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From: Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman
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Subject: POLITICO Playbook, presented by the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD):
THE FALLOUT: Republicans line up against Trump -- FIRST IN PLAYBOOK: Excerpts of BRADY on tax reform and SESSIONS on Chicago -- SNEAK PEEK: NYT Mag cover on Breitbart

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Today's POLITICO Playbook presented by the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD)
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Driving the Day

Good Wednesday morning. PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP is again in the hot seat after veering off course and reiterating that there was blame on "both sides" of the protests in Charlottesville. Remember all the bluster that recently named chief of staff John Kelly was going to install order and help get Trump's presidency back on track so Republicans could make good on their promises to pass tax reform and an infrastructure package, not to mention fund the government and raise the country's borrowing limit? No dice. White House aides we talk to were surprised this happened, but have grown immune to the president's unpredictability. Many are dispirited. This was a news conference aimed at boosting an infrastructure bill -- Trump's best chance of bipartisan legislating for the year. Instead, he did this. Remember that there are just four-and-a-half months left in this year, and there's a lot the president wants to get done.

RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD: How much sway is the president going to have with lawmakers as he is saddled with a 34-percent approval rating coming off playing footsie with neo-Nazi and white-supremacist groups?

WAPO OP-ED: "The nation can only weep": "TUESDAY WAS a great day for David Duke and racists everywhere. The president of the United States all but declared that he has their backs. ...

"Yes, there are good and moral Americans who oppose the removal of statues of Confederate generals. Yes, there are reasonable Americans who fear that slaveholding Founding Fathers will be the next target. Notwithstanding Mr. Trump's comments Tuesday, we don't find it difficult to distinguish between a monument to George Washington, say, and statues to Confederate generals that were erected in the 20th

century with the goal of maintaining white supremacy. ...

"There may be a time to debate such questions -- but not, as any national leader with a sense of decency would understand, now. Not in a time of mourning, with the wounds so fresh. Not when Mr. Trump has not even bothered to call the family of Heather Heyer, the young woman mowed down on Saturday. Not when Americans are looking for a clear and unequivocal condemnation of the hatred that brought those 700 marchers to Charlottesville." <http://wapo.st/2w03xGG>

WHAT TRUMP WILL WAKE UP TO -- N.Y. POST COVER: "Trump back at it: Hey, some white nationalists are 'very fine people' ... THEY WEREN'T ALL NAZIS" <http://nyp.st/2wdMtwB> ... **N.Y. DAILY NEWS:** "SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVILS" <http://bit.ly/2v0yw0S> ... **NYT:** "TRUMP AGAIN SAYS TWO SIDES AT FAULT IN RALLY VIOLENCE" <http://nyti.ms/2v0FAKN> ... **WSJ:** "Trump Adds Fuel to Race Furor" ... **WaPo:** "Trump again blames 'both sides'"

REPUBLICANS roundly criticized Trump.

-- **SPEAKER PAUL RYAN (@SpeakerRyan):** "We must be clear. White supremacy is repulsive. This bigotry is counter to all this country stands for. There can be no moral ambiguity." ... **SEN. MARCO RUBIO (R-FLA.) (@marcorubio):** "Mr. President, you can't allow #WhiteSupremacists to share only part of blame. They support idea which cost nation & world so much pain 5/6" ... "The #WhiteSupremacy groups will see being assigned only 50% of blame as a win. We can not allow this old evil to be resurrected 6/6" ... **MITT ROMNEY (@MittRomney):** "No, not the same. One side is racist, bigoted, Nazi. The other opposes racism and bigotry. Morally different universes." ...

... **NRCC CHAIRMAN STEVE STIVERS (@RepSteveStivers):** "I don't understand what's so hard about this. White supremacists and Neo-Nazis are evil and shouldn't be defended." ... **KEVIN MCCARTHY (@GOPLeader) :** "Saturday's violence and tragic loss of life was a direct consequence of the hateful rhetoric & action from white supremacists demonstrating." ... **JUSTIN AMASH (@justinamash):** "'Very fine people' do not participate in rallies with groups chanting racist and anti-Semitic slogans and displaying vile symbols of hate."

-- **SENATE MAJORITY LEADER MITCH MCCONNELL (R-KY.)** has not publicly commented about Trump's press conference.

