

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Morning Score
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Subject: POLITICO's Morning Score: Montana GOP Senate primary heats up post-special election — Gibbons kicks off Senate primary against Mandel in Ohio — Trump to hold reelection fundraiser in June

By Elena Schneider | 06/01/2017 10:00 AM EDT

With Daniel Strauss, Scott Bland and Bianca Padró Ocasio

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>)

UP NEXT - "Montana GOP turns to next task: Taking on Tester," by Campaign Pro's

Elena Schneider: "The moment Montana's controversial and expensive special House election finished, state Republicans refocused on their original 2017 to-do list: finding a candidate to take down Democratic Sen. [Jon Tester](#) next year. But Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's departure for President Donald Trump's Cabinet not only set off the House special but 'threw a grenade' into the GOP's 2018 planning, said one national Republican who's worked in Montana and, like many, expected Zinke to run against Tester. Republicans are quick to tout their deep bench in the state, but the fallout from Zinke's decision to leave his House seat continues to affect his party. Attorney General Tim Fox is at the top of many Republicans' wish list - but it's also the worst-kept secret in Helena that he wants to run for governor in 2020, a door that appeared to open wider when Rep.-elect Greg Gianforte was charged with assaulting a reporter. Troy Downing, the CEO of AC Storage Solutions, recently started a campaign after encouragement from Zinke, a fellow veteran - but he has some of the same out-of-state liabilities that hampered Gianforte for the past year." [Full story.](#)

PRIMARY WATCH - "Gibbons kicks off Senate primary against Mandel in Ohio," by

Campaign Pro's Daniel Strauss: "Ohio investment banker Michael Gibbons is jumping into the 2018 Senate race in his state, he told POLITICO on Wednesday. 'I have a pretty nice life and I have it easy. I looked at my kids and my grandkids and I said I gotta do this for them,' said Gibbons, who added that he will announce his campaign on Thursday." Gibbons will face "state Treasurer Josh Mandel, who was Republicans' 2012 nominee against Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown. Mandel recently has been endorsed by Sens. Rob Portman and Ted Cruz, and he also has the backing of major conservative groups including the Club for Growth. But Gibbons was adamant that he has a clear path to the nomination. ... Gibbons said he was in contention for a job at the Department of Commerce in the Trump administration, but he is closing the door on that opportunity to run for Senate." [Full story.](#)

2020 FORESIGHT - "Trump to hold reelection fundraiser in June," by POLITICO's Alex

Isenstadt: "President Donald Trump continues to prepare for his next election - in 2020. Trump is slated to headline a Washington, D.C. fundraising dinner on June 28 that will benefit Trump Victory, a joint fundraising agreement between Trump's campaign and the Republican National Committee, according to [an invitation](#) obtained by POLITICO. Funds raised at the event will be

split between the two accounts." [Full story.](#)

Days until the 2017 election: 158.

Days until the 2018 election: 522.

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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BIDEN HIS TIME? - "Biden launches PAC, keeping options open," by POLITICO's Edward-Isaac Dove: "Former Vice President Joe Biden will launch a new PAC on Thursday, American Possibilities, giving him a way of supporting candidates and keeping his own options open for a potential 2020 presidential run. Officially, the group will be 'dedicated to electing people who believe that this country is about dreaming big, and supporting groups and causes that embody that spirit,' according to the PAC's launch materials. Biden has hired Greg Schultz, his political director during his second term as vice president, as the executive director of the PAC." [Full story.](#)

RUH ROH - "J.B. Pritzker sought political office from Blagojevich, 2008 FBI wiretaps show," by the Chicago Tribune's Todd Lighty, Jeff Coen and David Heinzmann: "J.B. Pritzker, a billionaire businessman with political ambitions, told Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich he was 'really not that interested' in the U.S. Senate seat the governor was dealing in late 2008. Instead, Pritzker offered his own idea: Would Blagojevich make him Illinois treasurer? ... Phone calls secretly recorded by federal agents - never before publicly revealed - captured that exchange and other conversations between the influential Democratic donor and the then-governor discussing politics, their futures and the ramifications of Blagojevich's authority to fill the Senate seat being vacated by President-elect Barack Obama. Although Blagojevich raised the idea of appointing Pritzker to the Senate, Pritzker expressed his preference for being state treasurer, a post he believed might soon be vacated by its occupant, Alexi Giannoulias, who was rumored to be in the running for a post in the Obama White House. In one conversation, Blagojevich asked Pritzker for a significant campaign contribution as the two discussed the possible treasurer's appointment." [Full story.](#)

