

## Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE) — Congressional Activity Brief

### TOP STORY

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS / FY2027 BUDGET / DOGE **UPDATED**

### FY2027 Defense Budget Hearing Week Wraps — Coons Closes With Sharp Attacks on DOGE Civilian Cuts, Frames Dover AFB Readiness Risk

The Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee concludes its first full week of FY2027 budget hearings Friday. Ranking Member Coons has used the week to build a sustained narrative that DOGE-driven DOD civilian workforce reductions constitute a 'national security crisis,' culminating in calls for a moratorium on further separations and formal reinstatement of terminated employees. Throughout the week, Coons repeatedly cited readiness metrics, maintenance backlogs, and installation-level impacts — with Dover AFB's C-5M and C-17 airlift operations as a recurring example. As the hearing series recesses for the weekend, expect Coons to issue a comprehensive statement or op-ed summarizing his week-long critique and framing the DOGE debate heading into the next round of markups.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz supports strong defense and fiscal responsibility simultaneously — drawing on his platform commitment to 'restructuring and reorganizing government' (per Katz's Delaware Senate legislation establishing an independent council for a five-year state government reorganization plan). Katz can argue that he understands how to cut waste without gutting mission-critical functions, while Coons reflexively opposes all efficiency reforms. Katz should position himself as the candidate who will protect Dover AFB jobs AND demand accountability for bloated Pentagon bureaucracy.

#### • TALKING POINTS

- I wrote the bill to restructure Delaware's state government — I know how to cut waste without cutting readiness.
- Coons calls every reform a 'crisis' because he's never had to balance a budget or run an organization.
- Dover AFB is Delaware's largest employer — I'll fight for the mission AND demand the Pentagon spend smarter.
- After 14 years in the Senate, Coons's answer to every problem is more spending, never better management.
- A physician knows triage — you fix what's broken without killing the patient. That's how I'll approach defense reform.

## DEFENSE &amp; PENTAGON

DEFENSE / GOVERNMENT REFORM / DOGE **UPDATED**

## Pentagon Civilian Workforce Reductions — Coons's 'National Security Crisis' Narrative Fully Established After Week of Hearings

By Friday, Coons has spent an entire hearing week building his case that DOGE-aligned DOD civilian workforce reductions threaten national security. His messaging has escalated from 'management concern' on Monday to 'national security crisis' by midweek, and he is now calling for formal congressional action to block further reductions-in-force. Coons is expected to carry this framing into weekend media appearances and constituent communications. Staff should monitor whether Coons releases a formal letter to the Secretary of Defense or circulates a Dear Colleague letter seeking Democratic co-signers.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's Delaware Senate legislation establishing an independent council to evaluate state services and develop a five-year government restructuring plan, Katz can credibly argue he's the reform candidate who actually wrote legislation to modernize government — not just protect the status quo. Coons has spent 14 years in the Senate and never introduced a single DOD efficiency measure; his only instinct is to block reform.

**TALKING POINTS**

- I authored Delaware's government restructuring bill because I believe taxpayers deserve better — Coons just protects bureaucracy.
- Coons calls reform a 'crisis' — real crises are \$35 trillion in debt and a Pentagon that can't pass an audit.
- Reforming government isn't reckless — refusing to reform it is.
- As a physician managing operating rooms and surgical centers, I know how to run lean without compromising outcomes.
- Coons wants to keep every federal employee regardless of performance — that's not leadership, that's inertia.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION / DELAWARE **UPDATED**

## Dover AFB FY2027 Military Construction Request — End-of-Week Status Check on Budget Justification Details

As the first week of FY2027 defense hearings concludes, military construction details for Dover Air Force Base should now be available in submitted budget justification documents. Dover AFB, home to the 436th and 512th Airlift Wings and the Charles C. Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs, is critical to U.S. strategic airlift capability. Staff should pull the specific MILCON line items for Dover AFB from the FY2027 budget justification books now available and compare against FY2026 enacted levels. Any increases or decreases will be campaign-relevant.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's veterans and defense platform, he is committed to sustaining Dover AFB's mission and ensuring military families have first-rate facilities. Katz should be prepared to comment immediately on any MILCON shortfalls at Dover, positioning himself as the candidate who will fight for base modernization — not just use Dover as a backdrop for anti-DOGE press conferences.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Dover AFB is the backbone of America's strategic airlift — its facilities must be world-class.
- I'll fight for every MILCON dollar Dover needs, not just use the base for political photo ops.
- Our service members and their families at Dover deserve modern housing, modern hangars, and a Senator who delivers.
- After 14 years, what new facility has Coons actually delivered for Dover? Delawareans should ask.