THE REACTION -- "'Wow': Stunned TV Hosts Reacted in Real Time to Trump," by NYT's Mike Grynbaum: "'What I just saw gave me the wrong kind of chills,' a visibly stunned Chuck Todd said on MSNBC. 'Honestly, I'm a bit shaken by what I just heard.' Unable to disguise her disgust, the Fox News host Kat Timpf said: 'I'm still in the phase where I'm wondering if it was actually real life. I have too much eye makeup on to start crying right now.' And on CNN, as the network cut away from President Trump's extraordinary 23-minute news conference at Trump Tower, the anchor Jake Tapper could not contain his astonishment. 'Wow,' he said. That was something else.'"

<http://nyti.ms/2vCFYCJ>

-- **TV THIS MORNING -- JOE SCARBOROUGH** was supposed to be off until Thursday, but he will be live this morning on "Morning Joe" from 6 a.m. to 7:30 to address Trump's press conference.

THE FALLOUT -- "Trump Gives White Supremacists an Unequivocal Boost," by NYT's Glenn Thrush and Maggie Haberman: "President Trump buoyed the white nationalist movement on Tuesday as no president has done in generations - equating activists protesting racism with the neo-Nazis and white supremacists who rampaged in Charlottesville, Va., over the weekend. Never has he gone as far in defending their actions as he did during a wild, street-corner shouting match of a news conference in the gilded lobby of Trump Tower, angrily asserting that so-called alt-left activists were just as responsible for the bloody confrontation as marchers brandishing swastikas, Confederate battle flags, anti-Semitic banners and 'Trump/Pence' signs.

"Thank you President Trump for your honesty & courage to tell the truth,' David Duke, a former Ku Klux Klan leader, wrote in a Twitter post shortly after Mr. Trump spoke. Richard B. Spencer, a white nationalist leader who participated in the weekend's demonstrations and vowed to flood Charlottesville with similar protests in the coming weeks, was equally encouraged. 'Trump's statement was fair and down to earth,' Mr. Spencer tweeted. ... No word in the Trump lexicon is as tread-worn as 'unprecedented.' But members of the president's staff, stunned and disheartened, said they never expected to hear such a voluble articulation of opinions that the president had long expressed in private." <http://nyti.ms/2vHSBL6>

-- **ANNIE KARNI, ELIANA JOHNSON AND NOLAN MCCASKILL:** "[John] Kelly stood off to the side while Trump spoke, staring down at the marble floor as the president doubled down on his widely criticized 'many sides' rhetoric. Kelly's stiff body language appeared to reflect the feeling among many Trump aides. 'My head is spinning,' texted one White House aide watching the president unleash himself on television. When asked whether he and other officials supported the president's views on the protest, [National Economic Council chairman Gary] Cohn hedged. 'We share the president's view that infrastructure is really important to America, and our infrastructure is crumbling,' he said.

"Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump, the two family members who serve in Trump's administration, were absent from Trump Tower on Tuesday -- they were on a two-day, pre-scheduled trip to Vermont, a White House official said, and were planning to rejoin the president at his Bedminster, N.J. golf club on Thursday." <http://politi.co/2i3g9H8>

-- **@NBCNews:** "WATCH: White House chief of staff John Kelly reacts to President Trump's latest remarks on violence in Charlottesville, Virginia." <http://bit.ly/2vHIIgN>

ALI WATKINS and JOSH MEYER: "Domestic hate groups elude feds: American white supremacists enjoy legal protections that blunt sweeping powers used to

prosecute groups like ISIS and Al Qaeda": "U.S. law enforcement officials, who enjoy sweeping powers to investigate and prosecute suspected foreign terrorists on U.S. soil, face obstacles to charging the man, James Alex Fields Jr., as a terrorist. The Justice Department's civil rights division is currently focused on whether Fields committed a hate crime. Beyond Fields' case is the urgent question of how law enforcement can prevent further violence at a time when radical white supremacist groups appear emboldened. U.S. officials are severely limited in their ability to crack down on domestic extremist groups-even those who spew hate-filled rhetoric, acquire arms and advocate violence." <http://politi.co/2fKyecg>

***** **A message from the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD)** : If you know only one fact about rising drug costs, know this one: drug makers set prices for prescription drugs. To help manage nearly double-digit price increases, employers, unions and government programs use PBMs to negotiate lower net prices to help curb costs for employers and patients. Learn more at affordableprescriptiondrugs.org *****

THE BROADER NARRATIVE -- "Racial politics haunt GOP in the Trump era," by AP's Steve Peoples and Bill Barrow: "[T]he fight over 'traditional America' is throwing a spotlight on the Republican Party's struggle with race in the age of Trump. The deadly white supremacist rally against removal of the Lee statue served as a painful example of the uncomfortable alignment between some in the party's base and the far-right fringe. But despite the party's talk of inclusiveness and minority outreach, it's clear white fears continue to resonate with many in the GOP base. Politicians willing to exploit those issues are often rewarded with support. One big beneficiary, critics say, has been the president himself." <http://bit.ly/2w9u3xA>

