
OLYMPIA INDIVISIBLE

Research Report: January 27, 2018

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National Indivisible Weekly Email to group leaders

Your weekly Indivisible Group Leader to-dos:

1. **Tell Dream Killers in the Senate they should be ashamed and you expect them to fight harder. Thank Dream Heroes who fought alongside immigrant youth.** Last week, Congress voted to fund the government without offering a permanent solution for immigrant youth brought here as children. That's unacceptable. Republicans are responsible for this crisis and need to fix it. Every day they fail to do so, they are helping to advance Trump's nativist, white supremacist agenda. And, Democrats can and should do more -- they must use the power of their vote to protect Dreamers. If your Senator is on the [Dream Hero](#) list, [call 1-855-980-2355 and use this script to thank them](#). If your Senator was a [Dream Killer](#), [call 1-855-980-2355 and hold them accountable using this script](#).
2. **Senate Democrats caved last week, but the House may still be in play on February 8.** Should Paul Ryan need Democratic votes to pass the February 8 spending bill, House Democrats should do what the Senate Democrats could not do: take a stand and refuse to vote for any spending bill that does not provide relief for Dreamers. [See how your Representative voted and give them a call as well](#).
3. **Protect the vote this fall.** Americans have fought and died for the right to vote. But ever since the Supreme Court struck down enforcement of the Voting Rights Act in 2012, the GOP has imposed voter ID laws that would keep millions of people -- primarily people of color -- from voting. [We have a new voter protection guide for fighting voter ID laws that can help you protect people at the polls](#).
4. **Get to know Indivisible435 this Thursday.** Indivisible's Political Director Maria Urbina and Organizing Director Isaac Bloom will host a call for all Indivisible Group Leaders about our plans for the midterm elections this coming Thursday, February 1 at 8pm ET/5pm PT. [RSVP for the Indivisible435 webinar here](#).

Dear Indivisible Group Leaders,

Last September, Donald Trump put the lives of hundreds of thousands of immigrant youth in limbo when he unilaterally eliminated the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. He pushed the government to shut down with his racist theatrics. We always expected most of the GOP to go along with him -- and they did.

What we didn't expect was for so many Democrats to break their promises, too. Last September, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi cut a deal with Trump, without securing relief for Dreamers. Facing backlash, they promised repeatedly for months to use their "leverage" in the upcoming spending bills to get the Dream Act done. They appeared to take a stand last Friday when Democrats refused to give McConnell the votes he needed to pass the spending bill in the Senate. However, after roughly 72 hours, they caved -- despite having massive public support, and without securing relief for Dreamers -- in exchange for a vague promise from serial liar Mitch McConnell to take up DACA after February 8.

Here's what Indivisible Nation BK -- Senator Schumer's hometown group -- had to say about his vote: "We are profoundly disappointed that Senator Schumer accepted a 'deal' with no guarantees about actually passing the Dream Act or providing disaster relief for millions of Americans in the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. We have a unique role as the Brooklyn-based Indivisible group right in Schumer's 'backyard,' and while we understand the complexity of political negotiations, we see Indivisible's job as simple: constantly pushing Schumer to the left of his naturally middle-leaning inclinations."

Let us be clear: this is a vote that let down 800,000 immigrant youth and their families. We need Democrats to do better. It's a huge let down to the DACA recipients who risked so much to leave the shadows based on the

promise of safety from the US government. It also let down the hundreds of Indivisible Group Leaders who fought hard alongside the immigrants in their groups and in their community.

Dream Killers in the Senate must be held accountable. We also need to thank Dream Heroes who stood for immigrant youth. Last week, members of Congress from *both parties* joined with Trump and voted to fund the government without offering a permanent solution for immigrant youth brought here as children. That's unacceptable.

Republicans are responsible for this crisis and need to fix it. Every day they fail to do so, they are helping to advance Trump's racist agenda. And Democrats can and should do more -- they must use the power of their vote to protect Dreamers. If your Senator is on the [Dream Hero list](#), [call 1-855-980-2355 and use this script to thank them](#). If your Senator was a [Dream Killer](#), [call 1-855-980-2355 and hold them accountable using this script](#).

