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POLITICO Playbook PM: Trump sends letter to the Hill

By **JAKE SHERMAN, ANNA PALMER, DANIEL LIPPMAN, GARRETT ROSS** and **ELI OKUN** | 01/04/2019 01:02 PM EST

Presented by





President Donald Trump speaks to reporters about border security in the briefing room of the White House on Thursday, Jan. 3. | Evan Vucci/AP Photo

HOT DOCS ... PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP sent a letter and DHS border presentation to rank-and-file members of Congress. *The letter ... The PowerPoint*

-- **CHOICE LINE FROM THE LETTER ...** “Walls work. That’s why rich, powerful, and successful people build them around their homes.”

CNN’S JEFF ZELENY (@jeffzeleny): “President Trump is planning a Rose Garden appearance this afternoon, following shutdown meeting with Congressional Leaders. All of this is contingent on how the meeting goes, of course, but it’s designed for Trump to have the final word, WH officials say.”

-- **EXPECT** Pelosi and Schumer to go to the sticks and speak afterward.

SARAH FERRIS and BURGESS EVERETT: “Both parties dismiss ‘Dreamers’ deal to end shutdown”: “Though some Trump allies have suggested that a fix for thousands of young immigrants who could be deported may be the key to solving the

deadlock, both Trump's allies and Democratic leaders rejected the idea as the shutdown extended into its 14th day. ...

“With more than 800,000 federal workers feeling the effects of the shutdown and at least two Republican senators breaking with their party over the shutdown, some lawmakers have signaled a new sense of urgency to end the shutdown. Yet a deal remains out of reach, as GOP leaders on Friday are expected to flatly reject the Democrats' funding plan to reopen nine agencies that have been shuttered since Dec. 22.” POLITICO

NEXT UP ... WAPO'S MIKE DEBONIS: “House Democrats unveil bill targeting Trump on tax returns and transparency”: “House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and other Democrats are set to unveil an outline of the legislation Friday in the Capitol. The Washington Post obtained an advance blueprint of the bill, which will move through several House committees over the coming weeks and is tentatively set for floor consideration early this year.

“Under the blueprint, presidents, vice presidents and candidates for those offices would all be required to release 10 years of returns — a move prompted by Trump's refusal to release any returns throughout the 2016 campaign up to the present day, breaking with the practice of both Democratic and Republican presidents in recent decades.” WaPo

Happy Friday afternoon.

ABOUT THE RASHIDA TLAIB CLIP ... It's been pretty obvious for a long time that party activists' and some of the rank and file's desire to impeach **TRUMP** was more fervent than the leadership's. Republicans could use this to show that Democrats are looking to impeach Trump no matter what.

-- CAITLIN OPRYSKO: “Freshman Rep. Tlaib: Dem majority will ‘impeach the motherf---er’”

-- TLAIB NOT BACKING DOWN ... @RashidaTlaib: “I will always speak truth to power. #unapologeticallyMe” ... “This is not just about Donald Trump. This is about all of us. In the face of this constitutional crisis, we must rise.”

... TLAIB walked away from reporters today (**video**), and tried to shove questions off to her staff. It's quite tough to do this in the long run in the Capitol, where reporters have basically unfettered access to the building.

-- **HOW IT PLAYED ... RACHAEL BADE, HEATHER CAYGLE and JOHN BRESNAHAN: “Dems livid after Tlaib vows to ‘impeach the motherf—er’”**

-- **NBC’S LEIGH ANN CALDWELL: “Pelosi: Impeachment is ‘divisive’ but colleague’s coarse language no worse than Trump’s”**

-- **FLASHBACK ... GARRETT ROSS’ POWER LIST PROFILE: “Rashida Tlaib will be loud. In Donald Trump’s Washington, she has to be, she said.” POLITICO**

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JAMES ARKIN: “Kansas Sen. Pat Roberts to retire in 2020”: “Roberts, 82, has served four terms in the Senate and last won reelection in 2014 after facing a bruising Republican primary. His retirement has already sparked interest in his seat from a number of other Kansas Republicans, heralding a potentially crowded 2020 primary — though Democrats hope they can make the race competitive after winning the governorship in 2018. ...

