

## **Issue Update – January 5**

### [Wa Po - We're seeing institutions start to waver as constraints to Trump's impulses](#)

This may be the most consequential news day in quite a while.

The Wolff Book confirm as much of what we knew about Trump. That he does not read, is addicted to FOX News, and lives in his own reality. And that the people who work for him know this and know that he is not qualified or competent to do the job. Then we learned that the FBI is investigating the Clinton foundation. Which means he is investigating and props direction opponent. Finally had the chairman of the judiciary calling for indictment of Christopher Steele. In effect trying to criminalize someone identify the links between Trump and the Russians.

If this is not a constitutional crisis, I don't know what is. Steve Hodes

## **Issue Update—January 3**

### **Budget**

***Bipartisan budget and DACA talks begin January 3:*** Politico reported that Democratic and Republican congressional leaders will meet with OMB director Mick Mulvaney on January 3 to try to put together a budget deal to avert a government shutdown January 19 and to focus on funding levels. A final deal would also likely address the future of DACA recipients and CHIP program funding.

The fact that the meeting is with Mulvaney rather than Chief of Staff Kelly suggests the White House will be taking a hard line, making compromise with Democrats difficult. Republicans have been proposing demands for a DACA fix that Democrats will not be able to accept, including funding for a border wall, ending the immigration lottery, and preventing family reunification, which is responsible for half of all immigration.

Republicans want to raise the spending caps put in place in 2011 in order to substantially increase military spending. Democrats are willing to agree to more military spending but want to maintain the provision in current law that requires parity between military spending and non-military discretionary spending.

***Democratic positions on a budget deal:*** Democratic votes have been required to pass budget legislation in the House every time since the 2010 election and are required in the Senate (where the budget will require 60 votes). The New York Times reported that Democrats are demanding protection for DACA recipients and a path to citizenship for them and a full five years of funding for CHIP, the program that funds health care for nine million children. They remain committed to parity between military and domestic discretionary spending, so that Republican goals to increase military spending be accompanied by comparable increases in domestic spending. They are also pushing for broader intervention to combat the opioid epidemic, more funds for veterans health care and disaster funding that supports California, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands along with Florida and the Houston area. However, Senate Democrats running in Republican states do not want a government shutdown, worried that they could be blamed. While

Republicans are pushing a stand-alone DACA/border security bill, Democrats fear that such a bill would die in the House.

## **Immigration**

***Difficulty resolving DACA in the budget deal:*** The Washington Post reports that Trump appears to want a deal to allow Dreamers to remain in the US, but knows his base opposes it. His response has been to link it to other immigration issues he brought up during the campaign, such as funding for a border wall. This combination is supported by members of the House Freedom Caucus, but not by House Republicans from more moderate districts, who would prefer a simple bill legalizing Dreamers. Democrats have already agreed to include border security enhancements, but oppose funding for a wall and oppose provisions that will degrade the security of other immigrants, such as funding for detention centers, staff to arrest immigrants far from the border, or to substantially change US immigration law. This mix substantially complicates efforts at a DACA agreement.

***Three former Homeland Security officials urge faster action on DACA:*** Three former homeland security secretaries warned congressional leaders and officials of both parties on January 3 that the window for legislative action to protect undocumented immigrants brought to the country as children will close by the middle of January, months before a period outlined by the White House. The letter was signed by Jeh Johnson and Janet Napolitano, homeland security secretaries under President Barack Obama, and by Michael Chertoff, a homeland security secretary under President George W. Bush. They said that the significant administrative requirements for implementation, not to mention the need for certainty for employers and DACA recipients, require authorization well before March, when all DACA authority will end.

They warned that they knew of the number of changes that must be enforced to allow applications by DACA recipients who would apply to stay in the United States. There needs to be proper time to train people to ensure that applications are properly reviewed. They said that when DACA was established, it took nearly three months before the first applications were approved. They estimated that Congress would need to pass a bill by January 19 to guarantee enough time for the applications to be processed before the March 5 date that the Trump administration set. They said that establishing this new program in 45 days would be an difficult accomplishment done in record time.