Senate Democrats caved last week, but the House may still be in play on February 8. Should Paul Ryan need Democratic votes to pass the February 8 spending bill, House Democrats should do what the Senate Democrats could not do: take a stand and refuse to vote for any spending bill that does not provide relief for Dreamers. [See how your Representative voted and give them a call as well](#).

The Dream Act fight isn't over -- but it gets a lot tougher from here. Senator Schumer and the Democrats traded away a lot of their leverage, and Trump is in a much stronger position than he was last week. But Indivisible Groups are going to keep sticking with this fight and standing with immigrant youth at risk of deportation. Thank you for all you've done so far.

Protect and spread the vote.

Since the founding of this country, Americans have fought and died for the right to vote. But ever since the Supreme Court struck down enforcement of the Voting Rights Act in 2012, Republicans have imposed voter ID laws designed to prevent people from going to the polls unless they have certain kinds of government-issued identification.

But 21 million eligible voters do not have government issued photo ID. **Voter ID laws target Black and Latino Americans in particular, preventing millions of Americans from exercising their constitutional right to vote.**

Indivisible has partnered with Spread the Vote to write a guide for Indivisible Groups to help everyone vote in the face of voter ID laws. [Use our latest guide to make the difference in your community and fight back against voter ID laws!](#)

Get to know our plan to take back Congress

Indivisible435 is our plan to fight for progressive values and against the Trump agenda in *every single Congressional district* this fall. Indivisible's Political Director Maria Urbina and Organizing Director Isaac Bloom will host a webinar for all Group Leaders about our plans for the upcoming election this Thursday. Join the call to learn what tools group leaders will have to reach voters, and much more!

What: How *your group* can take back Congress with Indivisible435

When: Thursday February 1, 8pm ET/5pm PT

Who: Indivisible's Political Director Maria Urbina and Organizing Director Isaac Bloom

[RSVP for the webinar here](#)

[All of our past webinars are available for you on IndivisibleHQ.](#) If you haven't already registered, just go to [IndivisibleHQ.org](#), use the password WeStand1nd1v1s1ble to access the page, and then create your own login.

This Week on Capitol Hill

There's a ton going on next month -- but we've got you covered. You can check out our new ["What Could Happen in February" blog post](#) for a rundown of everything that could happen this month, and how you can be ready to respond.

Here's what's happening this week on the Hill:

- **Trump will give his first State of the Union.** Congress will assemble in a joint session for the State of the Union address, which is this coming Tuesday, January 30 at 9pm ET/6pm PT. He will likely highlight his infrastructure plan (catered to billionaires and corporations) and immigration framework (written by the White House's chief nativist Stephen Miller) as major items of the speech.
- **The Senate will vote on a 20-week abortion ban.** The "Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act" will likely be brought to the Senate floor for a vote early in the week. It is extremely unlikely to pass because it will require 60 votes in favor to overcome a filibuster. [Call your Senators now and tell them to stand against this attack on women's health.](#)
- **Trump will officially release the framework for his infrastructure plan.** The framework, which leaked this past week, leans heavily on funding from private investors to finance the rebuilding of our nation's infrastructure -- which means weakened labor and environmental standards, higher state and local taxes, and higher costs to repay via tolls and user fees.

Trump Threat Level

Donald Trump is a national security threat. Here's how he's made us less safe this week:

- The New York Times reports that Trump has already tried to fire Special Counsel Mueller, which would be a constitutional crisis. This shows he is not taking seriously Russia's attempts to interfere in our democracy and undermine our institutions. [Here's what you can do right now to prevent Trump from firing Mueller \(and ensure you're ready if he does\).](#)
- Trump is reportedly planning to issue an executive order rescinding Obama-era policy and attempting to keep the detention camp at Guantanamo Bay open forever, condemning those there to die without charge or fair trial. This gives international terrorism groups a recruitment tool and diminishes the US' moral credibility on the global stage.
- The Trump Administration released a bogus "report" on terrorism without even consulting the Department of Homeland Security. This document stretched and misrepresented facts in order to achieve racist conclusions justifying the bigoted Muslim ban. This report comes nearly one year after the original Muslim ban, and shows how this administration continues to inflame racial and religious tensions in the name of "security."

