma Congressman To Head NASA](#)
- [Rep. Jim Bridenstine](#) of Oklahoma has to be confirmed by the Senate, and the two senators who represent Florida's Space Coast have already [publicly objected](#) to the choice of a politician as head of the space agency.
- Bridenstine is a Republican congressman who was elected in 2012 after working as executive director of the Tulsa Air & Space Museum & Planetarium. He's a veteran Navy combat pilot who served during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our MoCs:

- Senator Cantwell has spoken out in opposition of the nomination of Clovis, asking that we tell Trump to stop politicizing scientific research.

To Do:

- Thank Senator Cantwell for speaking out in opposition to the nomination of Sam Clovis. Ask her to vote against Bridenstine as leader of NASA
- Ask Senator Murray to vote against both Clovis as the US Department of Agriculture's Chief Scientist, and Bridenstine as leader of NASA.

4. The Russian Investigation Update

Summary: The Russia investigation continues. Russia used Facebook to organize anti-immigrant rallies in the US. Putin wanted normalized relationships with the US. Flynn backed the building of numerous nuclear reactors in the Middle East, again without declaring the relationship or income.

Talking Points:

- Mueller wants to question six White House (WH) aides who were involved when Sally Yates told the White House that Michael Flynn was compromised by the Russians: Reince Priebus, Sean Spicer, Don McGahn and his deputy James Burnham, Hope Hicks and Josh Raffel (who works closely with Jared Kushner).
- Mueller seeks interviews with WH staff who were aboard Air Force One when the initial misleading statement over Donald Jr.'s Trump Tower meeting with a Russian lawyer statement was drafted. This appears to be part of an obstruction of justice investigation.
- Trump campaign has begun turning over documents to Mueller. The campaign had previously turned over documents to congressional investigators. [The Daily Beast - The Trump Campaign Has Begun Turning Over Documents to Mueller](#)
- Russian networks RT, funded by the Russian government, is under investigation by the Justice Department for disseminating propaganda in the US. [Yahoo - Russian news agency RT now under scrutiny as foreign agent](#)
- FBI has obtained internal emails from Sputnik, a Russian government news agency that also operates in the US, and is investigating whether Sputnik must register as a foreign agent. [Yahoo - Sputnik, the Russian news agency, is under investigation by the FBI](#)
- Putin hoped for broad reconciliation with US after 2016 election, as reported by BuzzFeed based on a document sent from the Russian government to the State Department in March. It called for wholesale restoration of diplomatic, military and intelligence channels severed between the US and Russia after Russia's military intervention in Ukraine and Syria. They proposed the changes to take place immediately, ignoring Russia's election hacking and the Ukraine crisis. [BuzzFeed - Russia Sought A Broad Reset With Trump, Secret Document Shows](#)
- Russia used Facebook (FB) events to organize anti-immigrant rallies in the US, including an August 2016 anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim rally in Twin Falls, Idaho. The Idaho rally was hosted by "SecuredBorders", and its FB page had 133,000 followers when it was closed last month. FB confirmed that the Russian-organized events were promoted with paid ads, which were likely seen by between 23 and 70 million people. [The Daily Beast - Russia Used Facebook Events to Organize Anti-Immigrant Rallies on U.S. Soil](#)
- Politico reported that Michael Flynn backed a private-sector proposal to build numerous nuclear reactors in the Middle East during the transition, but did not disclose that he had been paid at least \$25,000 by backers of the proposal. [Politico - Flynn backed for-profit nuclear scheme inside Trump transition](#)

To Do:

- Be prepared to join us in a rapid response event if Trump fires Mueller. The plan will be to meet on the steps of the Insurance Building on Capitol Campus (302 Sid Snyder Ave SW). If the firing occurs prior to 2 pm local time, we will meet on the same day at 5 pm. If the firing occurs after 2 pm local time, we will meet the following day at noon. This will be a national event spear-headed by National Indivisible.

5. Equifax

Summary: The Equifax security breach may have exposed personal information, including names, birthdates and Social Security numbers, of up to 44% of US credit card holders. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB's) arbitration rule, if allowed to go into effect as planned early next year, would prevent companies like Equifax from denying legal remedies to consumers hurt by identity theft and other corporate misconduct.

Talking Points: Arbitration Rule (From 5 Calls)

- On July 10th, the CFPB announced a new rule banning the use of mandatory arbitration clauses to block participation in class action lawsuits. According to the CFPB, this straightforward consumer protection provides a much-needed check on predatory and illegal banking activities by guaranteeing people who are harmed the right to sue as a group.
- Banking contracts (such as those for checking accounts, credit cards) routinely include “mandatory arbitration” clauses, requiring all disputes be handled through private arbitration rather than the court system. As a recent example, Wells Fargo used arbitration clauses to obstruct legal action following the revelation that employees created millions of fraudulent accounts for unwitting consumers.
- Republican leaders quickly denounced the CFPB arbitration rule and have begun to repeal it. The House passed HJR 111, legislation that would overturn the rule. It now awaits a final vote on the Senate floor.