## **Russia connection**

***Glenn Simpson New York Times piece:*** The two former Wall Street Journal reporters who founded opposition research firm Fusion GPS, Glenn Simpson and Peter Fritsch wrote an opinion piece in the New York Times to clear their names of suspicions spread by conservative media and House and Senate Republicans and to explain their concerns about Trump and Russia. They called for the Senate Finance Committee to release the transcript of their ten hours of testimony. They complained about selective leaks of their testimony. The two had testified for a total of 21 hours in front of three congressional committees. Their key points were that the Steele dossier was not the trigger for the FBI Russia investigation. It only corroborated reports the FBI had from other sources.

In their hearings, they suggested that investigators look into bank records of Deutsche Bank and others funding Trump businesses. They said that they found widespread evidence that Mr. Trump and his organization had worked with a wide array of dubious Russians in arrangements

that often raised questions about money laundering. They explained how, from their past journalistic work in Europe, they were familiar with the Paul Manafort's coziness with Moscow and his financial ties to Russian oligarchs close to Vladimir Putin.

They hired Christopher Steele, a highly respected Russia expert without informing him whom we were working for and they gave him no specific direction beyond the question: Why did Trump repeatedly seek to do deals in a notoriously corrupt police state that most serious investors shun?

They said they were shocked by the answers they got. Steele's sources in Russia, who were not paid, reported on an extensive (and now confirmed) effort by Russia to help elect Trump president. Steele saw this as a crime in progress and decided he needed to report it to the FBI/

They said they did not discuss that decision with their clients or anyone else. After the election, Steele decided to share his intelligence with John McCain via an emissary and they helped with that. The goal was to alert the US national security community to an attack on the US by Russia. They said they did not share the dossier with BuzzFeed and were dismayed when it was published in full in January 2017.

**Trump New York Times interview:** The New York Times reported that Trump said that he believes Robert Mueller will treat him fairly. He said, however, that the sooner the investigation is complete, the better it is for the country.

Asked whether he would order the Justice Department to reopen the investigation into Hillary Clinton's emails, Mr. Trump appeared to remain focused on the Russia investigation. "I have absolute right to do what I want to do with the Justice Department. But for purposes of hopefully thinking I'm going to be treated fairly, I've stayed uninvolved with this particular matter."

Trump repeated his assertion that Democrats invented the Russia allegations "as a hoax, as a ruse, as an excuse for losing an election." He said that "everybody knows" his associates did not collude with the Russians, even as he insisted that the "real stories" are about Democrats who worked with Russians during the 2016 campaign. "There's been no collusion. But I think he's going to be fair," Mr. Trump said of Mr. Mueller. Trump did not directly answer a question about whether he thought that Eric H. Holder Jr., President Barack Obama's first attorney general, was more loyal than Mr. Sessions had been. "I don't want to get into loyalty, but I will tell you that, I will say this: Holder protected President Obama. Totally protected him," Mr. Trump said. He added: "When you look at the things that they did, and Holder protected the president. And I have great respect for that, I'll be honest."

**How Russia probe began:** The New York Times reported that the Russia investigation began as the result of a conversation in London between George Papadopoulos and Alexander Downer, Australia's top diplomat in Britain. The conversation took place after a night of heavy drinking in the Kensington Wine Rooms, an upscale London bar in May 2016. Papadopoulos told Downer that Russia had political dirt on Hillary Clinton. Downer passed this information to his superiors. Papadopoulos had been told that the Russians had emails that could damage Hillary Clinton three weeks earlier by Joseph Mifsud, a Maltese professor in London with contacts with the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He had previously gotten Papadopoulos in contact with a series of Russian government officials and others connected to the Kremlin.

When emails from the Democratic National Committee became public two months later, Australian officials passed Downer's comments on to their American counterparts. This was a key element that led the FBI to open a counterintelligence investigation into Russian

involvement in the 2016 election. A trip to Moscow by Carter Page, another Trump advisor, also raised FBI concerns. The US had been told by the intelligence services of European allies back in the fall of 2015 of Russian links to Trump campaign aides and their meetings in Europe.

