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SPOTLIGHT

Republicans Face Recess Bullying

GOP members are selling their agenda to a skeptical public.

By Kirk A. Bado

Republican lawmakers are back in the district during August recess face frustrated voters.

In town halls, Lincoln/Reagan-Day dinners, and Rotary Club meetings, Republicans are on the frontlines selling President Trump's agenda to a skeptical public. What they're finding are raucous crowds unhappy with cuts to government funding thanks to DOGE, the One Big Beautiful Bill, and other policy priorities from the Trump administration.

The latest high-profile dustup came in Lincoln, Nebraska, where Rep. Mike Flood (R-01) could not even get through the first 30-seconds of his prepared remarks "when the booing and the jeering began," according to the *New York Times*. Their ire was directed as Trump's recently signed OBBB which contained cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, and other benefits as well as renewing the 2017 tax cuts. The crowd got so disruptive that Flood had to pause the event and plead with them to calm down.

"The only way we're going to get through tonight," he said, "is if I get a chance to tell you how I voted."

Republicans have dismissed these scenes of discontent as the work of Democratic meddling. Earlier this year NRCC Chairman Richard Hudson advised his GOP colleagues to stop holding in-person town halls. Trump called the protesters "paid 'troublemakers'" out to get him. Speaker Mike Johnson echoed that sentiment.

The demonstrators who show up at these public events might not always be concerned constituents, but there is evidence to suggest that voters are unhappy with the first six months of united GOP control of Washington.

A new poll of 16 swing districts held by Republicans from United for Cures conducted by Public Opinion Strategies (June 23-July 2; 3,200 RVs with 200 RVs in each district; 1.73%) found that 59% of those polled opposed cutting more than \$20 billion in federal funding for medical research and that the same percentage "is less likely to vote for a member of Congress who votes to cut funding for medical research."

Other polling has found more troubling data for Republicans: Sixty-five percent of Americans in the latest Gallup survey were dissatisfied with the direction of the country; Sixty-one percent of Americans opposed the OBBB according to a July CNN survey; and just 43.8% of voters approve of Trump's job performance, according to the *Silver Bulletin* average.

The saving grace for Republicans right now is that unlike at a similar point in 2017 when Democrats had a 10-point lead in the generic ballot, Republicans only trail by 3 points on average. Voters might be frustrated with the direction of the country, but they're not necessarily looking toward Democrats to fix the problem.

— Kirk A. Bado

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Quote of the Day

" This is not the Democratic party of your grandfather, which would bring a pencil to the knife fight. This is a new Democratic Party. We're bringing a knife to a knife fight, and we are gonna fight fire with fire. " — DNC Chairman Ken Martin on gerrymandering, NOTUS, 8/5

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Trump floats joint Vance, Rubio 2028 ticket

By Erika Filter

REPUBLICANS: House Oversight Committee Subpoenas DOJ

House Oversight Committee Chairman James Comer (R-KY 01) formally subpoenaed the Justice Department "for its files on convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, potentially setting up a contentious standoff between Congress and the Trump administration over an issue that has sparked major headaches for" President Trump.

- **EXPANSIVE LIST.** Comer "also subpoenaed documents or testimony from several high-profile figures, who had either investigated or associated with Epstein in the past. That list included" former President Clinton and Hillary Clinton "as well as a slew of former attorneys general under Democratic and Republican administrations."
- **THIS MAY TAKE A WHILE.** "Comer's issuing of the Epstein subpoenas sets off a likely clash between the GOP-led House, which has been struggling to satisfy demands from the GOP base for more transparency on Epstein, and Trump's Justice Department, which has stood by the memo's conclusions." (*Washington Post*)
- **WHITE HOUSE HAS DECISIONS TO MAKE.** "Top Trump administration officials will gather at" Vice President JD Vance's residence "as they continue to weigh whether to publish an audio recording and transcript of Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche's recent conversation with" convicted

Epstein ally Ghislaine Maxwell.