Talking Points: Investigation of Breach

- Orrin Hatch, chair of the Senate Finance Committee, and Ron Wyden, ranking member, sent a letter to Equifax, asking 13 questions. The questions will help them understand the data breach, including what data was exposed, how the hack was detected, whether the firm has adequate systems for detecting and countering intrusions and why there was a six-week delay in notifying impacted individuals and the public about the hack.
- The NYT reported that Equifax, bowing to public pressure, agreed to waive all fees through Nov 21 for those who want to freeze their credit files. It also agreed to refund any fees paid since Sept 7, though it is unclear whether this would be automatic.

To Do:

- Call our senators and ask them to vote NO on HJR 111
- Script: Hello, my name is [NAME] and I’m a constituent from [CITY]. I’m calling to ask Senator [NAME] to vote no on House Joint Resolution 111, which overturns the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s recent Arbitration Rule. As highlighted by the response to the recent Equifax security breach, allowing consumers to take group action against financial institutions is a necessary check against predatory, risky and illegal banking practices.
- Investigate how to protect yourself from identity theft.
 - [Identifytheft.gov - Info Lost or Stolen](http://Identifytheft.gov)
 - Equifax is offering free services to all U.S. consumers due to the breach. Visit Equifax’s website, <http://www.equifaxsecurity2017.com>.
 - Consider placing a [credit freeze](#). A credit freeze makes it harder for someone to open a new account in your name.

6. DeVos' New Sexual Assault Rules (from 5 Calls)

Summary: In a shameless speech at George Mason University on September 7th, Secretary Betsy DeVos announced that she will change how the Department of Education enforces Title IX ("9") federal guidelines with respect to campus sexual assault.

Talking Points:

- The 2011 guidelines, outlined in a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL), defines schools' responsibilities in building a safe and responsive campus, clarifies the requirement that schools must independently investigate reports of sexual violence between students, and defines "preponderance of the evidence" as the burden of proof necessary when adjudicating sexual assault cases on campus. Calling this "overreach" and "weaponizing" by the federal government, DeVos will now roll back these vital protections.
- Since 2011, many universities have overhauled their programs for reporting and investigating sexual assault, educating campuses on sex discrimination and providing support for victims of sexual violence. A rushed roll-back of these rules by the administration sends a terrible message to students and administrators and would undermine the protections universities, students and activists have worked so hard to implement. Earlier in the summer, 20 state Attorneys General wrote to Secretary DeVos to strongly oppose any roll-back of the Title IX protections and expressed concerns about the continuing role of Assistant Secretary Jackson.

Our MoCs:

- [Seattle PI - Connelly: Murray rips DeVos' new sexual assault rules](#)

To Do:

- Call the Department of Education at 800-872-5327
 - Script: Hi, my name is [name], and I live in [city, state]. I'm calling to urge Secretary DeVos to maintain the critical Title 9 protections for survivors of campus sexual assault as guided by the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter. This is a serious and troubling epidemic, and it is vital that schools maintain strong policy guidelines to protect its vulnerable students. Thank you.

Articles:

- [NYT - Betsy DeVos Says She Will Rewrite Rules on Campus Sex Assault](#)

7. Don't Let Trump Trample on Civil Liberties (from Indivisible National)

Talking Points:

- We stand in solidarity with those impacted by the horrific act of violence in London Friday morning. We also condemn Trump's knee-jerk rhetoric and irresponsible exploitation of this moment to tweet about the need to be "nasty" and not "politically correct." He even used the tragedy to promote expanding his bigoted Muslim ban. Fear is no excuse to trample rights.
- On October 10, the Supreme Court will be hearing two cases about the Muslim and refugee bans, Trump v. Int'l Refugee Assistance Project and Trump v. Hawaii. The Supreme Court will decide whether the executive order from the Trump Administration that temporarily bans travel from six Muslim-majority countries (Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen) and suspends the refugee admissions process violates the Establishment Clause and Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution.
- The Muslim and refugee bans are discriminatory, unconstitutional and inhumane in the same vein as the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Japanese American incarceration, and special registration after 9/11. We must remember history and raise our voices, both in the critical weeks before the SCOTUS hearing and in the months ahead. Join us in declaring No. Muslim. Ban. Ever.
- [Find out how you can take action to resist the Muslim ban on the website nomuslimbanever.org.](http://nomuslimbanever.org)

To Do:

- We ask you to join us to declare #NoMuslimBanEver between September 5th and October 10th by raising awareness through events, forums, dialogues, and actions, and by attending the national mobilization on October 10 in Washington, D.C. The #NoMuslimBanEver campaign is a grassroots awareness and mobilization effort that will happen in the weeks leading up to and on October 10, 2017.
- The campaign is being organized and led by the following organizations, Asian Americans Advancing Justice –Asian Law Caucus, Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)'s San Francisco-Bay Area chapter, MPower Change, and the MASA Organizing team, in partnership with allies including refugee rights groups, Indivisible, and others.