Nearly a month later, Christopher Steele began sending the memos he was compiling for Fusion GPS (funded by the DNC and the Clinton campaign) to an FBI contact in Rome because he was alarmed at the connections he was finding between Trump, his campaign and the Russians. The FBI later received Steele's full dossier from John McCain. This led FBI agents to interview Steele in October 2016 in London.

***Paul Manafort sues Mueller and Rod Rosenstein:*** CNN and The Hill reported that Paul Manafort has sued Special Counsel Robert Mueller and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein in federal district court in DC. He is challenging the broad authority of Mueller and that the Justice Department violated the law in appointing Mueller. The suit challenges Mueller's decision to charge Manafort with alleged crimes that are not directly connected to the 2016 campaign, but rather relate to lobbying work Manafort and his deputy did for a former Russia-friendly government in Ukraine. Manafort asked the court to narrow Mueller's authority, to reject his appointment and to dismiss the indictment Mueller has brought against him and his deputy.

The lawsuit alleges that Rod Rosenstein and Mueller have unlawfully exceeded the authorities allowed under the law governing special counsel appointments. The suit contends that the order Rosenstein signed to appoint Mueller "exceeds the scope of Mr. Rosenstein's authority to appoint special counsel as well as specific restrictions on the scope of such appointments." The focus is on a part of the Rosenstein order that says that Mueller may investigate "any matters that arose or may arise directly from the investigation." The Manafort suit alleges that that goes beyond what the law allows Rosenstein to empower Mueller to do. The Rosenstein order gives Mueller "carte blanche to investigate and pursue criminal charges in connection with anything he stumbles across while investigating, no matter how remote from the specific matter identified as the subject of the appointment order," the lawsuit alleges.

***Trump and Bannon:*** The Guardian reported that Steven Bannon was quoted in a new book by Michael Wolff ([Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House](#)) as suggesting that Donald Trump Jr., Jared Kushner and Paul Manafort had been treasonous and unpatriotic for meeting with Russians offering incriminating information on Hillary Clinton in June 2016 in Trump Tower and saying they should have called the FBI. Bannon also predicted that the Mueller investigation would ultimately center on money laundering. Trump responded to reports about the book with a tweet, saying when Bannon was fired, "he not only lost his job, he lost his mind."

## **Environment**

***Trump Interior Department rescinds fracking rules:*** The Washington Post reported that the Trump Interior Department rescinded a 2015 Obama administration rule that would have set new environmental limits on hydraulic fracturing (known as "fracking") on public lands. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regulation has been tied up in court with a Wyoming federal district court finding that it exceeded the agency's authority. As a result, the regulation had not taken effect. It would have tightened standards for well construction and wastewater management, required the disclosure of the chemicals contained in fracking fluids, and probably driven up the cost for many fracking activities.

## **Disasters**

***Half of Puerto Rico without power three months after Maria:*** The New York Times reported that over three months since Hurricane Maria struck, over 1.5 million people, half of the island's population, still are without electric power. The Times quotes experts as saying that some parts of Puerto Rico are not expected to get power back until spring. Part of the explanation of why power restoration has been slow because of the sheer scale and complexity of the damage. Much of the island's 2,400 miles off transmission lines, 30,000 miles of distribution lines and 342 substations were damaged in the storm. Some materials ordered in October are only now beginning to arrive. Some private firms that had committed to help get electric service back will only arrive in January, with 1,500 workers expected then.

## **Voting rights**

***Trump abolishes commission studying alleged voter fraud:*** The New York Times and Washington Post reported that Trump announced that he is disbanding the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity, a controversial commission studying alleged voter fraud that became mired in federal lawsuits, including from one of its own members, and faced resistance from states that accused it of overreach. The commission met only twice. It faced a series of lawsuits seeking to curb its authority. Democrats claimed that it was stacked to recommend voting restrictions favorable to Republicans and that were intended to suppress the votes of minorities and young people. The White House blamed the ending of the commission on the refusal of many states to provide voter data sought by the commission and the cost of ongoing federal lawsuits.

