

CATO POLICY REPORT

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“To Be Governed...”

WHEN NEWSPAPERS CALL IT A RARE BIPARTISAN VICTORY . . . IT'S A SPENDING BILL

President Trump signed a sweeping opioids bill into law Wednesday, a rare piece of legislation that garnered bipartisan support.

—*WASHINGTON POST*, OCTOBER 24, 2018

The intense partisanship engulfing Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh has diverted attention from a raft of recent bipartisanship in the Senate during the past few weeks, drowning out issues that could appeal to voters in the midterms.

The chamber on Wednesday passed legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration for five years by a 93-6 vote. That legislation included a measure to double funding for big infrastructure projects around the world, combining several little-known government agencies into a new body with authority to do \$60 billion in development financing.

Also on Wednesday, the Senate advanced an opioid bill to President Trump's desk by a vote of 98-1. That bill includes several changes to Medicare and state Medicaid programs, such as requiring Medicare to cover services provided by certified opioid treatment programs.

And last week, Mr. Trump signed into law a spending bill that increases military spending for the next fiscal year.

—*WALL STREET JOURNAL*, OCTOBER 4, 2018

NOW THAT'S PORK-BARREL POLITICS

A Chinese-owned pork producer will sell at least \$240,000 worth of ham products to the federal government as part of the Trump administration's farm bailout program, the administration said Wednesday.

U.S. pork producer Smithfield, which is

owned by the Chinese conglomerate WH Group, will sell 144,000 pounds of ham products to the federal government under the contract.

The Agriculture Department is purchasing pork and other commodities from U.S. farmers to help offset the damage from retaliatory tariffs imposed by China this summer.

—*WASHINGTON POST*, NOVEMBER 9, 2018

A GAFFE IS WHEN A POLITICIAN TELLS THE TRUTH

“I have never been a partisan guy. I am a centralist,” [Michael Bloomberg] said when he took the stage at the county dinner. (An adviser later clarified that he meant to say “centrist,” a word that does not imply centralized government control.)

—*WASHINGTON POST*, OCTOBER 24, 2018

WHO NEEDS POLICY EXPERIENCE?

“[Rep. Dan Crenshaw] said he wanted to run for office one day, but wanted to get policy experience first,” said a Capitol Hill aide who ended up advising the campaign (and requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly). “I was like, ‘Have you paid attention to some of the people we have up here? You don't need that.’”

—*WASHINGTON POST*, NOVEMBER 12, 2018

IF AMAZON NEEDS LOWER TAXES, WHO DOESN'T?

On a per-job basis, New York's offer to Amazon is about typical for the state but well above the national average for such deals, said Timothy J. Bartik, an economist for the Upjohn Institute in Kalamazoo, Mich., who has studied tax incentives.

“New York's following its usual practices,” Mr. Bartik said. “It hands out a lot of

hefty incentives, a lot of long-term incentives.”

Gov. Andrew Cuomo defended the deal, arguing that New York has to offer incentives because of its comparatively high taxes.

—*NEW YORK TIMES*, NOVEMBER 13, 2018

IT'S A GOOD THING HOMELESS PEOPLE AREN'T HUNGRY

A coordinated wave of Kansas City Health Department inspectors simultaneously shut down large picnics across the city Sunday that were serving food to homeless and hungry people.

On Monday, a city health official said they trashed the food out of concern for public safety. . . .

It looked ugly Sunday. Home-cooked chili, stacks of foil-wrapped sandwiches, vats of soup and other food prepared by volunteers with Free Hot Soup Kansas City were dumped in bags and soaked in bleach to make sure no one went back to try to recover it.

—*KANSAS CITY STAR*, NOVEMBER 5, 2018

EQUALITY UNDER THE LAW?

Democratic leaders [propose] a rule requiring a supermajority vote to approve tax increases for most taxpayers—but only a simple majority vote to raise taxes for the wealthiest 20 percent or for corporations.

—*WASHINGTON POST*, NOVEMBER 16, 2018

THIS IS NOT AN ECONOMIC PLAN WE NEED TO FEAR

Beijing aims to produce more goods at home and sell larger numbers abroad, ordering farmers to ramp up soybean production and chipmakers to purchase local copper while earmarking billions to advance domestic technology.

—*WASHINGTON POST*, OCTOBER 19, 2018