- **HOW TO SAY THIS.** “There have also been internal discussions about Blanche holding a press conference or doing a high-profile interview, possibly with popular podcaster Joe Rogan.” (CNN)
- **INTERNET HAS CALMED DOWN.** “The Trump administration has largely succeeded in pushing the president’s core supporters to back off their online obsession with” Epstein. “But the topic is still hot in some corners of the internet, where anger simmers over the president’s handling of the matter.”
- **CHANGING THE SUBJECT.** Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard’s accusations that former President Obama acted improperly in investigating Trump’s ties to Russia gained traction, dimming the conversation on Epstein. “On July 19, about twice as many posts mentioned Obama as mentioned Epstein or Maxwell; by July 23, Obama was mentioned in more than 1 in 10 posts or podcasts on the right, nearly three times as frequently as Epstein was mentioned.” (*Washington Post*)
- **RNC CHAIRMAN ALL BUT SELECTED.** Florida state Sen. Joe Gruters (R), who Trump endorsed, was the only candidate to file in the RNC chair election, which will take place on Aug. 22. (*Florida Politics*)

WHITE HOUSE: Trump Has Yet to Speak with Democratic Leaders

“Almost six and a half months into his new term,” President Trump “has yet to host Democratic leaders or convene a meeting with the bipartisan congressional leadership.”

- **NO CALL, NO SHOW.** “In fact, Trump has not met privately to discuss his policy agenda with” Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer or House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries “at all—nor have they held these discussions by phone.”
- **YOU’LL NEED US SOON ENOUGH.** “By the end of September, Republicans will need more than a half dozen Senate Democrats to advance spending legislation averting a shutdown of federal agencies. Trump will need a large bloc of Democrats to keep the government open, as dozens of hard-right conservatives regularly oppose such big spending bills.” (Paul Kane, *Washington Post*)

2028 WATCH: Trump Says JD Vance ‘Most Likely’ Successor

President Trump said “it was too soon to settle on a successor to serve as the Republican nominee in 2028, but he acknowledged” Vice President JD Vance “is the ‘most likely’ heir apparent.”

- **POWER COUPLE.** “Trump suggested Secretary of State Marco Rubio ... could make a formidable ticket with Vance.” (*The Hill*)
- **JEWISH DEMOCRATS CALL OUT NETANYAHU.** Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro (D) called Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s “rejection of international hunger reports ‘abhorrent’ and ‘wrong.’” He said the Trump administration should “flood the zone with aid.” (*The Forward*)
- **REDISTRICTING KEEPS GOVS IN SPOTLIGHT.** “The brawl over redistricting is handing” California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) “something that has eluded Democrats since their 2024 humiliation: a shot at striking a tangible blow against” Trump. “It’s also giving the California governor his biggest platform yet ahead of a likely presidential run in 2028.”
- **NEED FOR SELFLESSNESS.** “Newsom’s maneuver is exceedingly risky. He is a polarizing figure, even among Democrats, and any suggestion of using redistricting to advance his own interests could set off rounds of party in-fighting.”
- **THERE IS NO TRY.** “If California voters end up rejecting the new districts, the setback would be monumental not just for Democrats’ bid for the House, but also Newsom’s future ambitions—a setback that would be compared to a primary presidential candidate losing their home state.” (*Politico*)

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Trump, McConnell loom over Kentucky Senate race

By Nicholas Anastácio

GEORGIA: Awaiting Trump and Brian Kemp's Endorsements

The GOP primary to take on Sen. Jon Ossoff (D) could become a proxy war between President Trump and Gov. Brian Kemp (R) if both back different candidates.

- **WORLDS COLLIDE.** The governor “hand-picked” former Tennessee football Coach Derek Dooley (R) to take on the senator, but MAGA-aligned party members aren’t completely convinced Dooley could flip the seat. Dooley and Reps. Buddy Carter (R-01) and Mike Collins (R-10) are all competing for the president’s endorsement with Carter and Collins leaning into their allegiance to the president. (*Politico*)
- **GOVERNOR’S GAMBLE.** Kemp is once again making a gamble on a political newcomer in a Senate race. Dooley lacks the considerable wealth or business experience of Small Business Administrator Kelly Loeffler, a former senator appointed by the governor in 2019. She ultimately lost her special election to Sen. Raphael Warnock (D) in 2021. (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)
- **JEWISH OUTREACH.** GOP candidates are looking to siphon off Jewish support from Ossoff, the state’s first Jewish senator. Dooley is already beginning outreach to Jewish leaders across the state, publicizing his pro-Israel position and holding discussions with Atlanta-area Jewish leaders. (*Jewish Insider*)

KENTUCKY: Republican Contenders Boost MAGA Allegiance, Distance McConnell Ties

The shadow of President Trump and retiring Sen. Mitch McConnell (R) hangs over the GOP primary race to replace the senator.