DON'T EXPECT HILL ACTION -- "GOP chairmen resist hearings on white supremacy," by Kyle Cheney and Rachael Bade: "Days after neo-Nazis and white nationalists led a deadly march through Charlottesville - and are beginning to organize again - Republican leaders in Congress appear to be in no hurry to tackle the issue beyond statements of condemnation. Many GOP lawmakers called Saturday's march and the killing of a 32-year-old woman an act of 'domestic terrorism.' ... But there was little urgency for congressional action among committee leaders and top GOP brass. Despite House Democrats' calls for hearings on the rise of white supremacy, the House Judiciary Committee, which oversees the Department of Justice's handling of domestic terrorism, has no immediate plans to schedule one, aides say." <http://politi.co/2ul1MxQ>

-- "Confederate statues in U.S. Capitol likely going nowhere," by Elana Schor: "Some of the most famous Confederate statues sit smack dab in the U.S. Capitol - and there are no plans to remove them. ... Robert E. Lee, leader of the Confederate army during the Civil War ... is among the 10 Confederates whose statues remain in the Capitol, lionizing a slaveholding era and sparking calls this week from some House Democrats to rid the building of their likenesses. The Capitol's Confederate statues are part of the National Statuary Hall Collection, created more than 150 years ago as a means to represent two citizens of each state under the dome. Even as multiple other cities follow Charlottesville in pursuing removal of their Confederate monuments,

however, only a handful of Democrats have so far called for the statues' replacement after the violent rally in the Virginia town left one woman dead and injured more than a dozen others." <http://politi.co/2i3VVx3>

SARAH ELLISON, a UVA alum, in Vanity Fair, **"Why Charlottesville, Liberal College Town, Became Ground Zero for White Supremacy"**: "The university, in many ways, represents a sort of antebellum fantasy of the South. From its founder to its sororities and fraternities, to its public face as a Southern Ivy, the image that Charlottesville and U.V.A. occupies is a kind of Southern masquerade. It matches perfectly with the fantasy of the aggrieved Trump supporters' vision of themselves as a group under siege-one representing a way of life that is falling away and that must be made great again." <http://bit.ly/2vCEuZf>

-- NORTH CAROLINA GOV. ROY COOPER in Medium on the Confederate monuments: "Some people cling to the belief that the Civil War was fought over states' rights. But history is not on their side. We cannot continue to glorify a war against the United States of America fought in the defense of slavery. These monuments should come down." <http://bit.ly/2wOXIcL>

ADDING FUEL TO THE FIRE -- "Trump pours gasoline on feud with CEOs," by Dan Diamond: "The businessman president is bleeding support from business leaders he once called allies - and his latest comments cost him another adviser. 'I cannot sit on a council for a President that tolerates bigotry and domestic terrorism,' Richard Trumka, the head of the AFL-CIO, said in a statement on Tuesday, an hour after President Donald Trump defended protesters in Charlottesville at a free-wheeling news conference. 'His comments today were the last straw.'

"Since Monday morning Trumka and four other business leaders have dropped out of Trump's manufacturing council, citing his inadequate response to the Virginia protests or suggesting that their companies shouldn't be involved in politics. Trump on Tuesday escalated his feud with those leaders, accusing them of failing to do their jobs and rebuffing criticism from Wal-Mart's CEO that his comments about Charlottesville were insufficient." <http://politi.co/2ul3qZ1>

-- WSJ EDITORIAL BOARD: "Trump and the CEOs: A GOP President who loses the business class has a big problem": "Their decision to quit now in such public fashion shows the growing political and cultural pressure that CEOs and others in public life are under to distance themselves from Mr. Trump. The disdain for the President in the media and Hollywood isn't surprising, and Mr. Trump wears it like a badge of honor. But the business community is, or ought to be, a natural part of a Republican President's governing coalition.

"Mr. Trump began his Presidency amid unprecedented hostility from those who didn't vote for him. This is all the more reason to govern in a way that seeks to broaden his coalition with new allies. Yet Mr. Trump has seemingly taken every opportunity to escalate feuds and attack even allies in Congress like Senate Majority Leader Mitch

McConnell. ... Mr. Trump's ego won't allow him to concede error and he broods over criticism until he ends up hurting himself, as he showed again Tuesday by relitigating his response to the Charlottesville violence. This is how he has achieved a 34% approval rating, as even allies flee and his Presidency shrinks in on itself."