TECH BEAT - "Hillary Clinton has harsh words for Democratic Party's 'horrible data deficit,'" by POLITICO's Nancy Scola and Li Zhou: "Hillary Clinton strongly criticized the data operation of the Democratic National Committee she encountered upon becoming the party's presidential nominee, saying today, 'I inherit nothing from the Democratic party. I mean, it was bankrupt, it was on the verge of insolvency. Its data was mediocre to poor, non-existent, wrong. I had to inject money into it to keep it going.'" [Full story.](#)

AIR WAR - New Northam radio ad stars Rep. Bobby Scott: "Thirteen-term Rep. [Bobby Scott](#), one of Virginia's two black members of Congress, is starring in a new radio advertisement for Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam in the state's Democratic gubernatorial primary." [Full story.](#)

- **New NRCC ad attacks Ossoff as soft on ISIS, Iran:** "The NRCC's latest TV ad in the Georgia special election says "ISIS is infiltrating America," criticizes Democrat Jon Ossoff's support for the Iran nuclear deal, and ties Ossoff to national Democrats on the issue of Syrian refugees." [Full story.](#)

- **Republican challenger to Warren airs radio ads:** State Rep. Geoff Diehl, a GOP challenger to Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, is out with new radio spot where he attacks Warren and promises to "make Massachusetts great again." [Watch it here.](#)

BUSH ON THE TRAIL - "Former President George W. Bush on Friday is attending a Jackson fundraiser for U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker," the [Clarion-Ledger reports.](#)

IN THE CROSSOVER DISTRICTS - Republican businessman John Chrin launched a campaign against Democratic Rep. Matt Cartwright in PA-17, PoliticsPA reported. President Donald Trump carried the seat with 53 percent of the vote in 2016 after former President Barack Obama won 53 percent there in 2012. "Chrin, a Easton native, has spent most of his career in the financial services industry. He became a Managing Director at JP Morgan Chase before spending three years teaching at Lehigh University. After teaching at Lehigh, Chrin joined his wife's investment advisory company Circle Wealth Management." [Full story.](#)

2018 WATCH - Sutton enters South Dakota race: Billie Sutton, the minority leader of the South Dakota Senate, entered the governor's race Wednesday. Sutton was an professional rodeo rider who was paralyzed from the waist down in an accident when he was 23. The GOP field includes Rep. Kristi Noem and Attorney General Marty Jackley. [Watch Sutton's announcement video here.](#)

ADMINISTRATION SPEED READ - "Comey Expected to Testify Before Senate, if He Isn't Blocked," by The New York Times's Matt Apuzzo and Michael S. Schmidt: "Senators expect the former F.B.I. director, James B. Comey, to testify next week about his conversations with President Trump, congressional officials said on Wednesday, setting up a test of the White House's willingness to cooperate with investigations into Mr. Trump's associates. Putting the highly anticipated hearing on the calendar would force Mr. Trump to decide whether to invoke executive privilege and try to prevent Mr. Comey from testifying. Mr. Comey is expected to be asked about several conversations he had with the president, including one in which he says Mr. Trump encouraged him to stop investigating his former national security adviser, Michael T. Flynn." [Full story.](#)

CODA - QUOTE OF THE DAY: "People in covfefe houses shouldn't throw covfefe." - Hillary Clinton, capping off a bizarre day on the internet, via [POLITICO.](#)

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<http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-score/2017/06/01/montana-gop-senate-primary-heats-up-post-special-election-220611>

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