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**From:** Morning Score  
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**Subject:** POLITICO's Morning Score: Northam wins Virginia governors race — Murphy wins in New Jersey — LoBiondo to retire from Congress

By Maggie Sevens | 11/08/2017 10:00 AM EDT

*With Zach Montellaro, Elena Schneider*

*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>)*

**ELECTION RESULTS - Ralph Northam (D) 54 percent, Ed Gillespie (R) 45 percent in Virginia's governor's race; Phil Murphy (D) 56 percent, Kim Guadagno (R) 42 percent in New Jersey's governor's race.**

- "**Northam beats Gillespie in Virginia governor's race,**" by POLITICO's Gabriel Debenedetti: "Democrat Ralph Northam was elected governor of Virginia on Tuesday in a sweeping victory that defied the conventional wisdom of a tightening race. The lieutenant governor's victory joins Democrat Phil Murphy's win in New Jersey's gubernatorial race to hand Democrats new hope in the Donald Trump era. After a bruising race against former Republican National Committee chairman Ed Gillespie, Northam outran Hillary Clinton in a state she carried by 5 points while losing the presidency in November 2016. A series of late-campaign controversies hitting Northam had Republicans cautiously optimistic that Gillespie could close the gap and pull off an upset, but Democrats rode a wave of anti-Trump backlash and satisfaction with outgoing Gov. Terry McAuliffe's administration."

- "'It was said that the eyes of the nation are now on the commonwealth,' Northam said in his victory speech. 'Today, Virginians have answered and spoken. Virginians have told us to end the divisiveness, that we will not condone hatred and bigotry, and to end the politics that have torn this country apart.' ... Gillespie sought to strike a balance between engaging moderates with talk of jobs and taxes and firing up his base by running ads on illegal immigration and sanctuary cities - which don't exist in Virginia - and cultural touchstones like Confederate monuments and NFL anthem protests. Gillespie did not initially home in on those subjects, but they became a bigger part of his campaign after he nearly lost the June Republican primary to Trump's former Virginia campaign chairman." [Full story](#).

- **UT-03 also elected Republican Provo Mayor John Curtis to former Rep. Jason Chaffetz's seat Tuesday night by a wide margin.** Read more from the [Salt Lake Tribune](#).

**DEPARTURE LOUNGE - "LoBiondo to retire from Congress," by Campaign Pro's Elena Schneider:** "New Jersey Rep. Frank LoBiondo, a senior Republican on the Armed Services Committee, will not run for reelection in 2018, according to a GOP operative familiar with the decision. The decision will open up a battleground district in southern New Jersey that LoBiondo

has held easily since 1994. New Jersey's 2nd District backed President Donald Trump with 50.6 percent of the vote to Hillary Clinton's 46 percent in 2016. But former President Barack Obama also won the seat twice with between 53 and 54 percent of the vote." [Full story.](#)

- **"Van Drew 'seriously considering' running for LoBiondo's seat, with Norcross' support," by POLITICO New Jersey reporter Matt Friedman:** "State Sen. Jeff Van Drew is 'seriously' considering running for retiring Republican Rep. [Frank LoBiondo's](#) seat, and South Jersey's most powerful Democrat is encouraging him to do so. 'I'm going to consider it very seriously. I'm going to look at all the issues and certainly talk to advisers and friends and colleagues, but it is something I'm seriously considering,' Van Drew said in a phone interview." **Full story [here.](#)**

- **Other names floated:** Retired judge Ray Batten as potential candidates. Democrat Tanzie Youngblood, a retired teacher, is already in the race. Republicans, meanwhile, named state Assemblyman Chris Brown and former Atlantic County Sheriff Frank Balles.

- **"Poe won't seek reelection in 2018," by POLITICO's Cristiano Lima:** "Seven-term Rep. [Ted Poe](#) (R-Texas) said today he will not seek reelection in 2018, the latest in a string of GOP lawmakers to announce their retirements recently. Poe, a former prosecutor and judge, won reelection in 2016 in the solidly conservative 2nd Congressional District by nearly 30 points, but said he was ready to move on." Full story [here.](#)

- **KEEP AN EYE ON - More safe Republican retirements expected:** Another senior Republican member, Virginia Rep. Bob Goodlatte, is also eyeing retirement, according to a Republican operative familiar with those conversations. (The same operative flagged Poe hours before he announced his retirement.) Goodlatte didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

- **SHAKEUP COMING IN AZ-SEN - McSally tells colleagues she's in:** "Congresswoman Martha McSally is planning to enter Arizona's 2018 Senate race, giving [Republican Kelli Ward](#) new competition in the GOP primary," The Arizona Republic reports. "The lawmaker has told her Republican colleagues in Arizona's delegation that she intends to enter the Senate race, but didn't indicate when she would formally announce her bid, according to two people with knowledge of the conversations." **Full story [here.](#)**

**Days until the 2018 election: 363.**

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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**AND YET... BRAND PROBLEMS - "Poll: Views of Democratic Party hit lowest mark in 25 years," by CNN's Ryan Struyk:** "Favorable views of the Democratic Party have dropped to their lowest mark in more than a quarter century of polling, according to [new numbers from a](#)

CNN poll conducted by SSRS. Only 37% of Americans have a favorable opinion of Democrats, down from 44% in March of this year. A majority, 54%, have an unfavorable view, matching their highest mark in polls from CNN and SSRS, CNN/ORC and CNN/USA Today/Gallup stretching back to 1992." **Full story [here](#)**.