<http://on.wsj.com/2vCuwan>

WAPO's Danielle Paquette in Indianapolis: "Trump tried to save their jobs. These workers are quitting anyway": "Kipp Glenn grew tired of standing for eight-hour shifts, assembling steel furnace doors. His knees ached from 25 years on the concrete factory floor. So even after President Trump made his job at Carrier a symbol of American prosperity and vowed to save it, the Indiana native took a buyout. 'What we want to call "blue-collar jobs" are on the way out,' he said." <http://wapo.st/2wP2oPR>

-- **THE PRESIDENT** at 6:12 a.m.: "Amazon is doing great damage to tax paying retailers. Towns, cities and states throughout the U.S. are being hurt - many jobs being lost!"

NEW POLITICO/MORNING CONSULT POLL -- STEVEN SHEPARD: "Poll: GOP voters side with Trump over McConnell": "Republican voters are taking President Donald Trump's side in his war with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, according to a new POLITICO/Morning Consult poll that also shows a bump in Trump's approval rating after last week's all-time low. The poll shows more GOP voters think Trump is looking out for the party's best interests than think McConnell (R-Ky.) is. By a more than three-to-one margin, they say that Trump is more in touch with Republican voters and that Trump is more honest. More evidence Trump has the upper hand, at least among Republicans: McConnell's favorability rating among GOP voters is down over the past three weeks, and half of Republicans say Trump's attacks against him were appropriate." <http://politi.co/2fKJLZg>

-- More Shepard: **"Poll: No increase in support for military action in North Korea":** <http://politi.co/2fK4YT5>

TRUMP'S WEDNESDAY -- THE PRESIDENT heads back to Bedminster, New Jersey, at 2 p.m. today. At 4 p.m., he'll sign the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017. (**Today show spot on the bill** <http://on.today.com/2v1djDI>)

ABOUT LAST NIGHT -- "Trump, McConnell will try to avoid Alabama embarrassment," by Alex Isenstadt and Seung Min Kim: "President Donald Trump and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell went all in for their man Luther Strange in the Alabama Senate race -- but the two GOP leaders will need a lot more to put him over the top after Strange's second-place finish in Tuesday's opening round of balloting. Strange starts the six-week runoff in the hole against former state Supreme Court Justice Roy Moore, whose fervent base of evangelical supporters helped him clinch nearly 40 percent of the vote in a field of 10 candidates.

"The outcome puts enormous pressure on Trump and McConnell, both of whom

have put their political capital in the line: They now must find a way to get Strange a majority of support when the Republican nomination is decided on Sept. 26. Senior Republicans conceded that Tuesday's results weren't what they'd hoped for. But they argued that Strange, who in February was appointed to the Senate seat that Attorney General Jeff Sessions held for two decades, still has a path to victory.

"One option being considered by McConnell allies, who have already spent around \$4 million in support of Strange, is a scorched-earth campaign targeting Moore. In a possible preview of what's to come, the pro-McConnell Senate Leadership Fund began airing TV commercials in the days leading up to Tuesday's primary accusing Moore of taking funds from a charity he ran. Those involved with Senate Leadership Fund insist they have not yet decided on what approach to take." <http://politi.co/2w0hTqr>

-- **THE PRESIDENT** at 6:18 a.m.: "Congratulation to Roy Moore and Luther Strange for being the final two and heading into a September runoff in Alabama. Exciting race!" **As CNN's John Berman said on Twitter this morning: "rooting for both the Red Sox and Yankees."**

-- **WAP0: "John Curtis, mayor of Provo, Utah, wins GOP nomination for House seat formerly held by Jason Chaffetz,"** by Mike DeBonis: "Curtis faced hundreds of thousands of dollars in negative super PAC ads that sought to portray him as insufficiently committed to lowering taxes and cutting government spending. Many of them highlighted his 2000 run as a Democrat for a state legislative seat." <http://wapo.st/2v0U1yp>

FIRST IN PLAYBOOK: WHAT HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS CHAIRMAN KEVIN BRADY (R-TEXAS) WILL SAY ABOUT TAX REFORM TODAY IN CALIFORNIA: The House's top tax writer will talk tax reform today at a replica of Ronald Reagan's White House tax-cut table at the Reagan Ranch. Reps. Peter Roskam (R-Ill.), Carlos Curbelo (R-Fla.) and David Schweikert (R-Ariz.) will all be with him. **WHAT BRADY WILL SAY:** "Thirty-one years ago today, a conference committee of 10 Members of Congress - five tax-writers from the House and five from the Senate - reached agreement on the most sweeping overhaul of the U.S. tax code in American history. ... As we stand here 31 years later, we face a monumental challenge of our own - coming together to fix a U.S. tax code that has become just as broken as the one President Reagan and Congress overhauled in the 1980s. ... Today Americans are watching good-paying jobs, manufacturing plants, and our research and development move overseas to countries with more competitive tax systems. ...

