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From: Morning Score
Sent: Thur 5/25/2017 2:04:38 PM
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Score: Election Day in Montana — GOP candidate cited for assault of reporter — Ossoff raised \$6.9M online in April

By Kevin Robillard | 05/25/2017 10:00 AM EDT

With Scott Bland and Daniel Strauss

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>)

FIVE THINGS TO WATCH IN MONTANA - POLITICO's Gabriel Debenedetti previews the MT-AL special from Missoula: "The closer-than-expected Montana special election is destined to be picked apart for clues about how voters feel about Donald Trump's nascent presidency. Like the record-breaking Georgia special election that will be decided next month - already the most expensive House race in history - the Montana contest between Republican businessman Greg Gianforte and Democratic musician Rob Quist is awash in money, nearly doubling the price tag of the state's previous most expensive campaign. The outcome of the at-large House race won't just serve as an early look at Trump's standing with voters in a red state he carried easily. It will also provide insight into the conditions Republicans are likely to face in the midterm elections, when the House majority could be in jeopardy. But complicating matters, a bizarre election eve incident Wednesday night drew national attention as Gianforte allegedly body-slammed a reporter who was asking him about the GOP's health care plan, sparking an investigation from the local sheriff just hours before polls opened.. ... Here are POLITICO's five things to watch as Montana votes today: THE TRUMP (AND PENCE) EFFECT ... JUST HOW ENERGIZED IS THE DEMOCRATIC BASE? ... THE GOP FREAK-OUT WATCH ... THE POLITICS OF REPEAL AND REPLACE ... WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR 2018...AND 2020?" [Full story.](#)

- LATE BREAK - "Montana House GOP candidate cited after reporter says he 'body-slammed me,'" by POLITICO's Hadas Gold and Gabriel Debenedetti: "Montana Republican congressional candidate Greg Gianforte was issued a citation late Wednesday after he allegedly "body-slammed" a reporter at a campaign event on the eve of a hotly contested special election. Ben Jacobs, a reporter for The Guardian tweeted that Gianforte "body-slammed me and broke my glasses" at a campaign event in Bozeman, Montana - minutes before what was to be the last campaign rally of the campaign. Jacobs said he had asked Gianforte about a new budget analysis of House Republicans' effort to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act." [Full story, including Jacobs' audio of the incident.](#)

- Gianforte was cited for misdemeanor assault late Wednesday night, [per the Gallatin County sheriff.](#)

- "Fox News team witnesses GOP House candidate 'body slam' reporter," by Fox News'

Alicia Acuna: "... During that conversation, another man - who we now know is Ben Jacobs of The Guardian - walked into the room with a voice recorder, put it up to Gianforte's face and began asking if he had a response to the newly released Congressional Budget Office report on the American Health Care Act. Gianforte told him he would get to him later. Jacobs persisted with his question. Gianforte told him to talk to his press guy, Shane Scanlon. **At that point, Gianforte grabbed Jacobs by the neck with both hands and slammed him into the ground behind him. Faith, Keith and I watched in disbelief as Gianforte then began punching the man,** as he moved on top the reporter and began yelling something to the effect of 'I'm sick and tired of this!' Jacobs scrambled to his knees and said something about his glasses being broken. He asked Faith, Keith and myself for our names. In shock, we did not answer. He then said he wanted the police called and went to leave. Gianforte looked at the three of us and repeatedly apologized. ... To be clear, at no point did any of us who witnessed this assault see Jacobs show any form of physical aggression toward Gianforte, who left the area after giving statements to local sheriff's deputies." [Full story.](#)

- The [DCCC](#) and [MoveOn.org](#) have turned the audio tape into digital ads and Priorities USA is promoting local news stories about the incident [on Facebook](#). The story was also all over the news in Montana Wednesday night. One local TV stations broke into an episode of Modern Family with the story, and it led promos for the late local news on a number of other stations, according to a survey of broadcast TV transcripts in the state.

- **Polls close at 10 p.m. Eastern tonight**, when results will start coming in [here](#), via the Montana secretary of state's office.

DIGITAL FUNDRAISING WATCH - "Ossoff raised \$6.9M online in April," by Campaign Pro's Scott Bland: "Georgia Democrat Jon Ossoff raised over \$6.9 million online in April - more than the DCCC, DSCC and DNC combined - as donors continue to pour cash into the heated special House election in the Atlanta suburbs. That's according to new federal campaign finance records filed this week by ActBlue, the Democratic online fundraising platform. It's the first broad look at Ossoff's fundraising since the beginning of last month, when Ossoff's campaign filed its own FEC report before the special primary on April 18. Ossoff reported raising over \$8.3 million by March 29 in that filing." [Full story, including online fundraising numbers from Senate Democrats and major PACs.](#)

- **NEW THIS A.M. - Veteran attacks Ossoff in new super PAC spot:** A new ad from Congressional Leadership Fund in the Georgia 6th special election features a Vietnam veteran nurse criticizing Democrat Jon Ossoff for inflating his resume on national security and voting with Nancy Pelosi. "Ossoff is a liberal and immature and he lied to us about his national security experience," says Donna Rowe, a retired Army captain. "Ossoff would vote with Nancy Pelosi to put our soldiers and our dear country at risk. Jon Ossoff cannot be trusted." **Watch the ad [here](#).**

CBO REPORT - "House Obamacare repeal bill would leave 23 million more uninsured," by Adam Cancryn and Sarah Ferris: "Roughly 23 million more people would be uninsured over a decade if the House-passed Republican Obamacare repeal bill becomes law, according to a long-awaited CBO analysis that could complicate GOP hopes of getting a companion measure through the Senate. That's nearly identical to the coverage losses that CBO forecast for an earlier

version of the bill - despite the addition of new provisions and billions of dollars in funding aimed at keeping more people insured. The nonpartisan scorekeeping office also forecast the GOP plan would cut the deficit by \$119 billion over a decade, primarily because of its cuts to Medicaid and private insurance subsidies." [Full story](#).