SOURCES: Senate Appropriations Committee · Dover Air Force Base (436th AW)

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DEFENSE / BORDER SECURITY

## **[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Statements on National Guard Border Deployment Expansion**

Staff should verify whether Coons has issued any formal statement, floor remarks, committee questions, or social media posts this week regarding the Administration's expanded National Guard deployment authorization along the southern border. Coons's position on using military resources for border security is a key contrast point. Check Coons's official website, social media, and hearing transcripts from this week's Defense Appropriations sessions for any remarks on border deployments or DOD funding for border operations.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform on secure borders and strong ICE enforcement, any Coons opposition to National Guard border deployments is a direct contrast opportunity. Katz supports Commander-in-Chief authority to deploy military assets for border

security and will frame Coons's silence or opposition as prioritizing foreign aid over homeland defense.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- I support the Commander-in-Chief using every legal tool to secure our border — including the National Guard.
- Coons fights harder for tropical forests overseas than for securing America's southern border.
- Delaware families deserve a Senator who puts American sovereignty first.
- Border security is national security — a physician understands you treat the cause, not just the symptoms.

SOURCES: [Coons.senate.gov](https://coons.senate.gov) · C-SPAN

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RECENT LEGISLATION

JUDICIARY / LAW ENFORCEMENT / DISABILITY RIGHTS **UPDATED**

## S. 4089 — Blue Envelope Act — Eight Days in Judiciary Committee, No Action or Cosponsors

Coons's Blue Envelope Act (S. 4089), introduced March 12, has now been in the Senate Judiciary Committee for eight days with no committee action, no hearing scheduled, and no publicly announced cosponsors. The bill authorizes DOJ grants for state and local 'blue envelope' programs — voluntary identification tools for drivers with autism spectrum disorder to communicate their condition during traffic stops. While the bill addresses a legitimate public safety concern, it has gained no legislative traction in the Republican-controlled Judiciary Committee.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** As a pediatric-trained physician (per Katz's healthcare background at Boston Children's Hospital and Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children), Katz has deep credibility on developmental disability issues. He can acknowledge the bill's good intentions while noting Coons's pattern of introducing messaging bills that go nowhere. Katz should signal he would work with law enforcement and disability communities on practical solutions that actually pass.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- I spent my career caring for children with complex conditions at Nemours and Boston Children's — I understand these families' fears.
- Good intentions aren't enough — after 14 years, Coons should know how to pass a bill, not just introduce one.

- I'll work with Delaware law enforcement and autism advocacy groups on solutions that actually become law.
- Coons introduces bills for press releases; I'll introduce bills that reach the President's desk.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](#) — S. 4089 · [Senate Judiciary Committee](#)

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ENVIRONMENT / FOREIGN AID

## **S. 4011 — Tropical Forest and Coral Reef Conservation Reauthorization Act — No Movement, Week 3**

Coons's reauthorization of the 1998 Tropical Forest and Coral Reef Conservation Act (S. 4011), introduced March 5, remains in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee with no new cosponsors, no hearing scheduled, and no committee action after more than two weeks. The bill would reauthorize a program that facilitates debt-for-nature swaps with developing countries, effectively using U.S. taxpayer-backed mechanisms to fund conservation programs abroad.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's energy and environment platform, which emphasizes leveraging private sector knowledge and technology for environmental stewardship while enhancing America's global competitiveness, Katz can argue that Coons prioritizes sending conservation dollars to foreign governments over investing in American environmental infrastructure. Katz authored Delaware's National Scenic Byway legislation (SB 241, 146th General Assembly) — he has a proven record of environmental conservation at home.

