**Minutes**

Coordinated Indivisible Group Meeting with Gregory Bloom

New Mexico State Director for U.S. Senator Tom Udall

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Attendees: Udall staff: Greg Bloom, Michelle Kavanaugh

Indivisible: Marilyn, Tiffany, Teri, Naomi, Sandy, Bettina, Maria, Michael, Denise, and Charna

We thanked Senator Udall for the recent statement on DACA, the use of the National Guard, and comments on the Scott Pruitt ethics issues.

Greg said to watch for another push against Pruitt in the next few days. He said that Pruitt is trying to roll back protection for farm workers, such as allowing kids to apply pesticides and taking away the right of farm workers to have access to pesticide material data sheets.

* **Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act:** H.R.38 - Concealed Carry Reciprocity Act of 2017 passed the House in December. It is currently in the Senate Judiciary Committee. Greg does not think this issue is dead. Republicans wanted to include this in the Omnibus bill and he expects the republicans will keep pushing this Act. Senator Udall is opposed to concealed carry.
* **DACA/Dream Act:** Greg said that Trump blew this up, but Democrats are still willing to discuss and that the courts say that DACA recipients are allowed to renew status. He thought outreach in some of the red states might be helpful. Michelle mentioned that at the National Farm Workers conference, the mood was not good, but they are thankful for the recent court decisions. She said that local actions (i.e.: city councils) would be good too.
* **Border Wall:** There was a discussion about media coverage of the wall in NM and how it was somewhat misleading. Michael noted that Trump was taking credit for the NM changes to the border barrier. They are changing part of it from a bollard system to a more solid structure. This will have an effect on wildlife migration. NM will be sending some National Guard members to the border, but APD is pushing back and trying to get police officers exempted from this.
* **Infrastructure:** Greg said that we need a significant infrastructure package and that Trump’s recent proposal is not going anywhere.
* **US participation in Yemen’s civil war Vote this week (S.J. Res 54)**

Senator Udall supported the joint resolution which would have directed the President to remove U.S. troops from Yemen (except those engaged in operations directed at Al Qaeda) within 30 days unless: (1) Congress authorized a later withdrawal date, or (2) a declaration of war or specific authorization for the use of the Armed Forces was enacted. When the Foreign Relations Committee went forward with the bill, a slight majority voted to table it (return it to the Committee). Udall voted no on the motion to table the bill.

* **Syria**: Senator Udall has concerns about getting into new conflicts. The Senator is calling for a new authorization prior to the use of military force in Syria.
* **Confirming CIA Director Mike Pompeo as Secretary of State:** Senator Udall has expressed his concerns. A sitting member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Senator has questioned Pompeo both privately and at a committee hearing, and has released a statement indicating he does not support Pompeo’s nomination to the Secretary of State position.
* **Confirmation hearings for Gina Haspel:** Senator Udall has shared his concerns about this nomination and Greg will relay Indivisible concerns to the Senator.
* **Tariffs:** Greg said that for NM, a top trading partner is Mexico and second is China. He said the tariffs are hurting the republican base and we can expect to see pushback. Senators Flake and Heitkamp are working on a bill to remove tariffs on steel. He thought that the republicans might push back more on war authorization and the tariffs.
* **Dodd-Frank rollback:** The bill is currently in the House and will likely pass the Senate once it comes back from the House.
* **Recision on funds from Omnibus bill**: There has been nothing coming to Congress yet on this issue. The republicans are trying to sell the tax cuts.
* **Net Neutrality Congressional Review Act (CRA)** resolutions (co-sponsored by NM Democratic Congressional delegation) have been introduced in both the House and Senate to stop the FCC’s repeal of net neutrality rules. This will be coming up for a vote in April or May and they need one more Senator for passage.
* **Senator’s legislative update**: Senator Udall is the lead democrat on the appropriations subcommittee for Interior and EPA. They were able to protect last year’s budget and increased it in the recent Omnibus bill for Interior. There was increased money for infrastructure for Interior and for the Indian Health Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education. Money was increased for EPA’s wastewater programs. The NEA received a $3 million increase. They were also able to reject 30 riders to the Omnibus bill that would have degraded environmental and conservation laws, such as the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act.

More information on these and other issues can be found in a March 22 press release at: <https://www.tomudall.senate.gov/news/press-releases/udall-omnibus-funding-bill-rejects-poison-pill-riders-dangerous-cuts-to-epa-and-public-lands>

* **Securing Rural Schools program:** Michelle mentioned that this was affected by a decrease in tax money and that the Federal government would have to reimburse the schools through the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program. See: <https://www.tomudall.senate.gov/news/press-releases/senate-passes-udall-heinrich-amendment-directing-congress-to-provide-mandatory-full-funding-for-pilt> for more information.
* **Fast tracking judges**: Greg says there is some talk about using the “nuclear option,” but he doesn’t think this will happen.
* **Update on the Senator’s recess town halls or other public interactions:** In the last couple of weeks there have been rural Resource Fairs (read more here: <https://www.tomudall.senate.gov/news/press-releases/udall-kicks-off-1st-rural-resource-roadshow-at-enmu-roswell->) to present programs and services that are available.
* **Other upcoming issues:** The Senator sent a letter to the FCC regarding the Sinclair proposed merger with Tribune media and the issue of Sinclair dictating statements to be read by stations they own. There is concern that this violates their licensing requirements with FCC.

Sandy mentioned the March for Our Lives and reported that students who went to D.C. for the event were very enthusiastic about the experience and grateful to Senator Udall and his staff for help. Terri mentioned that the students she talked to felt that there was more unity in the country on these issues than they had previously thought.

There was a positive discussion about doing some education presentations/forums in the schools or community centers about government and how people could be more involved.

The next meeting is tentatively set for May 8th at 10:30