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

It's always tough to see our political allies fail to live up to their own promises. This past week has been especially hard. But as 2018 progresses, we will have more and more opportunities to hold members of Congress accountable -- not just with calls and visits, but at the voting booth as well. The fight over the Dream Act isn't over, and we're going to keep pushing, together.

In solidarity,

The Indivisible Team

Issue Update—January 24

1. Budget

Shutdown starts on January 19, ends on January 22: The federal government had a partial shutdown on January 19. This followed two unsuccessful efforts by senators to present a negotiated deal with Trump.

The first took place last week when Lindsay Graham and Dick Durbin presented a draft agreement to Trump that had been negotiated by a bipartisan group of senators. This deal fell apart in “shithole-gate”, when a group of anti-immigrant members of Congress unexpectedly showed up at the meeting due to intervention by Stephen Miller and Chief of Staff Kelly and at the meeting, Trump said no to the deal. The second took place on January 19 when Chuck Schumer went to the White House and negotiated with Trump. They agreed to a deal that would include \$18 billion in funding for a border wall, in exchange for DACA legalization and a path to citizenship. Two hours later, Kelly called Schumer and said the deal was “too liberal”. Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell had delayed a vote assuming that it would put more pressure on Democrats to give in.

When the shutdown began, both parties tried to blame it on the other. Negotiations continued over the weekend, but there was little public support for the shutdown. On Monday, January 22, the majority of Senate Democrats agreed to end the shutdown, voting for a Republican plan that called for a vote in three weeks rather than four, and a guaranteed vote on an immigration bill acceptable to Schumer. Schumer received no promise from the House. The bill was very close to the bill Senate Democrats had rejected on January 19 with the exception of a guaranteed immigration vote.

Immigration advocates and progressives were very angry and blamed Democrats in general and Schumer in particular for caving and allowing the government to reopen without a DACA deal. Schumer is caught between Hispanic and progressive activists that want Democrats to stand strong for the Dreamers. But it is unclear how the Democrats, a minority in both houses of Congress, can force a recalcitrant majority to take up a bill they oppose in whole or in part, if Republicans are willing to fight give an

Polling on shutdown shows partisan divide: Politico reports that polls by Quinnipiac and Politico/Morning Consult on the budget shutdown showed a sharp partisan divide. A total of 32% of voters polled blamed congressional Democrats and 31% blamed Trump while only 18% blamed congressional Republicans in the Quinnipiac poll. The Politico/Morning Consult poll showed 35% blaming Democrats, showed that while Trump and congressional Republicans were blamed by 34%. Voters overwhelmingly backed allowing Dreamers to remain in the US in both polls. But a majority of those who supported protecting them said the shutdown was not worth it, 53%-to 43%. A total of 70% of voters polled disapproved of congressional Republicans while 63% disapproved of congressional Democrats. The Quinnipiac poll found that 84% of voters felt that the shutdown was mainly unnecessary, including 89% of Republicans and 78% of Democrats.

Trump gives basic conditions for DACA/immigration deal, formal terms expected January 29: Politico reported, that Trump, in off-the-cuff remarks to the press on January 24 before leaving for Davos said he would be willing to give DACA recipients citizenship, after a period in which they were legalized. He mentioned a 10-12-year period, but said the period should be determined by Congress. He said that an immigration bill would need to include \$25 billion in funding for a border wall as well as \$5 billion for other border security measures. The administration will seek to eliminate the diversity immigration visa lottery, though they are open to a replacement of some sort, and would seek to scale back family reunification to immediate family members, but not grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins or other relatives. Family reunification accounts for roughly half of all immigration to the US.

Trump rejected two proposals he had earlier agreed to: the Graham-Durbin compromise Senate proposal from last week and the agreement he made with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer that included DACA and significant wall funding.

The administration will release a formal proposal on January 29. It is not at all clear that it will really resemble what Trump put forward on January 24.