- **SORRY BOSS.** Rep. Andy Barr (R-06), 2023 GOV nominee Daniel Cameron (R), and waste removal entrepreneur Nate Morris (R) are all portraying themselves as Trump loyalists while distancing themselves from McConnell, their former boss. Morris has gone further than his competition by trashing the senator in speeches, in interviews, and on the air.
- **RACE FOR NAME ID.** Cameron, a former state attorney general, starts out with the highest name ID of the field, but Barr’s massive war chest and Morris’ early ad blitz are looking to change that. (*Roll Call*)
- **TEAM PLAYER.** Barr has said he’s the only nominee that can guarantee his “purple” KY-06 district remains in Republican hands. Cameron argued the congressman should run for reelection instead if he anticipates the House contest will become more competitive without him in the race next year. (*Kentucky Lantern*)
- **DEM DETERMINATION.** State Rep. Pamela Stevenson (D) is currently running for the Democratic nomination, but two other contenders could enter the race. Personal injury attorney Logan Forsythe (D) and former CIA officer Joel Willett (D) are speculated to be eyeing Senate runs. (*Lexington Herald-Leader*)

LOUISIANA: Dems Long for John Bel Edwards

National and state Democrats are encouraging former Gov. John Bel Edwards (D) to run for the Senate as Sen. Bill Cassidy (R) faces multiple GOP primary challengers. “Edwards hasn’t publicly said he’s not running, and he hasn’t said he is running. Those close to the former governor, however, say they wouldn’t bet the farm on an Edwards candidacy.” (*Greater Baton Rouge Business Report*)

TENNESSEE: Blackburn Runs for Governor, Keeps Seat Regardless of Primary Outcome

Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R) launched a bid for governor, running to replace term-limited Gov. Bill Lee (R). Even if Blackburn loses in the GOP primary, she wouldn’t relinquish her Senate seat. The senator isn’t up for reelection next year. (*Nashville Banner*) See the *States* section for more.

- **POTENTIAL APPOINTMENTS.** If Blackburn wins the governorship next year, she would be able to appoint her successor in the Senate. Potential appointees include Reps. Diana Harshbarger (R-01), Tim Burchett (R-02), John Rose (R-06)—who’s running in the GOP gubernatorial primary, and David Kustoff (R-08), Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs (R), state House Speaker Cameron Sexton (R), and Secretary of State Tre Hargett (R). (*RRH Elections*)

TEXAS: Wesley Hunt’s (Potential) Mission to Grow Bitter GOP Primary

Groups affiliated with Rep. Wesley Hunt (R-38) have invested more than \$3 million into advertising across Texas as the congressman eyes jumping into the GOP primary between Sen. John Cornyn (R) and state Attorney General Ken Paxton (R).

- **STARTING IN THIRD.** Hunt’s potential bid wouldn’t be a guaranteed winner. Public and private polling often shows him placing third in the GOP primary with Cornyn and Paxton, and House members are rarely elected to statewide office in Texas.
- **BEST CASE SCENARIO.** “Half a dozen operatives said Hunt’s best bet would be to siphon off enough votes to keep Paxton under 50% and finish second in the March primary, forcing a May runoff.” (*Texas Tribune*)
- **PRESIDENTIAL AVOIDMENT.** President Trump continues to steer clear of the GOP primary showdown, prolonging the bitter showdown between Cornyn and Paxton and forcing both Republicans to bill themselves as Trump loyalists. (*Bloomberg*)

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Indiana governor considers congressional redistricting

By James A. Downs and Amelia Monroe

REDISTRICTING ROUNDUP: Another Big Day in Redistricting

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) asked the state Supreme Court to remove Texas Democratic Caucus Chair Gene Wu from office. In the lawsuit Abbott claims Wu’s leaving the state “violated the state Constitution and that his absence amounted to abandoning office.”

