

dozen years railing against federal spending, so you should expect many Republicans will be wary of whatever you're trying to do. And you don't have a ton of political capital, since you have been singling out senators by name, and the House Freedom Caucus, which is a block of 30 votes that sticks together on tons of stuff -- you even said you'd primary their members! And you just lost the health-care vote. Attaching infrastructure spending to another bill actually could complicate matters.

FOR YOUR RADAR -- "Trump's 'red line' reversal hints at Syria shift," by Michael Crowley: "Appearing next to Jordan's King Abdullah II at the White House, [President Donald] Trump said Assad must be held accountable for a chemical weapons attack this week in a pro-rebel area that reportedly killed dozens of people, many of them children. U.S. officials believe the Assad regime is likely behind the attack, which bore the hallmarks of nerve gas, though Damascus has denied responsibility. Asked whether the attack violated a 'red line' for him, Trump said that it 'crosses many, many lines, beyond a red line.' Trump would not specify what kind of response he would deliver to Syria's government. 'You will see. They will have a message. You will see what the message is,' he said. But after calling the attack 'an affront to humanity,' Trump suggested he was reconsidering his view that the United States should not work to remove Assad from power. 'My attitude towards Syria and Assad has changed very much,' he said." <http://politi.co/2o5Vsvu>

***** **A message from Morgan Stanley:** Morgan Stanley helped All Aboard Florida raise capital to bring Brightline, an express railway, to the Sunshine State-potentially cutting travel time across Southern Florida by up to 25-30%¹ versus existing options. Investing in infrastructure isn't just good for people-it can be good for cities. Learn more at morganstanley.com/brightline. *****

PALACE INTRIGUE -- "Mega-donor [Rebekah Mercer] urged Bannon not to resign," by Eliana Johnson, Ken Vogel, and Josh Dawsey: "The man credited with honing Donald Trump's populist message and guiding him into the White House has grown frustrated amid continued infighting in the West Wing, so much so that in recent weeks a top donor had to convince him to stay in his position. Five people, including a senior administration official and several sources close to the president, tell POLITICO that Bannon, one of Trump's closest advisers, has clashed with the president's son-in-law Jared Kushner, who's taken on an increasingly prominent portfolio in the West Wing. Bannon has complained that Kushner and his allies are trying to undermine his populist approach, the sources said.

"Republican mega-donor Rebekah Mercer, a longtime Bannon confidante who became a prominent Trump supporter during the campaign, urged Bannon not to resign. 'Rebekah Mercer prevailed upon him to stay,' said one person familiar with the situation. Another person familiar with the situation, a GOP operative who talks to Mercer, said: 'Bekah tried to convince him that this is a long-term play.'"

<http://politi.co/2nGLLA2>

BEHIND THE SCENES -- "Bannon's departure solidifies McMaster's control over the NSC," by Bryan Bender: "National security adviser H.R. McMaster quietly slipped

out of the White House grounds last week to seek the counsel of one of his aging predecessors, another three-star general who ran the National Security Council in a time of political turmoil and congressional probes. McMaster's session with 92-year-old Brent Scowcroft, who served as national security adviser for Presidents Gerald Ford and George H.W. Bush, was the clearest indication yet that McMaster, who took the reins of the NSC in February after his predecessor Mike Flynn was ousted, intends to radically depart from the approach taken by Flynn and ... Steve Bannon ... An administration official with direct knowledge of the deliberations said the changes are part of broader reforms McMaster is implementing, including reducing the size of the NSC's professional staff, which ballooned to about 450 under President Barack Obama." <http://politi.co/2nNqQfx>

COURT WATCH -- "Senate braces for nuclear fallout," by Seung Min Kim and Burgess Everett: "Senate Republicans will trigger the nuclear option for Supreme Court nominees on Thursday in a move that critics say will wreak untold damage on the institution for years to come. But far from vowing revenge, Democrats just want to move on. 'There's a healthy feeling in both caucuses that we've got to put this behind us and legislate,' said Senate Minority Whip Dick Durbin of Illinois. 'There's more to the Senate than Supreme Court nominations. And as important as they are, we have other opportunities.' Democrats could certainly seek payback if they wanted to. The most draconian response would be to drag out the roughly 1,200 presidential nominations that require confirmation; such a tactic would bring the Senate to a virtual standstill, ensuring almost nothing else got done." <http://politi.co/2p4b9ka>

SOMETHING TO WATCH -- "Trump team already strategizing for the next Supreme Court vacancy," by Shane Goldmacher: "While the White House is focused this week on shepherding Trump's first Supreme Court nominee, Neil Gorsuch,