Senate Democrats agree to sever DACA demand from long-term budget negotiations: Politico reported that Senate Democrats are willing to drop their demand that a solution for DACA be tied to any long-term budget agreement. Long-term means both an agreement to fund the government through September and an agreement on budget totals for two years. The shift comes in response to the deal struck between Senate leaders to reopen the government and begin debate on an immigration bill next month. Budget negotiators are expressing optimism that a two-year agreement to lift stiff caps on defense and domestic spending is within reach. Patty Murray said that although she would prefer a deal to protect Dreamers be part of budget negotiations, the agreement reached with McConnell would make that impossible. McConnell has said the Senate would turn to an immigration bill only if the government is still funded, and few Democrats seem to want another shutdown. House Democrats have signaled they are not ready to go along with a long-term budget deal without a fix to DACA. They are insisting that these things be in the same negotiation.

Both parties are eager for a long-term budget agreement, with Republican defense hawks angry about uncertainty for the Pentagon and liberal Democrats concerned about deep cuts to domestic programs. Any legislation to boost spending by upwards of \$250 billion over two years would need broad bipartisan backing in both chambers, as House conservatives have already hinted they will not agree. The distance between Republicans and Democrats has been narrowing for weeks. Negotiators have already agreed to an increase in defense spending of at least \$70 billion above the current caps for fiscal 2018 and \$80 billion in fiscal 2019. That increase is much higher than the White House most recent budget request.

What remains is how much to spend on domestic discretionary programs. Republican leaders have proposed a deal that would increase domestic agencies' budgets by \$45 billion to \$50 billion over the caps for the next two years. Democrats are insisting on at least \$60 billion. Under current spending caps, military funding would be limited to \$549 billion in fiscal 2018. Domestic funding would be capped at \$516 billion. Because Democrats have insisted on parity between the defense and nondefense spending increases, Republican negotiators are looking at budgetary maneuvers to get there. Republican leaders are proposing tens of billions of dollars in additional domestic spending that wouldn't count toward the caps. That would likely include billions in emergency funding to address the nation's opioid epidemic, which both parties have called a priority. Negotiators are also floating potential changes in mandatory spending to further dodge the strict caps on discretionary spending. That could mean that programs with bipartisan support, would be moved to the mandatory side of the budget for good.

2. Russia connection

Republican memo on surveillance "abuse" seeks to discredit Mueller investigation: The New York Times and Washington Posts report that Republican aides on the House Intelligence Committee have prepared a memorandum said to accuse the FBI and Department of Justice officials of improperly obtaining a FISA warrant against a Trump campaign aide. The memorandum says suggests that FBI agents seeking the fall 2016 warrant to surveil Trump campaign adviser Carter Page concealed the role that the Christopher Steele dossier alleging Kremlin influence over Trump played in their decision. It also suggests that Christopher Steele lied to FBI agents who interviewed him in their investigation about whether he had spoken to reporters and that his lie was included in the FISA warrant. Steele later stated publicly that he had spoken to reporters during the campaign. Republican Intelligence Committee member Mike Conaway (supposedly in charge of the committee's Russia investigation) was asked why the committee wouldn't share the memo with FBI Director Wray, appointed by Trump last year. Conaway said Wray is surrounded by Obama administration holdovers who could not be trusted.

The Department of Justice wrote a public letter to Nunes that said that the classified materials were given to the committee on the understanding that they would not be made public, because they had not been vetted to insure that national security secrets would not be compromised by their release.

Only Devin Nunes, Adam Schiff and the staffers who prepared it read the memo before January 24. Only Schiff and the staffers have read the underlying classified materials it is based on.

Republican members on the House Intelligence Committee voted last week to allow other members of Congress to read copies in a secure room in the Capitol. Several Republican members who have seen the memo have said it is serious enough to warrant firing or even jailing some FBI and Justice Department officials, and conservative news outlets have demanded its release. But other Republicans have warned that the memorandum's contents are less than advertised. Democrats say the Republican focus on the memo is part of a wider smear campaign against law enforcement officials who have investigated Trump officials and associates.