“Republicans expect the seat to remain safely in their control barring a divisive and messy primary. Kansas has not sent a Democrat to the Senate since the 1930s, and Roberts won by double digits in 2014.” POLITICO

HEADLINES THE PRESIDENT WILL LIKE -- IAN KULLGREN: “Economy added 312,000 jobs in December”: “The economy added 312,000 jobs in December, the government reported Friday, signaling that Wall Street volatility and President Donald Trump’s trade war with China have yet to pinch booming job creation.

“Jobs growth nearly doubled from November, when the economy added 176,000 jobs. Wages rose with average hourly earnings up 3.2 percent over the previous year, up from 3.1 percent in November. It was the third consecutive month that wages rose more than 3 percent ... Unemployment ticked up slightly, however, to 3.9 percent.” POLITICO

-- **BEN WHITE: “Trump gets a reprieve from the economic freakout, but will it last?”**: “The report suggested – at least for a moment – that the U.S. economy is shrugging off a big pile of worries including the trade war with China, political dysfunction in Washington and higher interest rates imposed by the Federal Reserve.” POLITICO

BULLETIN -- VICTORIA GUIDA: “Fed Chair Powell says he wouldn’t resign if Trump asked”: “While Trump has repeatedly criticized Powell on Twitter for the central bank’s campaign of steady rate hikes, the Fed chairman said there has been no direct contact between him and the president in recent months. Still, he said he would be open to meeting with Trump.” POLITICO

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MORE ON THE SHUTDOWN ... WAPO’S PETER WHORISKEY and LISA REIN: “While federal workers go without pay, senior Trump administration officials are poised to get \$10,000 raises”: “The pay raises for cabinet secretaries, deputy secretaries, top administrators and even Vice President Mike Pence are scheduled to go into effect beginning Jan. 5 without legislation to stop them ...

“The raises appear to be an intended consequence of the shutdown: When lawmakers failed to pass bills on Dec. 21 to fund multiple federal agencies, they allowed an existing pay freeze to lapse. Congress enacted a law capping pay for top federal executives in 2013 and renewed it each year. The raises will occur because that cap will expire without legislative action by Saturday, allowing raises that have accumulated over those years but never took effect to kick in, starting with paychecks issued next week.” WaPo

PREVIEWING PELOSI’S TOWN HALL ...

-- **USA TODAY’S SUSAN PAGE (@SusanPage)**: “Nancy Pelosi on what she hopes the legacy of her second tour as Speaker will be: “That we head on addressed the issue of disparity of income in America...(and) we must address the climate issue.””

-- **NBC'S LEIGH ANN CALDWELL (@LACaldwellDC):** “.@SpeakerPelosi at #MSNBCTownHall throws a bit of cold water on a Medicare for all bill coming up in the House. ‘Medicare for all sounds like a good idea but it’s not as good of a benefit as the affordable care act.’”

-- **MSNBC** will air the town hall at 10 p.m. tonight. **6-min. preview clip, via MSNBC**

THE NEW MAJORITY -- ADAM CANCRYN and ALICE MIRANDA OLLSTEIN:

“Democrats won the House on Obamacare. Here’s how they plan to defend it”:

“The House Democrats started their very first day in power with a vote to jump into a court battle defending the Affordable Care Act as part of their broad rules package. To ratchet up pressure on Republicans who campaigned on promises to keep the popular health care protections, they’ll vote again next week on a similar stand-alone measure — authorizing the House’s own general counsel to intervene alongside the Democratic states that Thursday filed an appeal of the ruling that would kill Obamacare. ...

“Those votes are just opening salvos from House Democrats, who also plan to go after the Trump administration policies that they say have purposefully undermined Obamacare.” POLITICO

-- **MATTHEW CHOI: “Ocasio-Cortez floats 70 percent tax on the super wealthy to fund Green New Deal”**

ON THE WORLD STAGE -- “Bolton, Pompeo to Travel to Mideast to Reassure

U.S. Allies,” by Bloomberg’s Margaret Talev and Nick Wadhams: “Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and National Security Adviser John Bolton plan to crisscross the Middle East to reassure nervous U.S. allies after President Donald Trump’s surprise withdrawal from Syria and Jim Mattis’s resignation as defense secretary.

