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From: Morning Score
Sent: Wed 7/26/2017 2:04:07 PM
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Score: What happened last night on Obamacare — Messer finance chair promises 'exciting news' Wednesday — Democrats prod Heller, Flake amidst health care votes

By Elena Schneider | 07/26/2017 10:00 AM EDT

With Zach Montellaro, Kevin Robillard 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>)

VOTE-A-RAMA - "How the GOP brought Obamacare repeal back from the dead," by POLITICO's Burgess Everett, Seung Min Kim and Jennifer Haberkorn: "As Mitch McConnell strode to the Senate floor on Tuesday, with no votes to spare to keep the GOP's Obamacare repeal campaign alive, he knew where everyone in his conference stood. Everyone, that is, except for Ron Johnson. The ornery Wisconsinite had been needling the Senate majority leader for weeks, accusing McConnell of a 'breach of trust' in selling a health care plan to his caucus. So when Johnson sprinted to the Capitol basement after a party lunch for a meeting with FBI director nominee Christopher Wray, just as a critical procedural vote got underway, Republicans had no idea where he would land, said a person who knows the senator well. ...But Tuesday's dramatic roll call - capped by Sen. John McCain's return to Washington less than a week after a cancer diagnosis and a tie-breaking vote by Vice President Mike Pence - allows President Donald Trump and his fractured party to continue their long-shot campaign to scuttle the Democratic health care law they've spent seven years railing against." **Full story.**

ICYMI - DSCC launches Nevada, Arizona Pandora ads ahead of health votes: The DSCC has launched digital radio ads against GOP Nevada Sen. [Dean Heller](#) and Arizona Sen. [Jeff Flake](#) ahead of today's vote on debating Obamacare repeal. The ads, made by Ralston Lapp, are running on Pandora radio and are targeting "key elements of the midterm electorate - including persuadable voters, seniors and women," the DSCC said. Heller and Flake are considered to be the two most vulnerable Senate Republicans in 2018, and the ads aim to remind voters of their history of voting to repeal Obamacare no matter which way they vote today. **Full story.**

- POLLING DATA - Titus internal poll shows tight Nevada Senate race: Democratic Rep. Dina Titus released an internal poll that found her in a dead heat against GOP Sen. Dean Heller in Nevada, signaling that she's still considering the race and not quietly stepping aside for former Sen. Harry Reid's preferred Democratic candidate, Rep. Jacky Rosen. In a general election head-to-head, Heller has 47 percent to Titus's 45 percent, per the poll. It also showed Titus with strength in Washoe County, a bellwether county where Titus trails by one point. The memo didn't share data on the primary race, but Titus told [The Nevada Independent](#) that she felt "confident" she'd win a primary against Rosen. Anzalone Liszt Grove Research conducted the 600-person telephone poll with a margin of error of plus or minus 4 points. **Read the full memo here.**

COMING ATTRACTIONS - Messer finance chair promises 'exciting news' Wednesday: "Indiana Rep. [Luke Messer](#), who has flirted with a Senate bid for months, will have "exciting news" on Wednesday, the chairman of Messer's finance committee told top fundraisers in an email." [Full story.](#)

Days until the 2017 election: 103.

Days until the 2018 election: 467.

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

You can also follow us on Twitter: [@politicoscott](#), [@ec_schneider](#), [@politicokevin](#), [@danielstrauss4](#) and [@maggieseversns](#).

IN THE STATES - The DNC is pouring \$1.5 million and top staffers into the Virginia gubernatorial race to bolster Ralph Northam, [NBC News](#) reports. "In addition to doubling the number of paid field organizers in the state, the money will be used to beef up the party's operations in the state, including training, digital and tech. [DNC Chairman Tom] Perez is also sending three of his top political aides, including Chief of Staff Sam Cornale, DNC Political and Organizing Director Amanda Brown Lierman, and DNC political adviser Ramsey Reid, who ran get-out-the-vote operations for the Virginia Democratic Coordinated Campaign in 2016." Yesterday in Score, we reported that the RGA donated \$2 million to Ed Gillespie's campaign, on top of the \$1 million they had already donated.