The commission panel had been nominally chaired by Vice President Pence and led by Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, a Republican who has aggressively sought to prosecute alleged voter fraud in his state and who went around the country to Republicans talking about how to successfully suppress minority voting. Trump has signed an executive order asking the Department of Homeland Security to review voter fraud issues and determine what the administration will do next.

## **Education**

***As flow of foreign students slows, US universities feel fiscal effects:*** The New York Times reported that, just as higher education recovered from the 2009 recession, campuses across the US have been forced to make new rounds of cuts, this time brought on by a loss of international students. Schools in the Midwest have been particularly hard hit, particularly some public universities that had come to rely heavily on tuition from foreign students, who generally pay more than in-state students. The downturn follows a decade of major growth in foreign student enrollment, which now tops 1 million at US colleges and educational training programs, and supplies \$39 billion in revenue. International enrollment began to flatten in 2016, partly because of changing conditions abroad and the increasing lure of schools in Canada, Australia and other English-speaking countries. Since President Trump was elected, his rhetoric and more restrictive views on immigration have made the United States even less attractive to international students. The Trump administration is more closely scrutinizing visa applications, indefinitely banning travel from some countries and making it harder for foreign students to remain in the United States after graduation.

Nationwide, the number of new foreign students declined an average of 7% this past fall, according to preliminary figures from a survey of 500 colleges by the Institute of International

Education. Nearly half of the campuses surveyed reported declines. Now that the revenue stream appears to be diminishing, the financial outlook may be dire enough to weigh down the bond ratings of some schools, making it more expensive for them to borrow money, according to Moody's Investors Service. Last month, Moody's changed its credit outlook for higher education to "negative" from "stable."

The shift comes just as some states also are experiencing a drop in domestic students, partly the result of a decline in birthrates two decades ago. This year, the number of domestic undergraduate students dropped 224,000, or 1%, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. An increasingly diverse population in that age group means that more of the students come from low-income families in which no one has ever gone to college, also presenting recruitment challenges for universities, with affordability the biggest issue.

## **International**

***China offers tax incentives to US companies to stay:*** The New York Times reported that it would temporarily exempt foreign companies from paying tax on their earnings, to try to keep US firms from taking their profits out of China after the passage of the Republican tax bill. However, to be eligible for the exemption, foreign firms must invest those earnings in sectors encouraged by China's government, including railways, mining, technology and agriculture. The measure is retroactive from January 1, 2017. Many American and European companies, which have had to navigate tricky laws and been subject to forced technology transfers, have complained in recent years that China is becoming an increasingly difficult place to do business. Despite China's reputation as a low-cost manufacturing hub, it charges high levels of taxes, imposing a standard corporate rate of 25%, in addition to required social security contributions that increase their tax burden beyond that in many other countries. The tax changes in the US have fueled Chinese concerns in Beijing that American companies will move their operations outside China, or repatriate much of their earnings. The larger worry is that a significant repatriation of foreign earnings could set off a broader capital flight, and weaken the renminbi, the Chinese currency. Some firms have already said that they would seek to repatriate China earnings to the US and were considering doing so quickly to minimize the risk of being subject to potential Chinese capital controls.

***Iranian demonstrations:*** On December 28, a group of people began demonstrating in Mashad, Iran's second largest city and a holy city for Shiites. This demonstration began against price increases for eggs and other basic foodstuffs in recent months. They were accelerated by the release by President Rouhani's government of an unusually transparent budget that showed the budget for the Revolutionary Guard and for clerics and upcoming food and fuel price increases. Social media played a role in their rapid spread.

The demonstrations rapidly spread to a wide range of small cities, small towns and villages around the country. They are much smaller than the demonstrations against election fraud in 2009 centered in large cities and focused on college-educated Iranians. These demonstrations were composed of the poor, unemployed and working people in the regime's base areas in smaller cities and rural areas. Demonstrators were equally angry at moderate President Rouhani and the lack of economic progresss and at Supreme Leader Khamenei, the Revolutionary Guards and Iranian involvement abroad in Syria, Lebanon, Gaza and Yemen. They have been going on for a week with at least 20 dead and hundreds arrested, but show no signs of abating.

