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From: Morning Score
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Subject: POLITICO's Morning Score: Missouri's \$10M man — Why the Messer-Rokita primary got out of hand so quickly — State of play ahead of Alabama Senate, UT-03 primaries

By Daniel Strauss | 08/14/2017 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>)

CAMPAIGN IN WAITING - "Sources: Club for Growth raises \$10M for Hawley," by Campaign Pro's Kevin Robillard: "The Club for Growth has raised \$10 million to support a Senate run by Missouri Attorney General Josh Hawley, two Republicans with knowledge of the group's fundraising said. The 37-year-old Hawley, who has formed an exploratory committee but has not yet officially entered the race against Democratic Sen. Claire McCaskill, is the establishment Republican pick for the race. The Club for Growth and other prominent Republican outside groups have expressed excitement about his candidacy, and McCaskill is considered one of the Senate's most vulnerable Democrats. One major donor pledged to match millions of dollars in donations earmarked for Hawley, and the Club has been collecting donations against that pledge, the two Republican sources said."

- "Hawley, who was educated at Stanford and Yale and clerked for Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, was a favorite of big national donors during his run for Attorney General in 2016. Tamko Building Products CEO David Humphreys and his sister Sarah Atkins combined to give \$4 million to Hawley's 2016 state campaign, and a number of other Republican megadonors chipped in thousands, including Richard Uihlein, Randy Kendrick and Darwin Deason." Full story.

NOT INDIANA NICE - "The slugfest underway between Republican Reps. Luke Messer and Todd Rokita in Indiana isn't just for the right to compete for possibly the GOP's best opportunity to seize a Senate seat from Democrats in next year's midterms. It's a chance to finally settle the score between two ambitious pols who've been vying to outdo one another politically since they graduated from the same small college more than 25 years ago. Yes, this one is personal. Their campaign didn't officially get underway until last week, but Messer, 48, has already accused Rokita of attacking his wife and 'spreading lies' about his record. Rokita, 47, has questioned his rival's mental health, calling Messer 'unhinged' and a 'ticking time bomb.'"

- "More than a dozen professional colleagues and personal acquaintances painted the hostility between Rokita and Messer as the product of three decades of pent-up rivalry. The two men have climbed Indiana's political ladder alongside each other for years and even attended the same small, all-male Wabash College together in the early 1990s - a school whose unofficial motto, a former dean noted with a touch of irony, is 'competition without malice.' ... Over the years,

Messer has enjoyed the full embrace of Indiana's political elite, which appointed him to a seat in the state legislature and embraced him as part of its leadership. That same elite has always kept Rokita at bay." [Full story.](#)

ONE DAY 'TIL PRIMARIES - Curtis 31, Herrod 23, Ainge 15 in UT-03 poll, via the Deseret News' Lisa Riley Roche: "Provo Mayor John Curtis continues to lead former state lawmaker Chris Herrod and political newcomer Tanner Ainge in the 3rd Congressional District GOP primary, according to a poll released Thursday. The UtahPolicy.com poll comes as spending by so-called super political action committees supporting Herrod or Ainge approaches \$1 million. Curtis is the main target of the advertising, which many have described as largely negative. ... Just over one-fourth of the voters - 26 percent - said they remain undecided in the three-way race for the GOP nomination." [Full story.](#)

MORE MOORE - "The GOP rebel threatening to snag Sessions' Senate seat" by POLITICO's Seung Min Kim: "Roy Moore lacks the war chest of two chief rivals in his bid to become the next senator from Alabama. He didn't land the coveted endorsement of President Donald Trump, and doesn't enjoy the advantages of incumbency. Yet the controversial former state Supreme Court justice is coasting over his Republican challengers in Tuesday's closely watched GOP Senate primary. Moore is set to easily secure a place in a September runoff, as the establishment-backed Sen. [Luther Strange](#) and Rep. [Mo Brooks](#) scrape for the second spot. ... 'I resent people from Washington, raising money in Washington, and sending negative ads to Alabama and trying to control the vote of the people,' Moore said in an interview after a GOP executive committee meeting here. 'If the Washington crowd wants somebody, the people of Alabama generally don't.'" [Full story.](#)

Days until the 2017 election: 85.

Days until the 2018 election: 449.

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

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CHARLOTTESVILLE REACTIONS - NRSC Chair and Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner, on Twitter: "Mr. President - we must call evil by its name. These were white supremacists and this was domestic terrorism. Praying for those hurt & killed today in Charlottesville. This is nothing short of domestic terrorism & should be named as such."

- **Alabama Sen. Luther Strange, on Twitter:** "We as Americans must stand together in opposition to those who encourage hate or promote violence. I stand with President Trump and leaders from both parties condemning these actions."

- **Virginia Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam, on CNN:** "The governor and I have made it very clear to

white supremacists and other groups such as that, that they're not wanted in Virginia. And we strongly encouraged them ... to go home and don't come back."

- Virginia GOP gubernatorial nominee Ed Gillespie in a statement: "Having a right to spew vile hate does not make it right. It is painful to see these ugly events in Charlottesville last night and today."

- Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine, in a statement: "Virginia has come so far in recent decades to put division behind us. ... The fact that people like David Duke cited the President to justify their views is a disturbing reminder that divisive rhetoric has sadly contributed to a climate where individuals who espouse hate feel emboldened."

- Prince William County Board of Supervisors Chair and Virginia GOP Senate candidate Corey Stewart: "Democrats and the media never denounce the violence perpetrated by the unhinged left. Antifa is simply answering the call for violence in the streets by Loretta Lynch, so it's no wonder Tim Kaine refuses to denounce his son's participation in fascist Antifa riots, even as he exhorts leftists to 'fight in the streets.'"

NEW THIS A.M. - Super PAC backing Kelli Ward launches ad against Sen. Jeff Flake: "Once again Arizona conservatives are sold out by our senators plotting with liberals on amnesty and blocking Trump's conservative agenda," the ad's narrator says, before introducing "pro-America conservative Kelli Ward" and saying that "if Dr. Ward were in the Senate today, Obamacare would be repealed." Kelli PAC is paying over \$100,000 to air the ad on broadcast and cable TV after taking in a big donation from [Trump megadonor Robert Mercer](#) recently. [Watch the ad here.](#)

- STAFFING UP - "2 Trump backers join Flake opponent Kelli Ward's campaign," the Associated Press reports: "A political operative who helped raise millions of dollars to support President Donald Trump's 2016 campaign is joining the U.S. Senate campaign of former Arizona state Sen. Kelli Ward. Thursday's announcement that Great America PAC founder Eric Beach was joining Ward's primary campaign to unseat Republican Sen. [Jeff Flake](#) comes a day after another Trump supporter, Robert Mercer, donated \$300,000 to Ward's super-PAC. The political action committee Beach founded was independent but raised more than \$28 million to back Trump. The announcement said Great America PAC executive director Brent Lowder is also joining Ward's campaign." [Full story.](#)

UN-RETIREMENT WATCH - "Rep. Ed Perlmutter is reconsidering a re-election bid," by ColoradoPolitics.com's Peter Marcus: "Multiple sources confirmed that after Perlmutter was approached by constituents and fellow colleagues in Congress about a re-election campaign, he began reconsidering running for re-election." Perlmutter had declared he would retire after dropping out of the governor's race. "Several Democrats have been running to replace Perlmutter in a tightly contested primary, including state Sens. Andy Kerr of Lakewood and Dominick Moreno of Commerce City, and state Rep. Brittany Pettersen, also of Lakewood. Also running in the race is former Obama-era U.S. ambassador Dan Baer. A re-election bid by the popular Perlmutter could cripple those campaigns." [Full story.](#) (The Denver Post has reaction from the Democratic primary field [here.](#))

HIGHLY IMPORTANT - "Marijuana politics emerge as 2020 flashpoint" by Carla Marinucci: "Marijuana legalization just moved from the fringes of the last presidential campaign to center stage in 2020. Between a sweeping new package of legislation introduced last week by one of the top Democratic presidential prospects and, on the other end of the spectrum, Attorney General Jeff Sessions' vigorous opposition to recreational use of marijuana, the debate over legalization of cannabis is about to receive a full airing on the presidential campaign trail. ... While Bernie Sanders also supported medicinal use of marijuana and the decriminalization of recreational marijuana, drug policy stayed on the outskirts of the 2016 presidential debate, and growing action at the state level was barely acknowledged. Tom Angell, chairman of Marijuana Majority, a bipartisan nonprofit advocacy group, said New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker's introduction of "the farthest-reaching bill ever proposed" will have a catalytic effect on the politics of legalized marijuana and the myriad criminal justice issues related to it." Full story.

LINE IN THE SAND - "Megadonor Steyer vows to only back candidates that support abortion rights" by Gabriel Debenedetti: "Democratic mega-donor Tom Steyer said on Saturday that he and his NextGen America group do not intend to work on behalf of anti-abortion politicians, jumping into the Democratic Party's debate on the topic. "We're pro-choice," the hedge fund manager-turned-activist told POLITICO on the sidelines of the progressive Netroots Nation conference here. Asked if his group would help candidates or sitting lawmakers who don't support abortion rights, he said, "We do not work for a single candidate who is not pro-choice. I think people like to have litmus tests. We are explicitly pro-choice. We work a lot with Planned Parenthood, we work a lot with NARAL. We are absolutely committed to it." Full story.

MORE STAFFING - Rauner hires former Johnson campaign manager Betsy Ankney: NBC Chicago reported on Sunday that Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner, whose campaign is set to spend record amounts, has hired Betsy Ankney, best known for running Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson's upset victory over Democrat Russ Feingold in 2016, an effort she won a campaign manager of the year award for from the American Association of Political Consultants. Full story.

CODA - QUOTE OF THE DAY: "The stakes are very high in September" - Tea Party Patriots chairman Jenny Beth Martin in a POLITICO story on the Trump administration's agenda for September.

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