- **"DeSantis-aligned super PAC gets familiar new head as gubernatorial rumors swirl," by POLITICO Florida's Matt Dixon:** "In another sign that Rep. [Ron DeSantis](#) is considering a run for governor in 2018, the state and federal fundraising committees tied to the two-term Republican congressman are now both headed by the same person. Erika Alba, an attorney in Foley & Lardner's Jacksonville office, is in charge of Fighting for Florida's Future, a super PAC that raised \$1.2 million in support of DeSantis' 2016 run for Senate, according to a recent filing with the FEC. The super PAC was led by Nelson Warfield, a longtime GOP consultant no longer involved with the committee." [Full story.](#)

- **"Kennedy quietly reversed Illinois tax break request," by POLITICO Illinois' Natasha Korecki:** "Democrat Chris Kennedy has made Illinois property taxes - among the highest in the nation - a focus of his campaign for governor. He's railed against an appeal system that he has likened to 'extortion' for kicking lucrative tax breaks to politically connected insiders with high-powered lawyers. But even as Kennedy took to social media and forums to complain about a 'rigged system,' he was actively pursuing a second property tax appeal of his own - asking for a 20 percent reduction for his personal home in the Chicago suburb of Kenilworth. Kennedy then quietly withdrew his appeal request, according to a letter obtained by POLITICO, seven days after a story surfaced that was critical of property tax reductions won by his chief primary opponent, billionaire J.B. Pritzker." [Full story.](#)

THE END OF THE CASE, OR THE BEGINNING? - "Woman pleads guilty in scheme to pay off Brady challenger," by POLITICO's Josh Gerstein: "A Pennsylvania pastor pled guilty to a federal felony Tuesday for participating in a scheme that led a challenger to Rep. Robert Brady (D-Pa.) to bow out of a 2012 primary contest. Appearing in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia, Rev. Carolyn Cavaness pled guilty to a single charge of making a false statement in a federal proceeding, court records show. Cavaness was a campaign staffer for Jimmie Moore, a Philadelphia judge who entered the Democratic primary against Brady. ... No charges have been announced against Moore or Brady. However, [one court filing](#) made public Tuesday indicates prosecutors believe Brady attempted to influence the testimony of at least one witness in the investigation." [Full story.](#)

- Via the Philadelphia Inquirer's Jeremy Roebuck and Chris Brennan: "Reached for comment after the filings were unsealed late Tuesday, Brady referred a reporter to Ken Smukler, his longtime political consultant. 'You have to talk to Kenny,' Brady said. 'They did all that. That's five years ago. I don't remember none of that.' Asked if his campaign sent Moore's campaign \$90,000 to pay debts, Brady said: 'Whatever they did, I don't know.'" [Full story.](#)

TIMELINES - "Hovde says no decision, despite move to end committee," by the Associated Press: "Hovde said Monday that paperwork filing with the Federal Elections Commission earlier this month indicating he plan to close the 'Hovde for Senate' campaign committee was just clean up work from the 2012 campaign. Hovde says he's still considering whether to get into the race next year and won't make a decision until after his youngest daughter leaves for college later in August." [Full story.](#)

READING LIST - "Senator Jeff Flake, Facing Twin Threats, Is Said to Take On G.O.P. Rift in New Book," by The New York Times' Alexander Burns: "Senator Jeff Flake, Republican of Arizona, faces political challenges from both sides in seeking re-election next year: On the left, emboldened Democrats are aggressively recruiting candidates to run against him. On the right, allies of President Trump are devising ways to punish Mr. Flake for his [outspoken rejection of Mr. Trump](#) last year. Yet Mr. Flake, seemingly undaunted, has secretly planned an unconventional campaign kickoff that risks intensifying both threats: Working privately, and largely without the knowledge of political advisers, he has written a book that amounts to an ideological manifesto for his own version of conservatism, according to three people briefed on the manuscript who discussed it on the condition of anonymity." [Full story.](#)

AIR WAR - Gillespie launches television ads in Virginia: "Virginia Republican Ed Gillespie has launched the first three television ads of the general election in the state's governor's race. All are positive ads focusing either on his biography or his plans to improve the state's economy." Watch the ads [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#). [Full story.](#)

- Ohio Senate candidate Gibbons releases first TV ad: "Ohio Republican Mike Gibbons' Senate campaign released its first statewide TV ad today, attacking "career politicians" for failing to repeal Obamacare and cut taxes." Watch the [ad here](#). [Full story.](#)

PERSONNEL CHANGES - IMGE, IJR split, adds staff: Phil Musser, IMGE's CEO who co-

founded the Independent Journalism Review, announced to staff in an email that he bought IMGE from MGA Holdings, splitting off from the conservative website. "This was long in the works, and will allow us to pursue our dreams, and IJR to pursue theirs without the worry of conflicts of interest," Musser wrote. IMGE also brought on new personnel, including former NRCC executive director Liesl Hickey as a strategic partner and Phil Cox, who runs the bipartisan public affairs firm 50 State, as a senior adviser.

CODA - QUOTE OF THE DAY: "Trust me. Do you know why he challenged you to a duel? 'Cause you could beat the s- out of him." - Rhode Island Sen. Jack Reed to Maine Sen. Susan Collins, referring to GOP Rep. Blake Farenthold's comments that he would challenge Collins to a duel, if she were a man, [The Washington Post](#) reported.

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