"It begs the question: Why are we standing idly by while this happens? When did this nation start shrinking from challenges? At what point did we give up on the principles of fairness, simplicity, free enterprise, and - most of all - faith in each American's individual talents? ... And when did we decide that it was better to give in to Washington special interests at the expense of all the hardworking Americans who truly contribute to our economy? ... For the first time in over three decades we have a president, a House, and a Senate who are all committed to overhauling this broken tax

code and unleashing the growth of jobs and paychecks nationwide. And whether you're a Democrat or a Republican, if you're serious about getting real pro-growth tax reform done for the American people this year, we are serious about working with you."

HAPPENING TODAY - ATTORNEY GENERAL JEFF SESSIONS and ICE acting director Tom Homan are speaking today at 3 p.m. at PortMiami about how they believe jurisdictions like Miami-Dade are sharing more information with federal immigration authorities. The speech is meant as a contrast to cities like Chicago. Earlier this month, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel sued Sessions over his threat to withhold federal money for cities that don't cooperate with Trump's policies on illegal immigrants.

WHAT SESSIONS WILL SAY: "Miami-Dade is an example of what is possible through hard work and a rededication to the rule of law. It is proof that the entire nation can do better. ... The most fundamental duty of government is to ensure the safety and liberty of its people. ... Respect for the rule of law has broken down. In Chicago, their so-called 'sanctuary' policies are just one sad example. ... That makes a sanctuary city a trafficker, smuggler, or predator's best friend. ... I know that Miami-Dade will be an example of the good that comes from following the law. We have already seen that: the same Independence Day weekend when Chicago suffered more than 100 shootings and 15 homicides, Miami-Dade also had an historic number of shooting deaths - zero."

THE JUICE ...

-- **FORMER PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA** set the record for the most liked Tweet ever at 10:07 p.m. last night, according to Twitter. His tweet (<http://bit.ly/2wdRGEr>), which has over 3 million likes, "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin or his background or his religion..." is also currently the fifth most retweeted in the company's history with over 1.2 million retweets.

THE WASHINGTON POST on the Senate Subway. <http://wapo.st/2wP6BTK>

Playbook Reads

PHOTO DU JOUR: President Donald Trump reaches into his suit jacket to read a statement regarding the events in Charlottesville, Va., while addressing the media at Trump Tower in New York on Aug. 15. | Pablo Martinez Monsivais/AP Photo

SNEAK PEEK -- NYT MAGAZINE COVER - "Breitbart Goes to the White House -- Inside the paranoia-inducing, rage-channeling, conspiracy-fanning media company at the nerve center of Donald Trump's America," by Wil S. Hylton (online headline: "**Down the Breitbart Hole** -- Steve Bannon once said it was the platform for the alt-right. Its current editors disagree. Is the incendiary media company at the nerve center of Donald

Trump's America simply provocative - or dangerous?"): "In the short annals of journalism, there's no real precursor for Breitbart. I don't mean to suggest that this is because of the site's political agenda - the history of journalism is a cacophony of strident writing as far back as you want to look. ... What makes Breitbart distinct ... [is] the way the site appeared to materialize overnight, from the outermost periphery of the media, and to dominate the political conversation in a pivotal election.

"Maybe it's hard to remember anymore what you thought of Breitbart two years ago, but if you were like most people, you didn't think about Breitbart at all. The average voter had no idea the site existed, and by the time its stories slipped into the mainline arteries of public discourse, most people were already hearing more about Breitbart than they would ever hear from Breitbart. Take a quick survey of your friends and see how many visited Breitbart last week or can name two articles that appeared on the site in the past three months. Then ask the same people what they think of Breitbart's influence on the election, and watch how loud the room becomes.

"It's startling the way the word 'Breitbart' has become iconographic, referring not really to the website or the company but to an amorphous mass of revanchist opinions for which Breitbart receives credit or blame. We're all so certain that Breitbart is spewing a fountain of bigotry every day - denigrating women and riling up anti-Semitism, wailing about 'black crime' and 'trannies' - that few of us devote much time to observing it for ourselves. As a result, we haven't done a great job of figuring out what exactly Breitbart is or what Steve Bannon meant when he described it as a 'platform for the alt-right.'"