Republicans in Congress are pursuing an obscure, never-before-used process to compel the release of classified information, with or without the president's approval. Under House rules, the intelligence committee may reveal classified information if they deem its public release outweighs national security concerns. Under the process, the committee could vote to release the memo as early as January 31. That would trigger a five-day window for Trump either to approve the release or recommend against it. If Trump approves, as many GOP lawmakers expect, the memo could be made public immediately.

The Christopher Steele dossier that the memo alleges helped drive the decision to seek a FISA warrant on Page was compiled in 2016 by the former head of the British intelligence agency MI6's Russia desk. He was a trusted FBI partner in previous investigations. Steele had been commissioned by the private research firm Fusion GPS to investigate Trump's business ties to Russia. Steele shared his research with the FBI because he was concerned with what he was discovering about Trump's Russia ties. Fusion's work was funded at that time by a lawyer who represented Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign and the Democratic National Committee (DNC). It is unclear if Steele's relationship to the campaign was disclosed in the FISA application or to what degree the warrant was actually based on the dossier.

House Republicans will not show memo to Justice Department or the FBI: Politico reported that House Republicans have refused to share with the Justice Department a secret memo alleging misconduct by federal officials investigating the Trump campaign's Russia ties, even as they build a case that Trump should authorize the memo's public release. The Justice Department has requested access to the classified document but has not been able to see it. The FBI, too, has been denied access to the document.

Sessions and Comey interviewed by Mueller team: The Washington Post and New York Times reported that Mueller's team has interviewed Attorney General Sessions and former FBI Director Comey. Sessions was questioned for several hours last week. He was accompanied by longtime DC lawyer Chuck Cooper. Sessions was the head of the campaign foreign policy team and involved in developing its position toward Russia. He chaired the meeting at which George Papadopoulos proposed the idea of a meeting between Trump and Putin. He was also involved in the firing of Comey.

Comey was interviewed last year. The Comey interview focused on the memos he wrote about his interactions with Trump that he had said unnerved him. In one memo, Comey said Trump had asked him to end the FBI investigation into Michael Flynn.

Sessions pressured Wray to fire McCabe and others, Wray threatened to resign: Axios and the Washington Post reported that in December, Attorney General Sessions, at the public urging of Trump, has been pressuring FBI Director Wray to fire Deputy FBI Director Andrew McCabe. Wray threatened to resign if McCabe was removed. Sessions told White House Counsel Don McGahn about how upset Wray was about the pressure on him to fire McCabe. McGahn told Sessions this issue wasn't worth losing the FBI Director over. McGahn has not spoken to Wray about the situation. The New York Times reported in December that McCabe plans to retire in March,

after he becomes eligible for his full pension benefits. Firing McCabe would be problematic because he has limited civil service protections as a government employee. Such a move could prompt litigation.

Sessions, Republican lawmakers and some members of the Trump administration have argued for weeks that Wray should conduct some kind of housecleaning by demoting or reassigning senior aides to his predecessor, Comey, according to people familiar with the matter. These people added that Sessions himself is under tremendous political pressure from conservative lawmakers and White House officials who have complained that the bureaucracy of federal law enforcement is biased against the president.

Trump asked Andrew McCabe, then acting FBI director, how he voted: The Washington Post reported that shortly after Trump fired Comey, he had a private meeting in the White House with Andrew McCabe, then the Acting FBI director. At the meeting, Trump asked McCabe who he voted for in the 2016 election. McCabe responded that he hadn't voted. Then Trump vented his anger at McCabe over the nearly \$500,000 in donations that his wife, a Democrat, received for her failed 2015 Virginia state Senate bid from a political action committee controlled by Terry McAuliffe, the then-governor of Virginia, who was trying to help Democrats get elected to state legislative seats. The governor is a close friend of the Clintons. It has been reported that the meeting is of interest to the Mueller investigation. Trump has attacked McCabe repeatedly on Twitter and in the press.