### • TALKING POINTS

- I passed the Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway bill to protect Delaware's environment — Coons sends your money to protect foreign forests.
- Debt-for-nature swaps with developing countries while Americans can't afford groceries? Wrong priorities.
- Environmental policy should start at home — clean water, clean air, and energy independence for Delaware.
- Coons has spent 14 years focused on international affairs while Delaware's own environment and economy need attention.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](#) — S. 4011 · [Senate Foreign Relations Committee](#)

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IMMIGRATION / OVERSIGHT

## **S. 3891 — ICE Accountability Act — Stalled in Judiciary Committee, Week 5, No Traction**

Coons's ICE Accountability Act (S. 3891), introduced February 12, remains stalled in the Senate Judiciary Committee entering its fifth week with no new cosponsors or committee action. The bill would impose additional reporting requirements and oversight constraints on Immigration and Customs Enforcement operations. In the current political environment favoring strong enforcement, the bill has zero chance of advancing but continues to serve as a messaging vehicle for Coons's position on immigration enforcement.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform supporting secure borders and strong ICE enforcement, this bill represents one of the sharpest contrasts in the race. Coons wants to hamstring ICE with bureaucratic reporting mandates while communities deal with the consequences of insufficient enforcement. Katz should use this bill relentlessly to define Coons as soft on immigration enforcement.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Coons wants to put ICE agents behind desks filling out paperwork instead of on the street enforcing the law.
- The ICE Accountability Act should be called the ICE Obstruction Act — that's what more red tape does.
- Delaware families want safe communities, not a Senator who makes it harder to deport criminals.
- I support our ICE officers — they deserve a Senator who backs them up, not one who ties their hands.
- Five weeks and zero cosponsors — even Democrats won't touch this anti-enforcement bill.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) — S. 3891 · [Senate Judiciary Committee](#)

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APPROPRIATIONS & DELAWARE FUNDING

FEDERAL FUNDING / DELAWARE

## **[STAFF VERIFY] FY2026 Federal Funding Status and Delaware Earmarks — Continuing Resolution or Omnibus Update**

Staff should confirm the current status of FY2026 federal funding — whether the government is operating under a continuing resolution or an enacted omnibus/minibus package. If an omnibus was passed, verify which Coons-requested earmarks for Delaware were included and at what funding levels. If still under a CR, identify which Delaware projects and programs are affected by flat or reduced funding. This is critical for understanding what Coons can credibly claim credit for and where gaps exist.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's fiscal responsibility platform, he can frame the FY2026 funding situation as evidence of Washington dysfunction regardless of outcome — either a bloated omnibus that adds to the deficit or a CR that fails to fund Delaware priorities. Katz's experience authoring Delaware's government restructuring legislation demonstrates he understands how to prioritize spending and deliver results within constraints.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Washington can't even pass a budget on time — that's the dysfunction I'm running to fix.
- I balanced budgets in my medical practice and surgical centers — Coons has never balanced anything.
- Delawareans deserve to know: after 14 years, which Coons earmarks actually improved your life?
- Fiscal responsibility isn't a slogan — it's how I've run every organization I've led.

SOURCES: Senate Appropriations Committee · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov)

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VETERANS / DELAWARE / HEALTHCARE

## Veterans Affairs — Southern Delaware VA Facility Advocacy — Coons Weekend Constituent Outreach Expected

Coons continues to advocate for expanded VA healthcare services in southern Delaware, including support for a new outpatient specialty care facility serving veterans in Kent and Sussex counties. With Congress heading into a weekend period, Coons may use constituent events or social media to highlight his VA advocacy in southern Delaware. Staff should monitor for any new announcements, site visits, or funding commitments related to this project.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's veterans platform, he has specifically called for a 'VA Advanced Medical Facility in Southern Delaware' and has detailed the urgent healthcare needs of Kent and Sussex County veterans. Katz should not cede this issue to Coons — he should proactively visit southern Delaware veteran communities, meet with VSOs, and release a detailed facility proposal that goes beyond Coons's general advocacy with specific timelines, services, and funding mechanisms.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- As a physician, I know exactly what services our Kent and Sussex County veterans need — not just talking points, but a real facility plan.
- Our veterans in southern Delaware drive hours for specialty care — that's unacceptable, and I have a plan to fix it.
- Coons has talked about a southern Delaware VA facility for years — where is it?