**FLASHBACK - "Democratic brand still suffering despite GOP woes," by POLITICO's Elena Schneider.**

**AIR WARS - "Moore reserves first TV ads since Alabama primary," by POLITICO's Daniel Strauss:** "Former Alabama Supreme Court judge Roy Moore has started reserving TV advertising for the special general election for Senate against Democrat Doug Jones. Moore, the Republican nominee, has reserved broadcast TV advertising time between Thursday and Dec. 11, a day before the election, according to Advertising Analytics. Advertising Analytics has seen \$111,000 in reservations so far, with more spending likely. Jones had the airwaves to himself for weeks since the September primary runoff, when Moore defeated Sen. Luther Strange for the GOP nomination." Full story [here](#).

- **"Jones ad hits Moore's 'extreme views' on health care," by Strauss:** Former U.S. Attorney Doug Jones, the Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate in Alabama, started running a new TV ad today warning that Republican Roy Moore would damage the American health care system if elected. 'If it's broken, fix it. Health care, it's broken. You know it, and I know it. But Roy Moore's grandstanding and extreme views will do nothing to fix it,' Jones says in the new 30-second ad. 'And his policies will take us back to the past.'" Full story [here](#).

- **"Blunt, Cassidy, Ernst listed as Moore fundraiser attendees," by Strauss:** "Alabama Republican Roy Moore's recent Capitol Hill fundraiser attracted senators from across the party's ideological spectrum, yet another sign of the GOP coalescing around its controversial nominee in the state's special Senate election ahead of the Dec. 12 vote. Sens. Rand Paul and Mike Lee and former Sen. Jim DeMint, who have all been involved in past anti-establishment primary fights, headlined the event for Moore. But a briefing memo obtained by POLITICO also listed Sens. Roy Blunt, Bill Cassidy and Joni Ernst as attendees, as well as Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn, Sen. Roger Wicker (a former NRSC chairman) and Alabama's entire Republican House delegation. The memo also said that prior to the event \$50,000 had already been raised. Campaign officials have not said how much the fundraiser brought in overall." **Full story.**

- Sen. Steve Daines endorsed Roy Moore for Senate, per a campaign release.

- **"DeWine to air his first TV ads in Ohio governor's race," also by Strauss:** "Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine's campaign for governor has reserved its first TV advertising time, starting later this week. Advertising Analytics reported seeing \$25,290 reserved on Fox News so far (the total could grow). The flight runs from Wednesday through Nov. 14, next Tuesday." **Full story [here](#)**.

**NEVER TOO EARLY - "The 2020 Glossy Primary Is Underway,"** by National Journal's Hanna Trudo: "Less than 10 months into the new administration and a year out from the midterms, Democrats thought to be eyeing national bids have sounded off in outlets like

Cosmopolitan with striking frequency, drawing attention to steps being taken to target women voters outraged by the country's top leadership. ... 'It's the women's equivalent of what Trump does in terms of tweeting,' said Celinda Lake, a longtime Democratic pollster who focuses on framing issues to female voters. 'It's a way to have a direct communication with your base.'" [Full story.](#)

**FIRST IN SCORE** - Former Navy SEAL Robert O'Neill endorses Republican John James, candidate for U.S. Senate in Michigan. Per a forthcoming press release: "I am proud to endorse John James for Senate. John James represents the epitome of what we should all strive to be as citizens of this great nation," O'Neill said. "Whether it was defending freedom over Baghdad or creating jobs in Michigan, John has demonstrated a passion for service and commitment to excellence that makes him the best choice for Senate." ...Robert O'Neill is one of the most highly decorated combat veterans in modern American history with 52 honors including two Silver Stars and four Bronze Stars with Valor."

**DEEP IN THE HEART...** - "**GOP fears Trump slump for North Texas women ahead of 2018 races,**" by McClatchy's Andrea Drusch: "Texas Republicans badly need the grassroots efforts of North Texas women to win local and congressional races next year. But getting their support - and enthusiasm - could be a challenge. ... But women were not overly enthusiastic about Donald Trump in 2016, who won Texas by 9 percentage points, the smallest margin of any GOP presidential nominee in decades." [Full story.](#)

**CODA - QUOTE OF THE DAY:** "My donors are basically saying, 'Get it done or don't ever call me again,'" Rep. Chris Collins on [tax reform](#).

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