<http://nyti.ms/2fJtFzb> ... **The cover** <http://bit.ly/2i4TVEL>

FOR YOUR RADAR -- "Israel Seeks UN's Respect in Campaign for Security

Council Seat," by Bloomberg's Kambiz Foroohar: "Outreach to Africa, educational trips for foreign diplomats and a more conciliatory Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu make it clear: Israel is campaigning to overcome its acrimonious relationship with the United Nations in time to win a coveted spot on the Security Council next year. Israel is working to rally enough votes in the 193-member General Assembly to defeat either Germany or Belgium in a three-way race for two spots on the UN's most powerful body. ...

[C]ampaigning ... sometimes resembles a cross between the campaign to win an Oscar and a high school student council election. Germany and Belgium kicked off their campaigns in 2015 with colorful posters, notebooks and little packets of candy bearing their country's campaign logos." <https://bloom.bg/2v0Qxfg>

THIS IS A BIG DEAL -- TEXAS TRIBUNE: "Federal court invalidates part of Texas congressional map:

Federal judges have invalidated two of Texas' 36 congressional districts, setting up a scramble to redraw them ahead of the 2018 elections," by Alexa Ura and Jim Malewitz: "A three-judge panel in San Antonio unanimously ruled that Congressional Districts 27 and 35 violate the U.S. Constitution and the federal Voting Rights Act. The judges found that Hispanic voters in Congressional District 27, represented by U.S. Rep. Blake Farenthold, R-Corpus Christi, were 'intentionally deprived of their opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice.' Congressional District 35 -- a Central Texas district represented by Democrat Lloyd Doggett of Austin -- was

deemed 'an impermissible racial gerrymander' because lawmakers illegally used race as the predominant factor in drawing it, the judges wrote.

"The 107-page ruling ... sets up a scramble to redraw the districts in time for the 2018 elections. The court ruled only on the current congressional map, leaving legal challenges to the state House map unanswered. The court ordered the Texas Attorney General's Office to indicate within three business days whether the Texas Legislature would take up redistricting to fix those violations. Otherwise, the state and its legal foes will head back to court on Sept. 5 to begin re-drawing the congressional map."

<http://bit.ly/2w9rc7T>

******* A message from the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD):**

Pharmacy benefit managers negotiate the lowest net price for prescriptions on behalf of employers and other health care purchasers; however, the list price - the important starting point for those negotiations -- continues to rise, at a rate of nearly ten percent in 2016 alone. Increased competition, faster reviews of generics and biosimilars and ending anti-competitive practices can also bring down the cost of medications for patients. Learn more at affordableprescriptiondrugs.org *****

TOWN HALL HEAT -- "Colorado's Gardner faces blowback at home over Obamacare repeal," by Rachana Pradhan in Lakewood, Colorado: "Sen. Cory Gardner was hammered for supporting Obamacare repeal during a series of raucous town halls on Tuesday, where constituents repeatedly criticized his role in a closed-door partisan process to draft the failed GOP health bill. Gardner, who's responsible for protecting the GOP majority in the Senate in 2018, faced heated criticism over the repeal effort that collapsed just a few weeks ago, even as congressional leaders try to pivot to tax reform when they return from the lengthy recess next month.

"While Gardner's constituents in this purple state applauded him for his swift and strong condemnation of white supremacist groups this weekend, he was interrupted by boos and jeers of 'shame' and was called a 'liar' as he defended his support for health care legislation that would have significantly scaled back Obamacare and Medicaid. One attendee at the town hall here, held at Colorado Christian University in a Denver-area suburb, was escorted out by police after repeatedly shouting, 'Why are you taking away health care?'" <http://politi.co/2i4aFfw>

-- "Trump Threat to Obamacare Would Send Premiums and Deficits Higher," by NYT's Robert Pear and Tom Kaplan: "Premiums for the most popular health insurance plans would shoot up 20 percent next year, and federal budget deficits would increase by \$194 billion in the coming decade, if President Trump carried out his threat to end certain subsidies paid to insurance companies under the Affordable Care Act, the Congressional Budget Office said Tuesday. ... Those threats continue, though the Trump administration has paid the subsidies each month. The nonpartisan budget office has now quantified the cost of the threats and potentially handed Democrats a weapon to force Congress and the administration to keep the money flowing."

