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From: Morning Score
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Subject: POLITICO's Morning Score: Rokita's road rules — Campbell embraces Trump in new ad — Trump vs. Flake begins in earnest

By Kevin Robillard | 08/18/2017 10:00 AM EDT

With Zach Montellaro, Daniel Strauss and 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>)

DRIVING MR. ROKITA - "The agonizing, 8-page memo on how to chauffeur a congressman," by John Bresnahan and Rachael Bade: "Who knew it could take eight pages of instructions on how to properly escort a member of Congress around his district? Yet there it is, laid out in mind-blowing detail, in a memo obtained by POLITICO that's sure to make any young, eager-beaver political aide shudder. Tasks listed in the document, entitled 'Instructions on Staffing and Driving - District Version,' include handing Rokita a cup of black coffee upon picking him up at his home, acting as a physical barrier between him and trackers looking to capture embarrassing footage of the congressman, and "avoid[ing] sudden acceleration or braking" while driving. 'The goal is to provide as smooth a ride as possible,' reads the instruction manual, co-authored by a former chief of staff to the congressman and Tim Edson, Rokita's ex-communications director turned campaign spokesman. ... Drivers are expected to transport not only Rokita's toothbrush and toothpaste but also stock and tote around the district a nearly 20-item supply box that Rokita's staffers call "the football." The contents include gum, hand sanitizer, business cards, bottled water, napkins and Kleenex, Lozenges-brand cough drops, a stapler and stapler remover, Post-it notes and Shout wipes, among other items. ... Asked about the memo, Rokita's campaign spokesman Tim Edson wrote in an email that 'there is nothing embarrassing about always being prepared.' Edson blamed the leaked memo on his boss' longtime nemesis, Rep. [Luke Messer](#) (R-Ind.), who he's running against for the GOP nomination to challenge Democratic incumbent Sen. [Joe Donnelly](#) (D-Ind.)." **Full story.**

FIRST IN SCORE - North Dakota's Campbell goes up with pro-Trump spot: North Dakota State Sen. Tom Campbell, a wealthy Republican potato farmer who announced a challenge to Democratic Sen. [Heidi Heitkamp](#) earlier this week, is out with his second television ad of the campaign. The 30-second spot features Campbell speaking directly to camera and linking himself to President Donald Trump. "America sent Washington a message. His name? Donald Trump," Campbell says. "The media may not like it, but it's exactly what Washington needs: Cut spending. Build the wall. Bold tax reform. And term limits to get rid of career politicians in both parties." **Watch the ad here.**

TRUMP VS. FLAKE - "Trump aides worry he hurt hopes of defeating Flake," by POLITICO's Alex Isenstadt: "President Donald Trump upended the Arizona Senate race on Thursday by signaling support for an underdog primary challenger - a move that went against the

wishes of his advisers and potentially undercut their efforts to unseat GOP Sen. Jeff Flake. ... Trump aides were taken aback by the tweet. Many of them are deeply skeptical about [Kelli] Ward's ability to defeat Flake. In 2016, Ward received 39 percent of the vote in an unsuccessful effort to unseat GOP Sen. [John McCain](#). More recently, she came under fire for saying that McCain should step down from the Senate 'as quickly as possible' after he was diagnosed with brain cancer. The White House has met with two other prospective Flake opponents, Arizona state treasurer Jeff DeWit, who was a top official on Trump's campaign, and former state GOP chairman Robert Graham. Some in the administration, meanwhile, have set their sights on another Arizona Republican, former GOP Rep. Matt Salmon ...

In a brief telephone interview on Thursday afternoon, Salmon said he is currently abroad and not interested in joining the race. He declined to comment on his discussions with Bossie, who did not respond to a request for comment. ... Ward's aides said they hope to parlay Trump's tweet into financial backing from his donors. On Thursday, she reached out to Doug Deason, a Texas businessman and the son of billionaire Darwin Deason, though he hasn't committed. Her campaign announced the support of Bill Doddridge, a major GOP donor and jewelry company executive who funded a Trump 2016 super PAC." [Full story](#).

-The [tweet](#) that started it all: "Great to see that Dr. Kelli Ward is running against Flake Jeff Flake, who is WEAK on borders, crime and a non-factor in Senate. He's toxic!"

-The NRSC and Senate Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) are, predictably, standing by their man. "Jeff Flake is an excellent Senator and a tireless advocate for Arizona and our nation. He has my full support," McConnell said in a statement.

- BATTILING BOTS - "Russian network amplified Trump's Flake criticism," by USA Today's Oren Dorrell: "After President Trump criticized GOP Sen. [Jeff Flake](#) of Arizona on Twitter Thursday, a network of Russian propaganda tools amplified the message across the twitterverse, following a pattern of sowing division in the U.S. and in Europe. ... Later Thursday, 'Flake,' 'Phoenix' and 'Arizona' were among the top five trending topics under discussion by a network of 600 Twitter accounts that amplify messages developed by the Kremlin for the U.S. audience. The list of accounts is compiled and tracked by a new database created by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, a Washington, D.C., think tank that promotes cooperation between North America and Europe." [Full story](#).