- **WE JUST GOT A LETTER.** State Attorney General Ken Paxton “appeared to suggest that Abbott's lawsuit was improper, saying in a letter to the Texas Supreme Court clerk that the court has set clear precedent allowing only the attorney general, a district or a county attorney to bring suits like the one filed by the governor.” Paxton pledged legal action if Democratic lawmakers don’t return by Friday, the deadline set by House Speaker Dustin Burrows (R). (NBC News)
- **I WONDER WHO IT’S FROM.** Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) sent a letter to FBI Director Kash Patel asking the bureau to help track down Democratic lawmakers who broke quorum. President Trump, when asked if the FBI should get involved in the process, said “they may have to.” (*The Hill*)
- **DISPATCH FROM INDY.** The vice president will travel to Indiana to meet with Gov. Mike Braun (R) and legislative leaders. Discussions about calling a special session to redistrict will be “exploratory,” but Braun did rule it out. Republicans control seven of nine congressional seats in the Hoosier State. Rep. Frank Mrvan (D-O1), already a GOP target, would be in the crosshairs for redistricting. The GOP has a supermajority in both chambers in Indiana, meaning they could pass new maps with little resistance. (*Indianapolis Star*)
- **MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH.** But there are obstacles for the White House. “The Hoosier governor is a constitutionally weak position, so Braun would need the stamp of approval from somewhat-reticent Republican supermajorities in the state House and Senate in order to gerrymander ahead of 2026.” Legislative leaders have not indicated whether they favor redistricting and have dodged questions on the topic from local reporters. (*Politico*)
- **TIMELINE IN CA.** In California, the secretary of state said a special election to vote on maps needs to be proclaimed by Aug. 22 for a Nov. 4 election, as Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) has considered. The Legislature is on recess until Aug. 18, giving Democrats five days to “finalize maps, ballot initiative, and take public comment.” (KCRA)
- **NEED LEGS TO STAND ON.** The DLCC launched a new fundraising initiative to “fund the fight to win more state legislatures and put the party on offense on redistricting.” The committee is gearing up to contest several legislative races between now and 2030, when the next Census will occur. (release)
- **INTERIOR STRUGGLE.** The redistricting fight across the country has created turmoil for a top anti-gerrymandering group. Common Cause, a good government group, “is in the midst of a tense internal debate over whether to modify its position opposing all partisan redistricting.” Common Cause’s president told the group’s leaders to avoid making new statements on gerrymandering “until the board issued further guidance.”
- **HISTORY.** Common Cause has played a role in a number of key redistricting lawsuits, such as *Rucho v. Common Cause*, which limited federal courts’ role in partisan gerrymandering. “Common Cause’s unequivocal anti-gerrymandering position had stayed consistent even in recent weeks,” condemning both Newsom and Trump.
- **BOTTOM LINE.** The group still favors independent commissions but is considering its stances in light of “highly unusual circumstances.” (*Christian Science Monitor*)
- **FOOT THE BILL.** Rep. Kevin Kiley (R-CA 03) released the bill text for his legislation to outlaw mid-decade redistricting. The bill amends a 1967 law that mandated single-member districts and prohibits states from redistricting “again until after the next apportionment of Representatives... unless a court requires the State to conduct subsequent redistricting to comply with the Constitution or to enforce the Voting Rights Act.” The bill, if passed, would be effective for any election after November 2024. (release)
- **PREPARING TO FIGHT.** Kiley said he’s prepared to use “all legislative tools available to get the bill to the floor,” including a discharge petition or privileged resolution to force a vote. The California lawmaker said he talked to Speaker Mike Johnson about the issue. Kiley added “the easiest way” to force a vote would be if Johnson backed the bill and took it to the floor.
- **KILEY SAYS:** “I’m going to fight in every way I can to get it approved, because this is a matter that’s of tremendous importance for the country.”
- **KILEY ALSO SAYS:** “The onus is on the speaker to show some leadership here.” (Fox News)

- **VIEW FROM THE SPEAKER SUITE.** Johnson has largely not weighed in on the ongoing redistricting saga, but a spokesperson for his political arm said he's focused on defending the majority while this plays out at the state level. (*Politico*)
- **ANOTHER ONE.** Rep. Mike Lawler (R-NY 17) posted on social media that he is introducing legislation to ban gerrymandering. Lawler said the practice "is wrong and should be banned everywhere." (X)
- **COLORADO LIKELY OUT.** The Centennial State is unlikely to see changes to its congressional map before the midterms. Colorado utilizes an independent commission approved by voters in 2018. Two-thirds of both legislative chambers would need to approve of this change. The Legislature or voters could put an initiative on the ballot, but the deadline already passed and would need 55% to be approved. (Rocky Mountain PBS)
- **SHOW ME THE DISTRICTS.** Missouri Gov. Mike Kehoe (R) said the question around redistricting is "what can we do to support President Trump's agenda?" (KTVI) The Missouri Senate pro tempore said Kehoe "wants to be sure Missouri's representation matches Missouri's Christian conservative majority." Kehoe would have to call a special session, which he has not yet done. Republicans control six of eight congressional seats and would target Rep. Emmanuel Cleaver's (D-05) Kansas City seat. (*Bloomberg*)
- **PLAYING FOR KEEPS.** DNC Chair Ken Martin "urged members of his party to forget their usual rulebook and go all in on partisan redistricting Tuesday." Martin acknowledged that Democrats typically play by the rules, which has limited their ability to counter Republicans' maneuvers.
- **MARTIN SAYS:** "This is not the Democratic Party of your grandfather, which would bring a pencil to the knife fight. This is a new Democratic Party." (*NOTUS*)

