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**From:** Morning Score  
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**Subject:** POLITICO's Morning Score: Red-state Democrats stay away from GOP tax bill — Trump moves to block Romney Senate run — Latino Victory Fund endorses

By Daniel Strauss | 12/04/2017 10:00 AM EDT

*With Scott Bland*

*The following newsletter is an abridged version of Campaign Pro's Morning Score. For an earlier morning read on exponentially more races - and for a more comprehensive aggregation of the day's most important campaign news - sign up for Campaign Pro today. (<http://www.politicopro.com/proinfo>)*

**TAXATION WITHOUT... - "Red-state Democrats stay away from GOP tax bill" by Campaign Pro's Kevin Robillard:** "When Republicans began their push for tax reform earlier this year, they had hopes of wooing multiple Senate Democrats to back their plan: 10 of them faced reelection in states President Trump won, five in states he won by more than 20 points. But those dreams were dashed by the bill's unpopularity in public polling and the inclusion of measures no Democrat was willing to vote for. None of the Democrats voted for the plan on Friday night. But the GOP still thinks it can make them pay in 2018. ... According to a Democrat tracking media buys, Republican groups have spent about \$6 million on ads promoting the plan, double the \$3 million Democrats have spent attacking it. The state with the most action was Wisconsin. There, the Koch Bros.-backed Freedom Partners Action Fund spent \$1.6 million blasting Baldwin for supporting tax increases in the past and not supporting tax reform. Senate Majority PAC responded with its own six-figure buy to defend the Wisconsinite." **Full story.**

**DAILY ROLL TIDE - "McConnell on Moore: 'I'm going to let the people of Alabama make the call'" by Robillard:** "Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Sunday shifted his tone on allowing Alabama GOP Senate candidate Roy Moore to serve in the Senate if elected. ... 'I'm going to let the people of Alabama make the call,' McConnell said on ABC's 'This Week.' He said he thought the Senate Ethics Committee would handle the allegations against Moore if he is elected: 'The ethics committee will have to consider the matters that have been litigated in the campaign should that particular candidate win.'" **Full story.**

- A CBS poll released Sunday found Moore leading Jones 49 percent to 43 percent. A Washington Post poll released Saturday, however, showed Jones leading Moore 50 percent to 47 percent.

- **"Is Roy Moore winning? Don't ask the pollsters" by Politico's Steven Shepard:** "The reality? No one really has a clue about where things stand with Alabama voters in the Dec. 12 special election. For all the national attention and the millions of dollars spent to win the seat, there's relatively little public polling in the contest. Only three public surveys in the average have been conducted since the Thanksgiving holiday, and odds are you've never heard of two of the three pollsters." **Full story.**

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN CONGRESS - Freshman Democrat Ruben Kihuen accused by former campaign staffer, via BuzzFeed's Kate Nocera and Tarini Parti:** "Samantha, whose last name BuzzFeed News is withholding at her request, began working for Rep. [Ruben Kihuen](#) early in his campaign to unseat Republican Rep. Cresent Hardy in December 2015 and quit by April 2016. Starting in February of that year, Samantha, who was 25 at the time, said Kihuen, who was then 35 and still competing in the primary race, propositioned her for dates and sex despite her repeated rejections. On two occasions, she says he touched her thighs without consent. ... After this story was published, the congressman's office sent out a new statement adding that he wanted to 'make it clear that I don't recall any of the circumstances' described by Samantha. ... DCCC chairman Ben Ray Luján called on Kihuen to resign." [Full story](#).

**- More from POLITICO's Heather Caygle and Elena Schneider:** House Minority Leader [Nancy Pelosi](#) and Minority Whip [Steny Hoyer](#) also called on Kihuen to resign. Lucy Flores, a former state legislative colleague and primary rival of Kihuen's in 2016, said: "Even though he maintained a girlfriend, he was known to be very flirtatious and hands on. I personally witnessed him being grabby with young, attractive women. ... I can certainly confirm that was the reputation he maintained [in the state Legislature]." [Full story](#).

**- Flores also blistered ex-Sen. Harry Reid and the Culinary Union on Twitter for aiding Kihuen's rise:** "You can thank [@SenatorReid](#) and his cronies for making sure the powers including [@Culinary226](#) aligned behind his choice. He's got a terrible track record of male political mentees, BTW."

**- IN FARENTHOLD'S TX-27 - Potential primary challenger steps forward:** "It is a sad day when an elected official uses taxpayer money to settle a claim of sexual harassment," said Texas Water Development Board Chairman Bech Bruun in a statement, via the [Texas Tribune](#). "I am humbled by the numerous calls I have received today and during the past weeks asking me to run for U.S. Congress to help restore voters' faith in our national leadership. ... I anticipate announcing my intentions next week." The filing deadline for Texas' primaries is Dec. 11.