<http://nyti.ms/2fKwFv7>

NAFTA TALKS START TODAY -- "5 big questions about the NAFTA talks," by Doug Palmer: <http://politi.co/2w9w0Ks>

BACK HOME -- "N.H. neighbors say Corey Lewandowski threatened them in land dispute" - AP: "Glenn and Irene Schwartz countersued Lewandowski this month after he filed a \$5 million lawsuit in July over access to a pond-front property in Windham, New Hampshire. Lewandowski accused the couple of blocking an easement granted to him so he could reach the tract. Court documents indicate Lewandowski is building a garage at the property. In the countersuit, the Schwartzes accuse Lewandowski of repeatedly intimidating them, once coming out of his house with a baseball bat and another time yelling on the phone that he would 'use his political connections and clout to shut down all building and work and make your life a nightmare with an expensive and extended lawsuit.'" <http://bit.ly/2x3IUYb>

AT THE PENTAGON -- "In a meeting with sailors, Mattis lauds their service and vulgarly criticizes people 'sitting on the sidelines,'" by WaPo's Dan Lamothe: "Defense Secretary Jim Mattis met with sailors serving on the submarine USS Kentucky last week in his home state of Washington, praising them for their sacrifices and expressing concern that he has 'grown remote from those of you who matter.' Then he noted the up-and-down nature of military life, told the sailors that they'll miss being in the Navy after they leave -- and issued an off-color compliment.

"'You'll miss it like the dickens, and you'll be changed for the better for the rest of your life,' said Mattis, who retired as a four-star Marine general in 2013. 'So you'll never regret, but you will have some of the best days of your life and some of the worst days of your life in the U.S. Navy, you know what I mean? That says -- that means you're living. That means you're living. That means you're not some p-- sitting on the sidelines, you know what I mean, kind of sitting there saying, 'Well, I should have done something with my life.'" He continued: 'Because of what you're doing now, you're not going to be laying on a shrink's couch when you're 45 years old, say[ing] 'What the hell did I do with my life?' Why? Because you served others; you served something bigger than you.'" <http://wapo.st/2i5ymUL>

Playbookers

SPOTTED: Rupert Murdoch and former LA mayor Antonio Villaraigosa having lunch on Monday at the commissary at the Fox studios in Los Angeles ... At the Watergate hotel last night having drinks: Morgan Ortagus, Tony Sayegh, Marty Obst, Jason Miller, Chris Giancarlo, and Samantha Menh ... Steven Mnuchin and wife Louise Linton last night at Cafe Milano for dinner ... Denis McDonough outside of the Center for American Progress on Monday after speaking to the U.S. Mexico Leaders Initiative.

ENGAGED - Isaac Baker, partner at AKPD Message & Media, got engaged on Monday

to **Kristina Peterson**, congressional reporter for the Wall Street Journal. He proposed in Greece while they were on vacation. They met online. **Pic** <http://politi.co/2uHnHFI>

--**Victoria Hartman**, senior account executive at Politico Pro, got engaged yesterday to **Paul Blair**, strategic initiatives director at Americans for Tax Reform. He posted on Instagram: "9 years ago we were next door neighbors in a freshman dorm at GW. 7 years ago we went on our first date in Georgetown. 8 months ago I brought two round trip tickets for a ten day trip to France. I had today in mind, the day I'd propose to my best friend. She said yes and I'm the luckiest guy alive." **Back-story** on their engagement: "I bent the knee as we sipped wine and hid from the rain on the balcony of our hotel room ... With a bit of inspiration from an episode of Anthony Bourdain's 'Parts Unknown,' we celebrated with a bit too much champagne and cheese at Paul Bocuse's flagship restaurant, The Auberge du Pont de Collonges. Next, we're off to Paris." **Instapic** <http://bit.ly/2w0xmXy>

WELCOME TO THE WORLD - Jackie Kucinich, Washington bureau chief for the Daily Beast and a CNN political analyst and **Jared Allen**, senior director for media relations at the National Automobile Dealers Association, welcomed Evelyn June Allen, who was born on Tuesday at 11:08 a.m. at Sibley Memorial Hospital, weighing in at 6 lbs. 12 oz. "Her middle name 'June' marks the first double byline Jackie and Jared shared shortly after meeting at The Hill newspaper in 2008. They are overjoyed to welcome Evelyn to Washington, although her arrival nine days prior to deadline will have them scratching their heads for some time to come. Evelyn and Jackie are both doing great and enjoyed their well-earned rest." **Pic** <http://politi.co/2wPbVpQ>

-- **Jordan Jiloty**, director of public and government affairs at NASCAR, and **Summer Jiloty**, a speech-language pathologist in Volusia County Schools, on Saturday welcomed Charles Jordan Jiloty, born at 10:53 p.m. at 8 lbs, 20 inches. "His big sister, Abigail (2 years old), was very excited to help welcome Charlie and mom home last night." **Pic** <http://politi.co/2wdlAsK>

TRANSITIONS -- Caitlin Girouard started on Tuesday as communications director for Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.). She previously was deputy chief of staff and communications director for Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (D-N.Y.). ... **David Kanevsky** has joined the Republican State Leadership Committee as director of polling and analytics. He held a similar role at the NRSC in the 2016 cycle. ...