## **Politics**

**Orrin Hatch to retire from the Senate:** The Washington Post reported that Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah will retire from the Senate at the end of his term in January 2019. Hatch, 83, is president pro tempore of the Senate and the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. Some Republicans expect Mitt Romney to run for Hatch's seat, though he has not made any public statements on it. As president pro tem, Hatch is fourth in line for the presidency, behind Pence and Paul Ryan.

**Al Franken retires from the Senate, Doug Jones and Tina Smith sworn:** On January 3, Al Franken retired from the Senate after allegations, some that he denied, of sexual misconduct with a number of women. Tina Smith, Minnesota's lieutenant governor and Governor Mark Dayton's former chief of staff, was sworn in as his replacement, accompanied by former Vice-President Mondale. Doug Jones of Alabama was also sworn in to the Senate, accompanied by former Vice-President Biden.

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**Overall Plea:** *more and more Trump & Republican initiatives will be revealed in the next few months. We need your help to monitor the broad range of issues. If there is an issue that you'd like to monitor and inform this group, please contact Barb!*

## **1. DACA fix, CHIP extension and the next budget bill:**

- Congress must pass yet another funding bill by midnight on Friday, January 19 to prevent a government shutdown. Democratic votes have been required to pass every significant government funding bill since 2011. This is because the most extreme conservative of House Republicans (roughly 40 members) have been unwilling to vote for bills that did not sharply cut government spending, while the remainder of the Republican caucus would not agree with such sharp funding cuts. In the current situation, the budget will also require 60 votes in the Senate, while there are now only 51 Republicans.
- There still has not been any fix to ensure that nearly 800,000 DACA recipients (the Dreamers) can remain legally in the US and that they have a path to citizenship. There is a bipartisan effort to draft stand-alone legislation in the Senate, but its fate is uncertain in the Senate and it almost certainly cannot pass the House. House leadership and Freedom Caucus members have continued to insist that any assistance for Dreamers be paired with draconian immigration restrictions. They insist DACA not be addressed in the budget. Dreamers

themselves insist that a fix for DACA not be at the expense of other undocumented immigrants, such as their parents or relatives.

- Trump is saying that a DACA fix must be linked with funding for a border wall, with funding for more immigration officers well beyond the border and with the elimination of the visa lottery. He sometimes also insists on eliminating family reunification immigration, which accounts for half of all immigration. Trump appears to be seeking a fight with Democrats over immigration, both to energize his base for 2018 and to force Democrats who will be running in areas that voted for him to either break with other Democrats or make themselves more vulnerable in the fall election.
- The December 22 budget bill includes what was advertised as a three-month fix for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), but it did not provide nearly enough funding for that period. The funding that was provided will run out in early February. The program provides health insurance for 9 million children around the country. Democrats have also insisted on parity between military and domestic discretionary funding, agreeing to higher military spending only if it is paired with additional domestic spending for the many underfunding domestic priorities.
- In the December budget, Democrats were reluctant to go insist on a DACA fix or long-term CHIP funding if the alternative would have been a government shutdown. Democrats have feared that insisting on them in a budget bill could lead them to be blamed for a shutdown.
- While protection for undocumented immigrants does not have majority public support, protections for Dreamers are broadly supported. The CHIP program also has strong public support. The public also supports funding for many domestic programs that are currently underfunded. There is a strong public case to be made for standing strong for these priorities.. There are 23 more Republicans than Democrats. If Democrats refuse to vote for the budget and it fails, it cannot be their fault. In the Senate, Republicans still control the chamber.

- ***Action steps:***

- a) Call or email our members. Ask them to push hard to include a fix for DACA and for CHIP in the January budget bill and for continued parity between military and domestic discretionary spending. Kicking the can for another month or two will either mean no protection for Dreamers or additional draconian immigration measures. They must also show toughness if they are to retain the health insurance of millions of children and protect nearly 800,000 Dreamers and protecting the health insurance of 9 million children. The budget is the only dependable leverage Democrats have and they must be willing to use it.