8. Other Issues

a) Funding the Wall

- [NYT - New Round of Contracts Is Issued for Border Wall Prototypes](#)
- [Newsweek - Unlike the Trump-Russia Investigation, Few American Care About Building the Border Wall](#)

b) Environment

- Hurricanes
 - Hurricane Harvey was the biggest rain event recorded in the continental US, with 52 inches of rain falling in some areas in less than a week, equal to all the rain that fell in the last seven months in Olympia in a very wet winter.
 - Hurricane Irma is the most powerful Atlantic hurricane ever recorded. As it moved through the Caribbean on the way to Florida, it sustained winds of 185 miles per hour (mph) and gusts of well over 200 mph. While no single hurricane can be attributed to climate change, it has the effect of increasing the intensity of storms and their wind speed as waters warm and the atmosphere carries more water vapor. There is already 4% more water vapor over the ocean than 20 years ago, and water temperatures in the southern Atlantic and Caribbean are higher.
- Fires
 - There are massive wildfires all over the US and Canadian west, with over a million acres burning in Montana, over two million in BC, massive fires in Washington, Oregon and California. In Washington, there are fires on the east side of the Cascades near the Canadian border, near Cle Elem (Jolly Mountain), near Mt. Rainier (Norse Peak), the western Columbia Gorge is on fire (Eagle Creek), as is the Chetko Bar wilderness in southern Oregon and there are fires near Yosemite and Los Angeles, too.
 - Western fires were caused both by the extremely hot summer, with the last 90 days exceptionally warm and dry, and by the large amount of fuel for the fire. That fuel resulted both from a 20th Century focus on fire suppression and from the very wet winter this past year, which resulted in more plant growth to fuel fires.
 - There is an exponential relationship between fire and aridity (caused by heat). Every degree of warming does more to promote fire than the previous degree. The western US is 2.7 degrees F hotter than it would be in the absence of climate change, in addition to this summer's heat wave. The area of annual burned forest in the Northwest has increased by 5,000 percent since the early 1970's. Despite this increase, only 10% of the forests have burned. By the end of the century, the western US is projected to warm by another 6.3 degrees F, with a massive increase in fires likely.

c) Voting Rights

- The New York Times reported that the Supreme Court, split 5-4, put on hold the lower court rulings that would have required Texas to redo some of its congressional and legislative districts before the 2018 election.
 - The lower courts had found that Texas districts were designed to minimize minority voting representation and strength.
 - The 5-4 Supreme Court vote was along conservative-liberal lines.
 - The court in San Antonio had ruled that a congressional district including Corpus Christi denied Hispanic voters the opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice. The court rejected a second congressional district stretching from San Antonio to Austin, saying race had been the primary factor in drawing it. In a separate decision, the court found similar flaws in several state legislative districts.

d) The Budget and Taxes

- Trump deal with Democrats a hurdle for tax reform: Politico reported that Republican anger at Trump's agreement to a three-month debt limit was that it made it harder to complete their tax cut. That is because they may have to deal with contentious appropriations fights, rewriting the tax code and raising

the debt ceiling all in the same month. It also means Congress would have to approve tax cuts that would raise the deficit while also raising the borrowing limit. The timing would also increase Democratic leverage, because their votes would be needed for raising the debt limit and likely also for passing some appropriations bills because some more conservative members would not vote for them. Democrats worry Republicans would pass massive tax cuts that would create more pressure to cut Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

- McConnell says there will be no December debt ceiling vote: Politico reported that there will be no vote to raise the debt ceiling in December. He said that he expects the Treasury to use the extraordinary measures it has used in the past to put off the need for such a vote into 2018. The Treasury might be able to put that vote off until March. McConnell's goal is to delink the debt limit vote from votes on budget issues as a way to reduce Democratic leverage in December. Democratic votes have been needed to pass debt ceiling increases in recent years as very conservative House and Senate Republicans have refused to vote for increasing the debt ceiling without meeting other (often politically difficult) policy goals. However, Democratic votes have also been needed to pass appropriations bills in recent years for the same reason. It is unclear how long the debt ceiling vote can be put off because of massive spending needed to respond to Harvey and Irma damage.
- Republicans plan to release tax cut details in two weeks: The Washington Post reported that the White House and House and Senate Republicans plan to release more details of their tax cut plan in the week of September 25 and they are pushing for a budget agreement that could smooth its passage. It is still possible that the tax plan would not be revenue neutral but would cut government revenues. But they still will not present the text of a tax bill. That will be drafted by the House Ways and Means Committee later. There is still no agreement between the White House, the House and the Senate Republicans. The disagreements include: how low to cut the corporate tax rate (with the White House wanting 15% and congressional Republicans arguing for the low to mid-20% from the current 35%); whether tax cuts will be retroactive to all income earned in 2017; what proportion of the changes should be temporary and what permanent. They have also not agreed on what current tax breaks would be eliminated to offset the revenue loss.
- House and Senate budget writers will need to reach an agreement in mid-October on 2018 budget level. They need to pass matching budget resolutions to trigger reconciliation, allowing them to pass a tax package with only 50 votes in the Senate. Many conservatives have been unwilling to agree to a budget until they see the full details of the tax package.