Mueller seeks to question Trump about Flynn and Comey firings: The New York Times and Washington Post reported that Mueller is seeking to question Trump in the coming weeks about his decisions to fire Michael Flynn and FBI Director Comey. This suggests Mueller is interested in questioning Trump about possible obstruction of justice. Trump's attorneys have crafted draft negotiating terms for Trump's interview with Mueller's team that could be presented to Mueller as soon as next week. Trump's legal team hopes to have Trump answer some questions in a face-to-face interview and others in a written statement. Mueller has also expressed interest in Trump's efforts to remove Sessions as attorney general or pressure him into quitting. The special is said to seek to determine whether there was a pattern of behavior by Trump.

Russian bots online repeat Republican attacks on the FBI: The Washington Post reported that over the course of the last 48 hours, bots linked to the Russian Federation have gone viral on a Twitter hashtag created by Republican lawmakers who claim the Obama administration illegally spied on Donald J. Trump's presidential campaign during FBI surveillance of Russian diplomats and figures linked to Russia.

The Washington Post reported that top Democrats on Tuesday called on Facebook and Twitter to investigate Russian efforts to promote the release of a classified Republican memo criticizing the FBI probe of Russia's meddling in the 2016 campaign. Hashtags such as "#ReleaseTheMemo" have been trending on Twitter in recent days, and accounts affiliated with Russian influence efforts have been supporting this campaign, according to the Alliance for Securing Democracy, a U.S.-based group that examines efforts by Russia and other nations to interfere in democratic institutions. "We are witnessing an ongoing attack by the Russian government through Kremlin-linked social media actors directly acting to intervene and influence our democratic process," said a letter to Facebook and Twitter from Rep. Adam B. Schiff and Sen. Dianne Feinstein, both Democrats from California who are the top members of their party on the House Intelligence Committee and Senate Judiciary Committee.

3. Immigration

Supreme Court to rule on Trump's powers to ban foreign travelers: The New York Times reported that the Supreme Court on January 19 said it will review whether Trump has the authority to ban travelers from certain countries in the name of national security, and will rule by June.

The court will consider the third iteration of Trump's travel ban, issued last fall, which bars various travelers from eight countries, six of them with Muslim majorities. Lower courts have struck down each version of the Trump administration restrictions, dating back to those issued in his first week in office, but the Supreme Court has yet to rule on the extent of the president's authority.

There are indications that the Supreme Court will be more sympathetic to the administration's claim that the president has extraordinary powers if acting to keep the nation safe. Last month, in an unsigned opinion, the justices said the restrictions in Trump's latest version of the ban could go into effect as envisioned while legal challenges to the merits of the decision continued. That decision, which included noted dissents only from liberal Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor, discarded a compromise the justices fashioned regarding the second version of the plan. That compromise said the ban would not affect those who could prove significant connections to the United States.

The current version of the plan imposes various restrictions on travelers from Syria, Libya, Iran, Yemen, Chad, Somalia, North Korea and Venezuela. The first six of those countries have Muslim-majority populations, and the restrictions on travelers from North Korea and Venezuela are not part of the challenge.

The court will review a unanimous ruling from a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit in San Francisco. It said the third version of the travel ban suffered from the deficiencies of the first two: that Trump had again exceeded his lawful authority and that he had not made a legally sufficient finding that entry of those blocked would be "detrimental to the interests of the United States." There is another challenge to the ban still resting with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit in Richmond. That full court is considering a ruling by a Maryland judge that the ban violates the Constitution because it is effectively a ban on Muslims. Judge Theodore Chuang considered Trump's statements and tweets in reaching his decision. Despite a nudge from the Supreme Court last month to work quickly, the 4th Circuit has yet to rule. The case could be added for the Supreme Court's consideration later.

Department of Justice threatens sanctuary cities with subpoenas: The Justice Department sent letters Wednesday to 23 cities, counties and states demanding that they turn over all records of such policies or practices. If they fail to produce those materials, they could face a legally-enforceable subpoena and eventually action to recover millions of dollars worth of federal grants. All of the jurisdictions getting the letters from Justice have been part of earlier demands for information on the same issue, but the latest letters represent an escalation both in tone and in threatening subpoenas.

