

The PerryScope (week ending 09/09/18)

Contents:

- [Perry This Week](#)
- [Tracking Perry in the Age of Trump](#)
- [Votes of Interest](#)

Perry/PA-10 This Week

With just eight weeks to go until the November midterms, state and national media outlets continue to focus on George Scott's campaign to challenge Rep. Perry:

- [Politics PA highlights Scott's first TV ad](#)
- [An Associated Press piece](#) says Perry is in "one of the most difficult reelection campaigns of [his] career."

TwitterScope

Since last week's Special Edition, Perry has taken to Twitter to:

- [tout the groundbreaking of a new Salvation Army facility](#) in Harrisburg
- continue to [perpetuate the storyline of a "booming economy"](#)
- [retweet fellow Freedom Caucus members' press conference](#) calling on the president to declassify documents related to Carter Page. This effort is widely seen [as an attempt to discredit the Mueller investigation](#).
- [announce passage of two of his bills](#) (see below) – the replies to this Tweet are way more entertaining than the Tweet itself.
- [Call attention to a live stream](#) of a hearing on innovation in surface transportation

[TOP](#)

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: 85.4% (no change 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.

[TOP](#)

Votes of Interest

Two of Perry's bills passed the House this week:

[H.R. 6374 The Security and Fitness Information Transparency \(FIT\) Act](#)

Previously, the bill [was reported to the full chamber for consideration](#) on July 24. Watch Rep. Perry read from his prepared remarks [here](#). For more details on the bill, see [here](#).

[H.R. 6438: Countering Unmanned Aircraft Systems Coordinator \(CUAS\) Act](#)

This bill, intended to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and create a position specifically devoted to “counter threats” related to drones, works in tandem with Texas Rep. Michael McCaul’s [H.R. 6401](#) to further impose restrictions on individual drone usage. Watch Rep. Perry offer his bill [here](#).

Both bills now move on to the Senate for consideration. [Skopos Labs](#) predicts a 56% chance of passage for the FIT Act and a 36% chance for the CUAS Act.

[H.R. 4606: Ensuring Small Scale LNG Certainty and Access Act](#)

This bill is a key vote to note whether a legislator values the primacy of the economy, or the importance of shifting to carbon neutral energy production. The stated purpose of this bill is to hasten the process of approvals for the import and export of natural gas. An opinion piece in [The Hill](#) outlines the logic used by the supporters of the bill, noting that “emerging markets within the Caribbean, Central America, and South America are looking to U.S. natural gas to help meet their growing energy needs, and this legislation will help ensure our domestic producers and exporters are able to meet that demand.” When the bill was marked up in the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) made the following [objections](#):

“[The Department of Energy’s] process for reviewing and approving gas export applications is working efficiently and effectively, so I fail to see a reason to alter it, let alone do away with it completely as proposed by this bill...unfettered exports could be even worse for climate change. The policy incentivizes widespread fossil fuel extraction with virtually no environmental protections, adds more fossil fuels to the electricity mix rather than replacing dirtier sources, and artificially props up the coal industry...It speaks volumes that this bill has even fewer environmental safeguards than a Trump Administration proposal. The bill also fails to prevent applicants from using this new process to evade the public interest determinations required for large-scale exports...”

Put more simply, those voting for this bill want to increase fossil fuel extraction and trade, while those voting against it are prioritizing the protection of the environment. In a vote that occurred on September 6, 2018, the bill passed 260-146. Thirty-seven Democrats joined all but 3 of the Republicans to pass this bill. **Perry voted YES.**

[H.R. 6691: Community Safety and Security Act of 2018](#)

This bill may have been prompted by the results of a recent Supreme Court case, but once drafted it becomes clear that it is the kind of law that a complacent GOP-run legislature, eager to appease their law-and-order president creates. In the case *Dimaya v. Sessions*, the court found that a portion of the criminal code was “unconstitutionally vague.” To solve that problem, this bill changes the US Criminal Code to expand the term “crime of violence” to encompass twenty-two specific types of crime. In their long letter of objection to the Congress, the Human Rights Watch outlines a number of ways this bill is exceedingly problematic (please see the [letter in full](#) for a lengthier description of each of their bullet points):

- The bill is overbroad and includes in its list of crimes of violence a number of offenses that have no element of violence at all.
- The bill dangerously expands the definition of violent crime which fuels overcriminalization.
- A new definition of crime of violence is unnecessary.
- H.R. 6691 could have significant exclusionary effects on federal criminal justice laws and legislation.

In an [essay](#) published on *Medium*, Senate candidate and current House member Beto O’Rourke does an even better job of explaining a wider array of problems with this bill, not just its content, but also the process by which it was created:

“Today, the House considered H.R. 6691, the Community Safety and Security Act of 2018. I voted no. The Supreme Court recently ruled in *Dimaya v. Sessions* that our understanding of a “crime of violence” is “unconstitutionally vague.” It is necessary that Congress work on a clearer definition, and I want to be part of that open dialogue and bipartisan discussion.

But this bill was introduced only seven days ago with no committee consideration, no experts, no testimony, no discussion. That makes it only the most recent piece of legislation in a long line of American criminal justice policy that was rushed through Congress without understanding the full consequences. Without understanding the decades-long ramifications. It’s how we ended up with the world’s largest prison population, disproportionately comprised of people of color. It’s how we ended up putting more non-violent offenders into prisons with mandatory minimums. Those prisons too often run by corporations who want more heads in more beds to feed their bottom line.

H.R. 6691 could continue the trend... expanding the definition of violent crimes to include crimes that don’t involve the use of force or threat of force. That don’t involve violence. It could allow those convicted of nonviolent offenses to face the same severe consequences and mandatory minimums as criminals that did use or threaten force. It could expand the number of teenagers who are prosecuted as adults. And it could increase prison sentencing.

We need true criminal justice reform, not more policies rushed through Congress that will put more people behind bars for non-violent crimes.”

The vote for this bill took place on September 7, 2018, and the bill passed 247-152. Twenty-nine Democrats joined all but 4 of the Republicans to pass this bill. **Perry voted YES.**

[TOP](#)



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