e) Russia undercutting North Korea sanctions

- The WA Post reported that Russian smugglers are providing North Korea with shipments of oil and other key supplies. These exports are taking place as China is beginning to place economic pressure on North Korea. There has been a jump in tanker traffic this spring between North Korean ports and Vladivostok in Russia.

f) Politics and Re-Elections

- Charlie Dent, Pennsylvania Republican moderate, has decided not to seek reelection in 2018. Dent was co-chair of the moderate Tuesday Group in the House. He represents the district that includes Allentown and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He served in the Pennsylvania legislature and in Congress for 27 years. Trump carried the district by 8 points in 2016 while Dent carried it by 20 points. Dent is chairman of the appropriations subcommittee on military construction and veterans affairs.
- Dave Trott, moderate Michigan Republican, announced September 11 that he would not seek reelection in 2018 after three House terms.
- Dave Reichert, Republican from Washington state, announced he would not run again last week.

g) White Supremacy

- [NYT - House Democrats Seek Committee to Combat White Supremacy](#)

h) Economy

- Median income finally above 1999 level: The New York Times and Washington Post reported that the Census Bureau reported that US median income rose to its highest level in 2016, but was the first time it increased beyond its level in 1999. Median household income rose to \$59,039 in 2016, a 3.2% increase from 2015.
- The poverty rate fell to 12.7%, nearly its level in 2007 before the recession. The top fifth of earners earned more than half of all overall income, which was a record. The median African-American household earned \$39,490, compared with over \$65,041 for whites, over \$47,675 for Hispanics and over \$81,431 for Asians.
- The rate of those without health insurance declined slightly in 2016 to 8.8%.
- Today's full-time year-round male worker earns a median of \$52,000. That is roughly what a similar male worker would have earned in 1972 in constant dollars. Full-time, year-round working women's earnings have increased in that time period, and are now at their highest level on record, though their median is now \$48,000. The bottom 20% of income-earners earn less than in 1999 in constant dollars.

i) Trump weighs more aggressive Iran strategy

- Reuters reported that Trump is weighing a new strategy that would allow more aggressive US responses, to its proxy forces in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon, and its support for militant groups. The proposal was prepared by Secretary of Defense Mattis, National Security Advisor McMaster and other top officials. It was presented to Trump September 8. It could be agreed to and made public by the end of September. If agreed to, Trump would set broad objectives but leave the details to the military and diplomats.
- The goal is to increase pressure on Iran to curb its ballistic missile programs and support for militant groups. It also targets cyber-espionage and nuclear proliferation. The proposal would include more aggressive US interception of Iranian arms shipments to Houthi rebels in Yemen and Palestinian groups in Gaza and Sinai.

j) Military

- Trump review leads towards proposed mini-nuclear munitions: Politico reported that a Trump review is leading toward proposing smaller, more tactical nuclear weapons that could make the use of nuclear weapons more likely. This would be a major reversal of policy under the Obama Administration.

k) Portland OR and Vancouver WA White Supremacists and Counter-Protest Demonstrations

- There were demonstrations by far-right and counter-protestors in Portland and Vancouver on September 10, both of which ended with some violence. The far-right Patriot Prayer group scheduled a march in downtown Portland, but moved it to Vancouver at the last minute. Hundreds of counter-protestors showed up at the original site, as did a small number of Patriot Prayer supporters. Most of the protesters on both sides were peaceful, but some antifa (anti-fascist) activists lit smoke bombs and threw things at police and some fought with some of the Patriot Prayer supporters. Police fired pepper spray and made seven arrests. They later allowed peaceful protesters to reconvene.
- In Vancouver, the main Patriot Prayer group had a 150-person rally and there was a larger group of counter-protestors, with police between them. There was minor violence and two arrests. But later in the day, a truck swerved toward a group of counter-protestors and then backed up at them. The driver was detained but not arrested. A motorcyclist tried to attack some counter-protestors, but was stopped by police. Counter-protestors reported another truck threatened them at least twice, but police did not find the truck or driver.