

## The PerryScope (week ending 07/22/18)

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### Perry This Week

#### Freedom Caucus Attempts Damage Control

Following the President Trump's bizarre and disturbing comments at the Helsinki press conference on Monday, members of the [House Freedom Caucus](#) rushed to make excuses for the president's statements, instead [blaming the press for asking questions that "triggered this whole odd reaction"](#) (meaning Trump's self-reported misstatement including the double negative). (Rep. Perry appears in a [photo](#) accompanying the [Vox story](#).) Perry later Tweeted about Trump's comments ([see below](#)).

#### Americans for Prosperity Features Perry

The Koch-brother funded Americans for Prosperity (AFP) chose to feature Rep. Perry in the second episode of "Torch Talk," their new video series. The focus of their interview with Perry was on the federal tax reform bill that AFP Torch Talk host Gabrielle Braud called a "huge victory for the American people." Watch the four-and-a-half-minute segment [here](#).

#### Perry's Amendment to House EPA Funding Bill Targets Clean Air Act Protections

According to [his press release](#), Perry's amendment to H.R. 6147 is intended to "eliminate 'back doors'" allowing "non-elected federal bureaucrats" to set Clean Air Act emissions levels, essentially allowing states to bypass Clean Air Act standards. One vocal opponent of the bill, Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN) noted that Perry had offered this amendment previously, to "torpedo the climate change agreement," and wondered why [now that Trump pulled the U.S. out of the Paris Treaty] Perry was offering it again. "A vote for this amendment," McCollum said, "is another vote ... for climate denial and to block action to curb carbon pollution that is driving our dangerous climate change." Read the Congressional Record [here](#).

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) also [opposes Perry's amendment](#), stating that it would undermine the EPA's methane rules.

#### Text of Perry DHS Contractor Bill Available

Last week Rep. Perry introduced [H.R. 6374: To require the Department of Homeland Security to streamline Federal contractor fitness determinations, and for other purposes](#). The bill is co-sponsored by Michael McCaul [R-TX10]. This bill was referred to the House Committee on Homeland Security which will consider it on July 24 before sending it to the House floor for consideration. Perry is a member of the committee. The text of the bill is now available [here](#).

#### TwitterScope

Rep. Perry Tweeted five times this week. In addition to [retweeting the AFP Torch Talk link](#) (see above) he also retweeted [a National Federation of Independent Businesses \(NFIB\) PA tweet](#) about a meeting on "regulations, finding employees, taxes and more."

Although he remained notably silent immediately following President Trump's remarks at the Helsinki Press Conference, he did [Tweet on July 17](#) following the Freedom Caucus' official response:

Russian agents unquestionably meddled in our electoral process. I'm encouraged the President clarified his statement and supports our findings. Putin's hostile actions against the US & our allies cannot stand. I encourage the President to continue to hold him & Russia accountable

The replies to this Tweet pretty much summed up the popular opinion. Franklin (@HFB66) stated it succinctly:

Trump clarified nothing. Walking back his statements do not constitute clarification. You need to step up and defend this country against a President who sides with the Russians. Stop mincing words. Do your job Rep. Perry.

Perry also Tweeted to [tout jobs numbers for the week](#), stating the 48.5-year low was “a result of Tax Reform”

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### Tracking Perry in the Age of Trump

The higher the number, the more the legislator votes in support of the Trump agenda.

[Rep. Scott Perry](#) — **Ranking This Week: 84.9% (+0.4% from last week)**

Nate Silver's [FiveThirtyEight](#) website assesses the voting records of our MoCs to provide this index, by comparing any bills where President Trump has stated a position, and comparing the vote of the legislator to that opinion.

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### Votes of Interest

#### [On Motion to Recommit with Instructions: H.R. 6147: Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2019](#)

A good portion of the House's efforts this week revolved around this appropriations bill. One of the more notable changes made to it was the Republican decision to strip out all of the funding to the states for election security. This was particularly noteworthy and concerning in light of the recent revelations from Rod Rosenstein's [indictments of Russian intelligence officers](#) for election interference. Prior to the final vote, Rep. Mike Quigley (D-Ill.) made a [motion to recommit](#) the bill. From the Congressional Record:

The instructions contained in the motion seek to require the bill to be reported back to the House with an amendment to decrease funds for the Fund for America's Kids and Grandkids account by \$380 million and increase funds for the Election Assistance Commission account by a similar amount.

The motion failed on party lines, in a 182-232 vote on July 19, 2018. **Perry voted NO.**

#### [H.R. 6147: Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2019](#)

This is a massive appropriations bill that will provide 2019 funding for the departments cited in the bill title, as well as the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Education, the Department of Agriculture for the Forest Service, the Department of Health and Human Services, and over a dozen other smaller agencies and programs. The

tab for this bill is \$58.7 billion. Among the more upsetting parts of this bill are a \$100 million cut to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) budget, and a policy rider to repeal the EPA's Obama-era Clean Water Rule. Rep. Betty McCollum (D-Minn.) observed "these riders undermine clean water and clean air safeguards, jeopardize protection and recovery for vulnerable species, and even intercede in California water issues outside of the jurisdiction of the subcommittee," as reported in an article in *The Hill* titled "[House completes first half of 2019 spending bills.](#)" The vote took place on July 19, 2018, and it passed 217-199. **Perry voted YES.**

The bill included an amendment from Rep Perry ([see above](#)).