- REID WEIGHS IN - "Southwest Rises as 2018 Senate Battleground," by the New York Times' Alex Burns: "Harry Reid, the former Democratic leader in the Senate, said the growing prominence of these states in 2018 portended a longer-term shift. For all the concern about Midwestern states that shifted toward Mr. Trump, it is the Sun Belt and interior West that are expected to gain population, House seats and electoral votes over the coming decades. 'The power has shifted in our country, west of the Mississippi,' Mr. Reid said in an interview. 'It started a couple of cycles ago, but now it's in full force.' But Mr. Reid said it would take intensive financial investment and political organizing by Democrats to capture new states, like Arizona or Texas, where Representative [Beto O'Rourke](#), a Democrat, is mounting a challenge to Mr. Cruz." [Full story](#).

Days until the 2017 election: 81

Days until the 2018 election: 445.

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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FOR YOUR RADAR - "Is Scott Pruitt on the campaign trail?" by Pro Energy's Emily Holden: "EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt has logged thousands of miles this summer touting his plans to rewrite the Obama administration's environmental regulations - and fueling speculation that he's laying the groundwork for a political campaign once he leaves his cabinet post. The former Oklahoma attorney general who made a name for himself by launching more than a dozen lawsuits against the Obama administration has visited 10 states in a few short weeks, hitting local media outlets along the way in a strategy that Beltway strategists say resembles more a candidate seeking political support than an EPA administrator pressing for regulatory changes. One conservative talk radio host in Iowa even joked about Pruitt's August trip to the state. 'If you're writing a book, you come to Iowa, or you must be running for the presidency,' WHO-AM's Simon Conway said to Pruitt. The trips, which have taken Pruitt mostly to Republican-led states, are ostensibly to highlight his efforts to loosen Obama-era water regulations. But he's also spending time with GOP leaders and influential industries and packing in as many media hits as possible, laying out well-rehearsed talking points to bash former President Barack Obama's EPA as part of his modern-day stump speech." [Full story.](#)

- "At Senator Menendez's Trial, Stakes Are High for Democrats," by the New York Times' Shane Goldmacher: "If Mr. Menendez, a Democrat, is convicted and then expelled from the United States Senate by early January, his replacement would be picked by Gov. Chris Christie, the Republican governor of New Jersey and an ally of President Trump. That scenario - where Mr. Menendez's interim replacement would more than likely be a Republican - would have immediate and far-reaching implications: The Republicans would be gifted a crucial extra vote just as the party remains a single vote shy in the Senate of advancing its bill to dismantle President Obama's signature health care law. Those potential consequences only heighten the drama around the first federal bribery charges leveled against a sitting senator in a generation. ... Even a bribery conviction would not automatically force Mr. Menendez from office, under the Senate rules. He would either have to voluntarily resign his seat, or two-thirds of his Senate colleagues - including at least 15 Democrats - would have to vote to expel him." [Full story.](#)

FOCUS ON FOCUS GROUPS - American Action Network tests tax reform arguments: American Action Network is out with the results of focus groups on tax reform in Orange County, Calif., and Omaha, Neb. Some of the takeaways: "The most popular messages on tax reform: more money in the pockets of the American people, bringing back the middle class, and paying your fair share. Least convincing message against tax reform: Any change to the tax system is just a cut for the rich and will not help relieve the tax burden on the middle class." The

memo also suggests "respondents recognized that Democrats will play on emotional fear mongering, yet all groups remained strongly in favor of tax reform." **Read the full memo [here](#).**

MEMO MOMENT - Bridge questions McConnell: In a new memo, American Bridge argues "McConnell looks weaker than ever." "McConnell's humiliation is the culmination of eight disastrous months for Senate Republicans in which they have careened from crisis to crisis," the group's president, Jessica Mackler, writes. **Full memo [here](#).**

GETTING THE NOD - End Citizens United endorsed first House candidates of 2018: End Citizens United endorsed three House challengers this week - Randy Bryce in Wisconsin's 1st District, Paul Davis in Kansas' 2nd District and Chrissy Houlahan in Pennsylvania's 6th District. The districts represent a diverse, both ideologically and demographically, slate of seats, which the group told [McClatchy](#) indicates that candidates who support getting money out of politics can run anywhere.

CODA - QUOTE OF THE DAY: "[Kid Rock] ain't running for jack squat. Okay? He never intended - he never thought about it. ... He ain't running. He never thought of running. Somebody literally pulled it out of their ass and said, 'Hey, what about Kid Rock?' Kid Rock didn't know anything about it. He's just having fun with it because it's so silly." - Ted Nugent, [discussing](#) Kid Rock's chances of running for Senate on a Michigan radio show.

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