MICHIGAN 10: Christina Hines Gets Congressional Endorsement

Elect Democratic Women, a congressional-led group, endorsed former special victims prosecutor Christina Hines (D) in the open seat race. The move is a part of the group's overarching goal to enhance the ratio of Democratic women in national politics, having raised over \$35 million and supported 200 candidates since its start in 2018.

- **THE FIELD.** Hines joins a crowded Democratic primary, facing off against former Biden administration official Eric Chung (D), Pontiac Mayor Tim Greimel (D) and Army veteran Alex Hawkins (D). There is no Republican candidate currently in the race. (release)

NEW JERSEY 07: Democratic Group Fires OBBB Jabs at Another Candidate

Unrig Our Economy, a liberal outside group, plans to spend \$200,000 in a new attack ad targeted at Rep. Tom Kean Jr. (R). The ad goes after Kean's support of President Trump's tax and spending bill.

- **RED TARGET.** Kean is one of a handful of other Republican incumbents that Unrig Our Economy has their focus on. In Texas, the group launched a \$2 million effort against Reps. Dan Crenshaw (R-02), Lance Gooden (R-05), Monica De La Cruz (R-15), Tony Gonzales (R-23), and Beth Van Duyne (R-24) for their support of the reconciliation package. (*Punchbowl News*)

NEVADA 01: State Senator Enters the Fray

State Sen. Carrie Buck (R) launched a challenge to Rep. Dina Titus (D). Buck is also a teacher and "charter school reform leader," according to her announcement. Buck has served in the Legislature since 2021 after she flipped a Democratic seat by 300 votes. She won by 7 points last year due in part to redistricting.

- **THE RACE.** Titus won reelection by 6.5 points in a rematch with 2024 nominee Mark Roberston (R), who was also the nominee in 2022. (*Las Vegas Review-Journal*)
- **THE PRIMARY.** Buck will go up against former state Assemblyman Jim Marchant (R), who also ran for Congress in 2020, secretary of state in 2022, and Senate in 2024.

NEW YORK 01: Long Time Firefighter is Ready to Bring the Heat

Army veteran Chris Gallant (D) launched a challenge to Rep. Nick Lalota (R). In his campaign launch video, Gallant touts his military experience that makes him ready to address controversial decisions made by Congress, which he criticized LaLota for—like voting for President Trump’s reconciliation package. Gallant is a former National Guardsman Black Hawk pilot, and also served as an air traffic controller and volunteer firefighter.

- **GALLANT SAYS:** “To a soldier it doesn’t matter what the call is. When it comes, you answer.” (release)

TEXAS 32: Premature Campaign Launches in Potential New District

2024 presidential candidate Ryan Binkley (R) is gearing up to enter the race for a district that isn’t fully drawn yet. The move comes as Republicans progress in their redistricting efforts that would make the state's electoral map lean in their direction.

- **LONG-SHOT CAMPAIGN.** In 2024, Binkley ran an ambitious presidential campaign before opting to endorse President Trump. Binkley loaned himself \$11 million for his run. In this race, Binkley could face off against state Rep. Katrina Pierson (R).
- **NEW LINES.** If the redistricting plan were to successfully go through, the new district would seep into Dallas County and spread eastward. As it sits currently the district is staunchly Democratic and favors Rep. Julie Johnson (D) in the midterms. (*Punchbowl News*)

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Marsha Blackburn announces anticipated bid for Tennessee governor

By Abby Turner

ALABAMA: Tommy Tuberville Tops \$5 Million Since May

Sen. Tommy Tuberville (R) raised more than \$5.2 million since May and had \$4.7 million on hand, according to July campaign finance reports. He raised \$722,000 in July and spent \$482,000 since launching his campaign. (*Alabama Daily News*)

CALIFORNIA: Dem Candidate Calls For Nine Primary Debates

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond (D) “is challenging his Democratic opponents for governor to not one but nine debates—one each month until next year’s June primary.” Businessman Stephen Cloobek (D) also said he wants to debate his opponents. (*California Playbook*)

GEORGIA: Geoff Duncan Switches Parties, Fields Calls To Run Statewide

Former Lt. Gov. Geoff Duncan (D) announced his switch from a Republican to a Democrat in an opinion column yesterday.