## **2. Firing Robert Mueller/firing Rod Rosenstein to limit the investigation:**

- There has been a drumbeat of attacks in the last three weeks against Robert Mueller, the FBI, and the Justice Department by conservative media and House and some Senate Republican conservatives, including committee chairs. They

have worked to try to discredit the investigation and have spread elaborate lies and conspiracy theories to justify them.

- There is increasing concern that Trump will try to fire Mueller by firing Rod Rosenstein or Jeff Sessions in the early months of 2018 to install a more pliable person to oversee the Russia investigation to limit or end it.

**Action steps:**

- a) Call or email our members today to let them know how important it is for them to speak out loudly about this.
- b) Call or email those senators and members of Congress who may still respect the rule of law to urge them to speak out now to warn Trump and their constituents of the danger of firing Mueller, Rosenstein or Sessions or of pardoning key witnesses.

Some possible senators include: Some Republicans include: Richard Burr, Lindsay Graham, Jeff Flake, Roy Blunt, Ben Sasse, Thom Tillis and John McCain (though he is very ill); some Democrats include: Mark Warner, Cory Booker and Christopher Coons and Democratic House members Adam Schiff and Jackie Speier.

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**Remember:** When in doubt, contact your members! For time-sensitive issues, call, email or send a postcard. (Letters take longer to process.)

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Local Members:**

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[www.cantwell.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-maria](http://www.cantwell.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-maria)

**Senator Patty Murray**  
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**Rep. Denny Heck**  
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<http://dennyheck.house.gov/contact/email-me>

### **Republicans to contact**

Note: for email, some senators require inputting a zip code from their state

**John McCain**  
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**Thom Tillis**  
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**Roy Blunt**  
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**Democratic senators to contact**

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**Cory Booker**

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**Christopher Coons**

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**Democratic House members to contact**

**Adam Schiff**

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**Jackie Speier**

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## Your weekly Indivisible Group Leader to-dos:

1. **Tell Democrats it's time to FIGHT for Dreamers.** In December, Senate Democrats passed up TWO big chances to use their leverage to pass a clean DREAM Act by withholding their votes on a pair of spending bills. In 2018, there are no more excuses. The next spending bill vote is January 19 — tell Democrats in the Senate to use the only thing that matters, their vote, to protect immigrant youth. [See how your Senators voted and make a call to hold them accountable here](#).
2. **Get ready to protect the Iran nuclear deal, and stop a war with Iran.** Donald Trump is ratcheting up the rhetoric to sabotage the Iran nuclear deal negotiated by President Obama -- a deal which successfully blocked Iran from getting a nuclear weapon and helped keep the United States out of war. Starting on January 11, Trump will face legal deadlines to trash or continue the deal. [See the state of play on the Iran deal](#), and [make a call to Congress telling them to keep us out of war with Iran](#).
3. **Start the new New Year by working for a New Congress.** We're getting ready for the biggest project Indivisible has ever undertaken: fighting for Indivisible values and progressive leaders in all 435 Congressional districts across the country. [No matter where you are, you can start working to take back Congress by registering voters with our voter registration guide and handy online tool](#).

Dear Indivisible Group Leaders,

2018 is finally here. And it's going to be a big one. We have a lot of work to do -- and a lot of winning to do. Here's a preview of the biggest fights coming up for Indivisible, and what you can do to get plugged in.

### **Don't let Republican (Tax) Scam Artists Show Their Faces Without Hearing From You.**

51 GOP Senators voted to give millionaires, billionaires, and corporations a massive tax cut, to kick 13 million Americans off of their healthcare, and explode the deficit. The tax scam is one of the most unpopular bills ever passed in Congress, and it's not hard to see why. When our members of Congress vote the wrong way, it's crucial that there be real consequences.