Justice Department officials contend that some cities, counties and states are not in compliance with a federal law that prohibits grant recipients from interfering with their employees' communications with federal authorities about alleged illegal immigrants who are in custody. Some leaders in sanctuary cities have said that they are in compliance with federal law, despite policies designed to protect undocumented individuals who interact with the police. The Justice Department is trying to make sure localities and states that received funds under the Byrne/Justice Assistance Grants program abided by conditions they promised to observe when they applied for the money. A total of \$380 million was awarded under the Byrne/JAG program in 2016, though the jurisdictions getting letters account for only a subset of the overall total.

Federal judges in Chicago and San Francisco have issued nationwide injunctions barring the Trump administration from adding additional conditions to Justice Department grant funding. In addition, a federal judge in Philadelphia blocked any effort to interfere with funds for that city based on the new conditions. However, those court orders do not prohibit the Justice Department from implementing the restriction in federal law on policies against local police or jail officials communicating with federal officials about individuals' immigration status.

Among those on the receiving end of the letters are: the states of California, Illinois and Oregon, New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Denver, Cook County, Illinois; Albany, New York; Berkeley, California; Bernalillo County, New Mexico; Burlington, Vermont; Fremont, California; Jackson, Mississippi; King County, Washington; Lawrence, Massachusetts; Louisville Metro, Kentucky; Monterey County, California; Sacramento County, California; Sonoma County, California; Watsonville, California and West Palm Beach, Florida.

4. Health

Oregon passes new health care tax to finance Medicaid expansion: Last spring, Oregon legislators were weighing the idea of ending their Medicaid expansion to close a growing hole in the state budget. This would have made Oregon the first state in the country to back out of the ACA Medicaid expansion program. Instead, the state ended up doing something different: Voters approved a tax on hospitals and health insurance plans to continue the Medicaid expansion's financing. The tax could raise as much as \$320 million over two years. This is the first such measure approved by voters anywhere in the country. It's also the second time that the Medicaid expansion has won at the polls. Maine voters in November overwhelmingly supported bringing the Medicaid expansion to their state.

5. Activism

Women's March II: Somewhere between 1.5 million and 2.0 million people participated in marches and rallies on January 20 to commemorate the first anniversary of last year's women's marches in dozens of cities and towns across the US. While not nearly as large as the 2017 marches, these were still among the largest protest marches and rallies in US history. There were also similar marches and rallies in cities across Europe and in Canada. A total of 500,000-700,000 people marched in Los Angeles, 300,000 in Chicago and 200,000 in New York. There were 50,000 marching in Philadelphia, San Francisco saw 50,000-80,000, there were 40,000 in Oakland and 20,000 in San Jose. Seattle police reported "tens of thousands." Pittsburgh reported 30-50,000 and Phoenix reported 20-25,000. While there was a sizeable crowd in DC, it was not the central focus of rallies that it was in 2017.

There was also an event on January 21 with 15,000 in Las Vegas, focused on preparing for the 2018 congressional elections.

6. Voting rights

Supreme Court finds North Carolina does not have to redraw boundaries before 2018 election: The New York Times reported that the Supreme Court ruled that North Carolina does not immediately have to redraw its congressional district maps, meaning that the 2018 elections will likely be held in districts that a lower court found unconstitutional. The court granted a request from North Carolina's Republican legislative leaders to put the lower court's ruling on hold. The decision was not unexpected, because the Supreme Court generally is reluctant to require the drawing of new districts before it has had a chance to review a lower court's ruling that such an action is warranted, especially in an election year. Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sonia Sotomayor said they would not have granted the request.

The effect is that this year's elections will be conducted under the 2016 boundaries, in which Republicans hold 10 of the 13 congressional seats. Despite the Republican domination's of the congressional delegation, North Carolina's has been a battleground state in recent years, with a Democratic governor and attorney general, who have declined to defend the maps.

A three-judge panel last week invalidated the map drawn by the Republican-controlled legislature in 2016, calling it improper partisan gerrymandering. The decision was the first striking down a congressional map on the grounds that it was rigged in favor of a political party. The court panel had ordered the state's legislature to redraw the boundaries by January 29.