- **NO DECISION YET.** “Duncan said he’s made no decisions about running for office as a Democrat in next year’s statewide elections, but has spoken with people across the political spectrum who’ve encouraged him to run.” Duncan’s “record of pushing conservative policies could hurt his trust with voters” in a primary against other Democrats. (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)
- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** With Georgia’s Democratic field for governor still unsettled, Duncan could shake up the race. The party has yet to coalesce around a frontrunner, with state Sen. Jason Esteves (D) and former Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms (D) splitting most attention. Duncan, a former Republican who left the party yesterday, has name recognition, a track record of winning statewide office, and potential appeal beyond the Atlanta metro area. Still, he may face skepticism from the party’s base, who might not be totally won over by his recent flip and his brand as a center-right conservative who broke with President Trump. If he runs, Duncan could encounter the same kind of intraparty tensions that former Rep. David Jolly (D-FL), another Republican-turned-Democrat, is facing.
- **A DEM WHO IS IN.** Former DeKalb chief executive Michael Thurmond (D) announced his campaign for governor, joining a field that includes Esteves and Bottoms.
- **ALREADY WON STATEWIDE.** “Thurmond is one of only three Black people to win election to statewide office in Georgia.” (WSB)
- **FINDING A FRONTRUNNER.** As Duncan announces his party switch and Thurmond jumps into the Democratic primary, “no clear Democratic front-runner will emerge anytime soon as each major contender fights to define their lane.”
- **OUTSIDE A-TOWN.** But “longtime Democrats aren’t counting” out Thurmond, who has a record in “the state’s most important Democratic stronghold, and a proven ability to win votes outside metro Atlanta.” (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)

MAINE: Republican Businessman Joins Over a Dozen Running for Governor

Businessman Ben Midgley (R) joined the crowded Republican primary to succeed term-limited Gov. Janet Mills (D), becoming “one of 15 candidates so far who have filed campaign finance paperwork” to run for governor. (WCSH)

SOUTH DAKOTA: Independent Candidate Asks Voters to Ignore Sex Offender Status

Terry Gleason (I), a Republican running for governor as an independent, “says his status as a sex offender should not prevent someone from voting for him.” KELOLAND News “discovered while preparing this report on Monday that Gleason is on the state’s sex offender registry” for raping a minor. (KELO)

TENNESSEE: Marsha Blackburn Sets Official Face Off with John Rose

Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R) “formally announced her campaign for governor” in a campaign video released this morning. “Blackburn kicks off her campaign by doubling down on her familiar campaign strategies: aligning herself with” President Trump “and staking her claim as the conservative choice.”

- **TRUMP’S PICK.** She’ll face Rep. John Rose (R-06) in the Republican primary to succeed term-limited Gov. Bill Lee (R). Trump has endorsed both in past elections, “meaning both will likely vie for Trump’s endorsement in the primary.” (*Nashville Banner*)

- **ALREADY ENDORSED.** “Blackburn is already the recipient of endorsements from across the state even without having announced she's running, including from once-gubernatorial hopeful” Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs (R) and Rep. Chuck Fleischmann (R-03).
- **A HELPING HAND.** Americans for Prosperity-Tennessee is “mobilizing to knock 200,000 doors” for Blackburn. (*Knoxville News Sentinel*)

VIRGINIA: NRA Endorses State GOP Ticket

Two days after President Trump “cleared up lingering confusion about his support for” Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears (R), “the National Rifle Association on Tuesday enthusiastically endorsed her and the full GOP ticket.” (*Washington Examiner*)

OVERLOOKED

Come and Take It

By Amelia Monroe

Amid Republican-led redistricting efforts in Texas, at least 50 state Democratic lawmakers fled the state last Sunday to block the quorum necessary for the new maps passage. The move is referred to as “breaking quorum” and with only 88 Republicans out of 100 required members present to conduct business, redistricting has been put at a temporary standstill. This method has been a political strategy in Texas since 1870, when 13 state senators walked out of a vote on a bill that would grant the governor wartime authority. Since then, breaking quorum in Texas has occurred three other times: 1979, 2003, and 2021.