### **[H.Con.Res. 119: Expressing the sense of Congress that a carbon tax would be detrimental to the United States economy](#)**

Earlier this week Rep. Carlos Curbelo (R-Fla.) signaled his support for a carbon tax, a policy to discourage big corporate polluters by putting a cost on their anti-environmental actions. In response, House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-La.) introduced a resolution that states "it is the sense of Congress that a carbon tax would be detrimental to American families and businesses, and is not in the best interest of the United States." The resolution passed on July 19, 2018, in a 229-180 vote. This was not a pure party line effort. Seven Democrats voted for this regressive effort, and six Republicans voted on the green side. **Perry voted YES.**

### **[H.Res. 990: Supporting the officers and personnel who carry out the important mission of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement](#)**

In last week's MoCTrack we reported that the House Republicans were planning on forcing a vote on the "abolish ICE" [bill](#) introduced by Rep. Mark Pocan (D-Wis.) on July 12, 2018. They quickly reversed course on this plan. As [The Hill](#) reported:

[Majority Leader McCarthy] said Thursday he intended to bring the abolish ICE bill to the floor in an attempt to force vulnerable Democrats to take a difficult vote. GOP leaders thought Democrats in swing districts would be reluctant to criticize the federal agency responsible for fighting human and drug trafficking and border enforcement. But Democrats responded by vowing to vote "no" and dismissed it as an election year show vote. It's a "political stunt," Democratic Reps. Mark Pocan (Wis.), Pramila Jayapal (Wash.) and Adriano Espaillat (N.Y.) — the architects of the progressive-backed bill — said in a joint statement.

Instead, the Majority Leader chose to offer a resolution introduced by Rep. Clay Higgins (R-La.) that includes the phrase "The House of Representatives...denounces calls for the abolishment of ICE, and supports the efforts of all Federal agencies, State law enforcement, and military personnel who bring law and order to our Nation's borders." In a vote taken on July 18, 2018, the measure passed 244-35. This irregular tally is the result of 133 Democrats opting to vote "[Present](#)" instead of yes or no. **Perry voted YES.**

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## **Legislation of Interest:**

### **[H.R. 6423: To impose sanctions with respect to certain Russian financial institutions](#)**

This bill was introduced by Rep. Steve Cohen on July 18, 2018. It does not yet have any co-sponsors, and it is pending in the House Foreign Relations Committee. If the name of Rep. Cohen is familiar to you, that is because MoCTrack has highlighted several of his past efforts, including his [bill of impeachment](#) against the President and a past [resolution objecting to the behavior of the president](#), citing numerous specific emoluments clause violations and unpresidential actions (like lying, bullying, casting doubts on the judiciary and framing the media as the enemy of the public). *This* bill would impose new sanctions on

Russia, specifically Russian banks, in protest for Russia's attack on Ukraine and their occupation of the Crimea. In support of this bill, Rep. Cohen made the following statement:

More than four years after the invasion of its sovereign neighbor, Ukraine, Russia continues to flout its international obligations and world opinion, and needs to see that the United States believes there should be a painful consequence. This bill would hit Russian President Vladimir Putin where it hurts – in his and his cronies' banking relationships.

Please call Rep. Perry to see if he is willing to support additional sanctions on Russia in the aftermath of last week's events.

**[H.R. 6436: To direct the Director of National Intelligence to submit to State election officials and Congress annual reports on pre-election threats for general elections for Federal office](#)**

This bill was introduced by Rep. Kathleen Rice (D-N.Y.) on July 18, 2018. It does not yet have any co-sponsors and it is pending in the House Permanent Select Intelligence Committee. Just this week the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Dan Coats appeared at public event and [continued to assert](#) that there was election interference by the Russians and they are maintaining their efforts as we move into another election season. In light of these attacks on our electoral systems, Rep. Rice's new bill would improve intelligence communications between states (who each run their own voting systems), the Congress (who appropriates funding to support state and federal election systems) and the DNI. [Rep. Rice explained](#):

Right now our country is facing an unprecedented threat from a foreign adversary. An Election Security Coordinator would bring oversight and cohesion to our splintered election security strategy, and would be responsible for overseeing and coordinating all election security efforts across federal agencies. Russia was already successful once, and with Election Day just four months away, we need nothing less than an all-hands-on-deck response, including regular public briefings on an Election Security Coordinator's progress and work... Before they go to the polls in November, the American people deserve real assurance that our government is taking every necessary step to protect our elections. Anything less is unacceptable.

Just this week, all of the Republican representatives in the House refused to return an appropriations bill to committee so that election security funding that had been stripped from it could be returned. Part of their reasoning was that some states still hadn't used election security funding that had been given. This bill, which would provide the latest information to the states, would give them some direction as to how to best use the funding already on hand. Please call Rep. Perry to ask him to support this effort.

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*Adapted from the weekly PA-08 MoCTrack report, compiled by Elayne Baker, Gary Garb & Kierstyn Piotrowski Zolfo*