The Supreme Court has never thrown out a state's electoral district map because of partisan gerrymandering. It has two cases on its docket that will decide just that question, but they are unlikely to be resolved in time to affect any plan to redraw the North Carolina districts. The court has already heard a case from Wisconsin and has accepted one from Maryland. In the Wisconsin case, the justices said new district maps did not have to be drawn until the case was decided. In Maryland, challengers lost in a lower court and have appealed, so the single district boundary in dispute has remained in place.

Pennsylvania Supreme Court gives Democrats a win on redistricting: The Washington Post reported that Pennsylvania's Supreme Court decided that the state's congressional districts violate the state constitution and ordered the lines of all 18 of them redrawn in the next few weeks. Less partisan lines could give Democrats a chance to win a number of seats that had been lost to them over the past decade, and give the party a boost in its quest to take back the US House of Representatives. By a 4 to 3 decision, Pennsylvania's Supreme Court ordered the Republican-controlled state legislature to redraw the lines by February 15, an extraordinarily quick timeline that will reset the districts in time for the state's May congressional primaries. Since gaining control of the state legislature in time to redraw maps after the 2010 Census, Republicans have rather easily held on to 13 of 18 districts during the past decade.

7. Trade

Trump puts significant tariffs on imported solar panels and washing machines: The New York Times reported that Trump has imposed steep tariffs on imported solar panels and imported washing machines. Trump decided to accept the recommendations of his trade advisers, who carried out a process to determine whether American manufacturers were being harmed by imported washing machines and solar products. The United States International Trade Commission, an independent body of trade experts, had also examined the cases and found that imports were hurting domestic manufacturers.

For the solar industry, Trump approved tariffs for the next four years. A tariff of 30% will be levied on imported solar modules and cells in the first year. That will fall to 25% in the second year, 20% in the third year and 15% in the fourth year. In each of the four years, the first 2.5 gigawatts of imported solar cells will be exempted from the tariff. For imported washing machines, Trump approved a combined tariff and quota for the next three years. In the first year, the first 1.2 million washing machines that are imported will face a tariff of 20%, while all subsequent imports will have a tariff of 50%.

The US had imposed a series of more modest restrictions on cheap solar products from China to protect American manufacturers in recent years under the Obama administration. But Chinese firms moved production to other countries, and continued with plans to ramp up their production capacity. The trade representative's office said it would also engage in discussions with other countries to try to resolve a prior dispute over imports of Chinese solar products and polysilicon, the raw material for solar cells.

While there are serious issues of Chinese support for the solar industry and significant overcapacity in the industry leading to even sharper price drops, it is widely believed that the solar cell decision was driven by Trump's goal to disadvantage renewal sources of energy while advantaging fossil fuel sources, especially coal.

8. Environment

2017 among the hottest years on record: The Washington Post reported that 2017 was the second-hottest in recorded history according to NASA while scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported 2017 was the third-warmest they have ever recorded.

The year also saw record breaking disasters affecting the US, including devastating California wildfires and a trio of hurricanes that cost over \$200 billion, events like those many experts fear may worsen as the planet warms.

2017 saw a temperature of 1.51 degrees Fahrenheit (0.84 degrees Celsius), above the average temperature seen in the 20th century, according to NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information. NASA found that 2017 was 1.6 degrees Fahrenheit (.9 degrees Celsius) above the average temperature from 1951 through 1980. 2016 was .99 degrees Celsius higher, and 2015 just .86 degrees Celsius higher, according to the NASA. Before 2017, the years 2014, 2015, and 2016 had set new all-time temperature records, ending in a dramatic new high in 2016. Both NASA and NOAA had both agreed on their rankings as they occurred. 2017, in contrast, merely stayed within the elevated temperature range these prior years had already established.

It was the warmest year on record that was not substantially influenced by the periodic El Niño phenomenon, which releases added warmth from the Pacific Ocean and was present in the record warm years of 2015 and 2016. NOAA's said that the amount of heat being stored in the upper layer of the global ocean, between the surface and about 700 meters depth, was at its highest on record last year. They said that it is unlikely the world will ever see temperatures as cool as before 2014 again. 2017 was 1.12 degrees Celsius above late 19th century temperatures. It is the third straight year in NASA's records temperatures have eclipsed 1 degree Celsius above temperatures in the late 19th century.