**Days until the 2018 election: 336**

Thanks for joining us! You can email tips to the Campaign Pro team at [sbland@politico.com](mailto:sbland@politico.com), [eschneider@politico.com](mailto:eschneider@politico.com), [krobillard@politico.com](mailto:krobillard@politico.com), [dstrauss@politico.com](mailto:dstrauss@politico.com) and [mseverns@politico.com](mailto:mseverns@politico.com).

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**THE PLAYBOOK POWER LIST: 18 TO WATCH IN 2018:** The final Playbook Power List of the year highlights 18 politicians, activists and operatives across the country who are poised to make waves in 2018. From the anti-Trump "Resistance" on the left to the far right Bannomite wing trying to remake the GOP, keep an eye on these people over the next 12 months. [Click HERE](#) to find out who made the list.

**LEADERSHIP CHANGE** - Washington Gov. Jay Inslee is poised to take over the

chairmanship of the Democratic Governors Association today. Here's a DGA [video](#) hailing the beginning of Inslee's chairmanship.

**GO SOUTHWEST - "Latino Victory Fund endorses in Southwest governor races" by Robillard:** "Latino Victory Fund is backing Rep. [Michelle Lujan Grisham](#) of New Mexico and David Garcia of Arizona in its first gubernatorial endorsements of the cycle. ... Garcia and Grisham are the two most prominent Latino candidates for governor in 2018. Garcia is competing with state Sen. Steve Farley for the Democratic nomination to challenge GOP Gov. Doug Ducey. Grisham is competing with state Sen. Joe Cervantes and businessman Jeff Apodaca, the son of former Gov. Jerry Apodaca. GOP Gov. Susana Martinez is term-limited. If Grisham wins, she would become the first Democratic Latina governor in the history of the United States." **Full story.** <<

**LEVIN RETIREMENT - "U.S. Rep. Sander Levin will retire from Congress when term ends next year" by The Detroit Free Press's Kathleen Gray:** "After 35 years in Congress, U.S. Rep. [Sandy Levin](#), D-Royal Oak, has decided it's time for a different adventure. The 86-year-old Democrat will not run for reelection in 2018, but will instead join the University of Michigan's Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, where he will continue to work on issues that have engrossed him in Congress, such as health care and trade issues. ... Levin is leaving after three decades of doing everything from fighting to make sure Social Security isn't privatized to securing a bailout for the domestic auto industry and overseeing the passage of the Affordable Care Act as the chairman of the powerful tax-writing Ways and Means committee." **Full story.**

**12-DIMENSIONAL CHESS - "Trump moves to block Romney from the Senate" by POLITICO's Alex Isenstadt:** "Donald Trump is going all out to persuade seven-term Utah Sen. [Orrin Hatch](#) to seek reelection - a push aimed in no small part at keeping the president's longtime nemesis, Mitt Romney, out of the Senate. ... Trump is slated to ride [to Utah today] with Hatch both ways on Air Force One - a total of roughly nine hours round-trip. After descending from the plane together, the two will meet with Mormon leaders and then head to the state capitol for the signing of the executive order, according to three White House officials. Hatch will introduce Trump, who in turn is expected to lavish praise on the senator. After the order is signed, Hatch is expected to receive the president's pen." **Full story.**

- **"Steve Bannon mulls Orrin Hatch endorsement to block Mitt Romney" by The Washington Examiner's David Drucker:** "Steve Bannon is mulling an endorsement of Sen. Orrin Hatch in his bid to keep Mitt Romney out of the Senate, a source close to President Trump's former chief strategist confirmed on Sunday. Bannon is targeting Republican incumbents in 2018 primaries to undermine support for Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. Hatch, a McConnell loyalist and a fixture of Washington and the Republican establishment for more than 40 years, is not Bannon's ideal choice. ... "If Steve had a choice between Orrin Hatch and Mitt Romney, he would pick Hatch 10 times out of 10," the source close to Bannon told the Washington Examiner." **Full story.**

**STAFFING UP - "Former White House southeast political director running Tennessee Senate campaign" by Campaign Pro's Daniel Strauss and Daniel Lippman:** "Thomas

Midanek, formerly the White House southeast regional political director, has left the Trump administration and joined former Tennessee Rep. Stephen Fincher's Senate campaign as campaign manager. A source familiar with Midanek's thinking said he left the White House because he 'wanted to get back into the campaign world.' Midanek confirmed the new job but declined to comment further. ... Fincher is one of a handful of Republicans running in the Tennessee Republican primary for Sen. Bob Corker's Senate seat. His most high profile opponent in the primary is Rep. Marsha Blackburn." **Full story**.

**QUOTE OF THE DAY:** "And we'll swear in whoever's elected and see where we are at that particular point." - Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell during an interview on "Face the Nation" on Sunday responding to a question about what to do about Roy Moore.

*To view online:*

<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/morning-score/2017/12/04/red-state-democrats-stay-away-from-gop-tax-bill-039170>

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