“Bolton will depart Washington Friday for stops in Israel and Turkey, he said on Twitter. Pompeo will visit the region next week, according to an administration official.” Bloomberg

-- **MARTIN MATISHAK: “Bipartisan bill seeks to toughen Trump approach on China”:** “The proposed measure would establish an Office of Critical Technologies & Security at the White House to coordinate efforts across federal agencies and develop a national strategy to combat state-sponsored technology theft and eliminate risks to supply chains.” POLITICO

REUTERS' LAWRENCE HURLEY: "U.S. court rules for Trump on transgender military limits": "In a legal victory for U.S. President Donald Trump's administration, a federal appeals court on Friday threw out a lower court ruling that blocked a policy barring certain transgender people from serving in the U.S. armed forces ... The victory is limited. Although the appeals court sided with the administration, other federal courts issued injunctions against the policy, which applied nationwide." Reuters

NYT'S JENNIFER STEINHAUER: "Veterans Groups Compete With Each Other, and Struggle With the V.A.": "[N]early a generation after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, the oldest and largest veterans' service organizations — known colloquially as 'the Big Six' — are seeing their influence diluted, as newer, smaller organizations focused on post-9/11 veterans compete for money, political influence and relevance. ...

"Leaner and more financially efficient than their predecessors, these newer veterans' organizations focus on issues such as education and job training rather than on brick-and-mortar meeting spaces for veterans to gather or on resources spent lobbying in Washington." NYT

TRUMP INC. -- "Trump's sons are running the business — and their big hotel expansion is at a standstill," by Jonathan O'Connell and Justin Vicory in WaPo: "Shortly after Donald Trump entered the White House, his eldest sons announced ambitious plans to open a new line of hotels called Scion that would target young, hip customers mostly in places where their father had proven popular with voters. ... A year and a half later, progress has been slow. ...

"And no projects outside of Mississippi have publicly materialized, giving Donald Trump Jr. and Eric Trump little to celebrate following a two-year stretch overseeing their father's business." WaPo

AT LANGLEY -- CBS' OLIVIA GAZIS: "Under Haspel, more agency vets and women take top posts at CIA"

TV TONIGHT -- Bob Costa sits down with WaPo's Dan Balz, CBS' Nancy Cordes, NYT's Carl Hulse and NBC's Andrea Mitchell on PBS' "Washington Week" at 8 p.m.

MEDIAWATCH -- per Jason Schwartz in Morning Media: "Bill Kristol, Charlie Sykes and a handful of other Weekly Standard castoffs have a new home: The Bulwark, a conservative site published by the Defending Democracy Together Institute ... Sykes ... will serve as editor-in-chief and host a daily podcast. Kristol [will be] an editor-at-large ... Also

joining them from the Weekly Standard: Jonathan V. Last, Rachael Larimore, Jim Swift, Ben Parker, Andrew Egger and Hannah Yoest.”

-- **AMY ARGETSINGER**, a Style section editor at WaPo, is writing a history of Miss America, for Simon & Schuster’s Atria Publishing Group, to publish in advance of the pageant’s 2021 centennial.

SPOTTED: Jane Pauley on an Acela train from NYC to D.C. talking to John Coale and Greta Van Susteren.

SPOTTED at Cafe Milano on Thursday night at a dinner hosted by New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy: Terry and Dorothy McAuliffe, Mike Berman, Tom Donilon and Cathy Russell, Peter O’Keefe, Neera Tanden and George Stevens.

TRANSITIONS -- Sarah Dolan will be executive director of America Rising PAC and America Rising Squared. She previously was comms director. **Alexandra Wilkes** will be SVP at America Rising Corp. She previously was ED at the PAC. ... **Evan Feigenbaum** will be vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He previously was vice chairman of the Paulson Institute at the University of Chicago.

WELCOME TO THE WORLD -- Jacqueline Policastro, Washington bureau chief for Gray Television, and **Michael McCarthy** of Molnlycke Health Care welcomed **Liliana May** on New Year’s Day. *Pic ... Another pic*

-- **OBAMA ALUMNI: Jeff Blackwood**, senior manager of government affairs at BASF and a Byron Dorgan alum, and **Sarah Blackwood**, president of Sarah Blackwood Government Relations LLC and an Obama DOE and Jerry Costello alum, welcomed their second son, Wyatt, on swearing-in day. *Pic*

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