**Indivisible groups are organizing “Early Retirement Parties” inside their tax-scum backing MoC’s local offices to show that their vote means they will be out of office, and soon (you can check if your MoC made the scam artist list [here](#)).** So far, parties have included cake, balloons, banners and big pink slips to make our message 100% clear. This is a creative, eye-catching way to hold your Members of Congress accountable -- [get the toolkit for hosting a retirement party here](#), and don't forget to [register your event on our map so we can help you promote it!](#)

*Democrats have another chance to do the right thing on the DREAM Act.*

**Congress kicked the can of funding the government down the road, until January 19.** That means that the issue of keeping the lights on will be one of the first orders of business, along with other issues that have come to be wrapped up in government funding, like the DREAM Act, the Children's Health Insurance Plan, domestic surveillance power, and climate disaster aid.

**Too many Democrats let that opportunity to fight for a DREAM Act pass them by when they had leverage during the spending fight last December** -- even though it was their idea to make that the place to take a stand. ([Find out whether your Democratic Senator was a Dream Hero or a Dream Killer here.](#)) With about 122 Dreamers losing their protection from deportation every day, Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi must follow through on using their leverage on funding the government as they promised they would to stand with Dreamers.

**The next opportunity for Democrats to use their leverage is coming on January 19.** There can be no more excuses in 2018. [Tell Democrats to be DREAM Heroes and use their leverage to fight for immigrant youth.](#)

*Trump could take us closer to war with Iran.*

**The nuclear deal President Obama negotiated with Iran has successfully kept us out of war, and this month**

**Trump may take steps to destroy it.** When Trump decided not to re-certify the deal in October 2017, Congress had the chance to vote to weaken or end the deal itself. Trump threatened to unilaterally throttle the deal next time he got the chance, if Congress didn't act. Congress didn't act, and now Trump has another deadline in January where he could break the deal and take us closer to war with Iran. [Call your Members of Congress to tell them to protect the deal and keep us out of war](#), and [catch up on the state of play for the fate of the Iran deal.](#)

*We must stop the #TrumpTolls*

**Trump and Mitch McConnell have both said they intend to move to infrastructure early this year.** We expect an announcement of some kind of "plan" (probably no more than a page or two of broad concepts) the week of January 15. Democrats in particular need to show up strong and early against what will be a massive toll on middle class families and America's future.

**What we know, based on earlier proposals, is that Trump's infrastructure plan is intended to line the pockets of private companies and foreign investors at the expense of local governments and their own priorities.** Trump plans to induce state and local governments into raising revenue for infrastructure projects by selling off assets (read: privatizing them) or cutting other critical programs by offering some minimal amount of federal funding. That will send taxpayer money into the pockets of private companies twice: once when the government subsidizes private investment in projects through tax credits, and again through the tolls that private companies put in place to pay back their investment. You can read more about a Trump infrastructure plan released earlier this year [here](#), and how Trump's own budget is bad for infrastructure [here](#).

Get ready for this fight to #StopTrumpTolls.

*It's a New Year - let's start the fight for a New Congress*

**There are 303 days until we take back the House (and maybe even the Senate).** Every member of the House is up for re-election, as well as 34 Senators. Local and state elections will be happening too. Every election is a chance for Indivisible groups to grow their power and support their values.

**We've built a whole program focused on participating in this year's election called [Indivisible 435](#).** It already includes guides on election law, and how to make an endorsement in a race. We also have a 50 state voter registration guide where you can get started on the work of bringing out new people to vote against the Trump Administration's disastrous agenda, and to support our values. [\*\*Get started with voter registration, no matter where you live, here.\*\*](#)

New year, same Trump.

[\*\*Click here to see our running list of all the ways Trump is putting us at risk.\*\*](#)

The new year is a chance to take stock and set intentions. Looking back at 2017, you should be proud of everything you accomplished -- and furious at the voices in government determined to ignore the clear will of the American people to protect our communities and our values from attacks by the Trump Administration.

2018 is going to bring a huge wave of progressive power -- one that stops any number of terrible plans by this Administration, and which sweeps their cronies out of office. It is an honor to be a part of it with you. Big things are coming.

In solidarity,

The Indivisible Team