... Participant Media has named **Amy Glickman** SVP for publicity and corporate comms. She is an alum of 42 WEST, PMK*BNC, and Rubenstein Communications. ... **Meredith Swan** has been named the national finance director for South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg's new super PAC, Hitting Home PAC. Swan is an alum of Evan Bayh, Melissa Bean and DWS PAC.

BIRTHWEEK (was yesterday): Patrice Woods Wildgoose, on AARP's social team and a Capital One alum, celebrating in Costa Rica (hubby tip: Laurence, who was on time)

BIRTHDAY OF THE DAY: Jack Quinn, partner in the gov't and regulatory practice at Manatt and former Clinton W.H. counsel. **How he's celebrating:** "Celebrating in Jamaica, the island, where I'm mostly working but also enjoying a fabulous lobster feast on my birthday with Susanna, Storm, Jocelyn, Brendan and Clementine Quinn and great friends including Allen Gannett, Matt Dornic, Kate Bennett, Stephanie Cutter, and more. We are staying in an amazing villa overlooking the Caribbean Sea." Read his Playbook Plus Q&A: <http://politi.co/2wP5hA3>

BIRTHDAYS: Josh Bolten, co-founder and managing director of Rock Creek Global Advisors, is 63 ... Politico's Michael Grunwald is 47 ... Ramesh Ponnuru is 43 ... CNN's Chris Moody ... Tom Lopach, chief of staff for Montana Gov. Steve Bullock and DSCC, Tester and Kennedy alum (hat tip: Jon Haber) ... Erin Casey French ... Danielle Jones ... FWD.us' Chris Golden ... Tyler Grimm is 32 ... Dave DenHerder, partner at FP1 Strategies, is 45 (h/t Ryan Williams) ... Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) is 69 ... Rep. Doug Collins (R-Ga.) is 51 (h/t Team Collins) ... Rep. Don Bacon (R-Neb.) is 54 ... former Rep. Dick Zimmer (R-NJ) is 73 ... former Rep. Rick Berg (R-ND) is 58 ... Steve Abbott is 55 ... Neil McKiernan ... Charles Brittingham ... Tom Anfinson is 76 ... Marli Keeley ... Lyndsi Stevens ... CBS' Matt Silverstein ... Karly Moen ... Stacey Daniels, press secretary for Rep. Farenthold (R-Texas), is 26 ... Kenneth Ryan James ... Nick Rawls ... former Sen. Carol Moseley-Braun (D-Ill.) is 8-0 ... Qorvis VP Sol Levine ... James Chris Bowen, former company commander/platoon leader in Iraq, now working in the DoD's military labs office, is 34 (h/t Saana Allie) ...

... **Abe Adams**, Targeted Victory managing partner ... Tricia Moffatt (h/ts Zac Moffatt) ... Grant Rumley, research fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies who just published "The Last Palestinian: The Rise and Reign of Mahmoud Abbas" (**\$16.32 on Amazon** <http://amzn.to/2w6zFZA>) (h/t Mikayla Bouchard) ... Matt Spence, partner at Andreessen Horowitz ... Ellen Weissfeld ... Harrison Roday ... Julia Haslanger ... Nick Rawls ... Marshall Cohen ... Kourtney Geers ... Dean Thompson ... Seth Colton ... Rafael Viturro ... Jane Elizabeth ... Julie Young ... Michael K. Lavers ... Robin Ahnen ... Jon Lipshutz ... Hunter and Cole Norris ... Linda Honold ... Dave Jacobsen ... Uday Sreekanth ... Lisa Graves (h/ts Teresa Vilmain)

******* A message from the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD) :**

The high prices that drug makers set for prescription drugs can put financial strain on patients, employers, unions and others who provide health care coverage to more than 50 percent of Americans. Pharmacy benefit managers negotiate the lowest net price for prescriptions on behalf of employers, unions and government programs. But, as list prices - the starting point for those negotiations -- continue their nearly double-digit increases, the effects ripple throughout the system. The key to ensuring greater access and affordability lies in fostering greater competition. Facilitating faster reviews of generics and biosimilars, identifying off-patent drugs with little or no generic competition, and ending anti-competitive practices that keep safe, effective alternatives out of the market are also key to abating rising drug costs for patients. Learn more at affordableprescriptiondrugs.org *****

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