- AARP ADS - Group to spend \$1 million-plus pressuring five Republicans: "The group is targeting Arizona Sen. Jeff Flake and Nevada Sen. Dean Heller, both of whom are up for reelection in potential battleground states in 2018, as well as Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner and Alaska Sens. Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski. The ad attacks the Republican health care plan passed by the House, saying it allows insurance companies to charge an "age tax" and does not protect people with pre-existing conditions. The ads will start airing this week." **Watch the ads [here](#).**

Days until the 2017 election: 167.

Days until the 2018 election: 531.

Thanks for joining us. You can email tips to the Campaign Pro team at sbland@politico.com, eschneider@politico.com, krobillard@politico.com and dstrauss@politico.com.

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PROGRAMMING NOTE - Due to the Memorial Day holiday, Morning Score will not publish on Monday, May 29. Our next Morning Score will publish on Tuesday, May 30.

DEMOCRATIC DEBATES - "Health care or Russia? Democrats divided on 2018 focus," by Kevin Robillard and Elana Schor: "The party's campaign committees and many of Democrats' leading super PACs have spent virtually all their energy this year on shaming Republicans for their push to repeal Obamacare, an issue that clearly touches voters' daily lives. But on the other side of the split, American Bridge - the party's outside-group research arm run by David Brock, the well-known Hillary Clinton ally - is among those convinced the investigation into possible collusion between President Donald Trump's campaign and Russian officials is one Democrats would be foolish to downplay or wait to take advantage of. A raft of data has already tabbed the House Republican health care bill as highly unpopular. But after last week's explosive developments related to the Russia investigation, Democratic groups have commissioned polling to gauge just how damaging the probe could be to Republicans in the 2018 midterms. They've also begun testing theories on how to make Trump's Russia problem into House and Senate Republicans' Russia problem." [Full story](#).

MAJORITY FORWARD LAUNCHES ADS IN SIX STATES - Majority Forward, a Democratic nonprofit with ties to Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, is airing new ads in six states on the Senate battleground map. In Indiana, the ad praises Sen. Joe Donnelly for working to bring jobs back from overseas. **Watch it [here](#).** In Missouri, an ad jointly paid for with VoteVets, the spot praises Sen. Claire McCaskill for working to make the VA more accountable. **Watch it [here](#).** In Arizona, the ad uses town hall footage to hit Sen. Jeff Flake over

Obamacare repeal. **Watch it [here](#).** In Nevada, the ad attacks Sen. Dean Heller over cuts to Medicaid, including nursing homes and rural hospitals. **Watch it [here](#).** In North Dakota, the ad praises Sen. Heidi Heitkamp for her work helping the state's military bases. **Watch it [here](#).** In Montana, the ad praises Sen. Jon Tester for his work to defend internet privacy. **Watch it [here](#).**

2018 WATCH - "Lynn Westmoreland is NOT running for governor," by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution's Greg Bluestein: "In a statement to the AJC, Westmoreland said 'the best contribution that I can make to our state is outside of elected office.' He added that he looks forward to 'doing all I can to support the Republican nominee for governor and the entire Republican ticket in 2018.'" **[Full story](#).**

ENDORSEMENT WATCH - Portman backs Mandel: With Rep. Pat Tiberi now longer in the running for Senate, Ohio Sen. Rob Portman has endorsed state treasurer Josh Mandel for the GOP Senate nomination. "Today, I'm encouraging all Republicans to unify behind Josh," Portman says in an endorsement video. **Watch it [here](#).**

TRANSITIONS - Let America Vote announces senior staff hires: The Jason Kander-led voting rights group has hired Abe Rakov, Kander's campaign manager, as executive director. Brendan Summers, who was the Iowa Caucus Director for the Bernie Sanders campaign, will be campaigns director. Sylvia Ruiz, who worked as the Hillary Clinton's campaign director of Hispanic Paid Media, will be political director. Leigh Chapman, formerly of the Pennsylvania Secretary of State's office and the Voter Protection Program, will be senior policy advisor. Suzy Smith will be digital director, Ben Tyson will be national field director and Austin Laufersweiler will be press secretary.

- **NRSC hires new regional press secretary.** The Republican Senate committee has brought on Michael McAdams as the third person in its press operation.

- **Daily Kos hires Fiddler:** Carolyn Fiddler, the DLCC's communications director, will become Daily Kos' political editor and senior communications adviser. Fiddler will be based in D.C. and lead the website's coverage of and efforts surrounding redistricting and state legislatures.

- **"Renee Ellmers, who endorsed Trump early, lands a federal job," by The News & Observer's Lynn Bonner:** "Former U.S. Rep. Renee Ellmers, an early supporter of Donald Trump for president, has a new job in the Trump administration running the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' regional office in Atlanta. ... Ellmers lost a primary to fellow Republican U.S. Rep. George Holding last year." **[Full story](#).**

- **DGA hires Illinois communications director.** The Democratic Governors Association is bringing on Sam Salustro, previously the research director on former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley's presidential campaign, as a communications director focused on the Illinois governor's race.

CODA - QUOTE OF THE DAY: "Al is trying to sell books and apparently he's decided that being obnoxious and insulting me is good for causing liberals to buy his books." - Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, to [POLITICO](#), on Al Franken devoting a chapter of his book to mocking him.

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