- I'll bring my healthcare expertise to the Senate to ensure our veterans get world-class care regardless of zip code.

SOURCES: [Coons.senate.gov](https://coons.senate.gov) · [VA.gov](https://va.gov)

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## DELAWARE

BUSINESS CLIMATE / CORPORATE GOVERNANCE / DELAWARE ECONOMY **UPDATED**

### **ExxonMobil Texas Redomiciliation — Coons Completes Second Full Week Without Addressing Delaware's Eroding Business Climate**

ExxonMobil's board-recommended redomiciliation from New Jersey to Texas — bypassing Delaware entirely — continues to reverberate as a signal of Delaware's weakening position as the nation's premier state for corporate domicile. CEO Darren Woods explicitly praised Texas's pro-business regulatory environment. Coons has now gone more than two weeks without any public comment on this development or its implications for Delaware's franchise tax revenue and corporate law preeminence. Staff should check whether any Delaware business organizations or the Delaware State Bar Association have issued statements.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing directly on Katz's Delaware Senate bill to repeal the state corporate income tax (SB 100, 146th General Assembly), Katz has a proven legislative record of fighting to make Delaware more competitive for business. Coons's silence on ExxonMobil choosing Texas over Delaware is deafening — Katz should challenge Coons publicly to explain what he's done in 14 years to keep Delaware the best state for business.

#### • TALKING POINTS

- I introduced legislation to repeal Delaware's corporate income tax because I understand competition — Coons doesn't.
- When the world's largest companies choose Texas over Delaware, that's a five-alarm fire for our economy.
- Two weeks of silence from Coons on ExxonMobil — because he has no plan to keep Delaware competitive.
- Delaware's franchise tax revenue is the lifeblood of our state budget — Coons is asleep while it erodes.
- I've actually written pro-business legislation. Coons writes press releases about foreign aid.

SOURCES: [Reuters](https://reuters.com) · [Delaware Division of Corporations](https://delaware.gov)

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DELAWARE ECONOMY / QUALITY OF LIFE

## [STAFF VERIFY] Delaware Population and Outmigration Trends — 2025 Census Estimates

Staff should check whether updated Census Bureau population estimates or IRS migration data for Delaware have been released in March 2026. Recent trends have shown Delaware experiencing slower population growth compared to peer states, with net domestic outmigration from some demographics. If new data is available, prepare a comparison of Delaware's growth rate vs. neighboring states (Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey) and key competitor states (Florida, Texas, North Carolina) to frame the 'voting with their feet' narrative.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's economy and cost of living platform, which emphasizes investing in education, workforce development, tax reform, and energy independence to create lasting economic growth, outmigration data is a powerful indictment of the status quo. Katz should frame population loss as the ultimate report card on Delaware's quality of life under its current leadership.

### • TALKING POINTS

- People are leaving Delaware — that's the ultimate verdict on 14 years of Coons's leadership.
- Families move where they can afford homes, find good schools, and feel safe — we're losing on all three.
- I have a plan for Delaware's economy: tax reform, workforce development, energy independence. Coons has excuses.
- When people leave, they take their tax dollars with them — Delaware can't afford more of the same.

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau · IRS Statistics of Income — Migration Data † INDEX

GOVERNMENT REFORM / DELAWARE JOBS

## [STAFF VERIFY] DOGE-Driven Federal Workforce Cuts — Delaware-Specific Impact Numbers

Coons has been among the most vocal Senate Democrats opposing DOGE-driven reductions-in-force across federal agencies. Delaware has a significant federal workforce presence, including at Dover AFB, the VA Wilmington Medical Center, IRS offices, USDA facilities, and numerous federal contractor operations. Staff should verify whether any Delaware-specific federal workforce impact numbers have been released by OPM, union representatives, or media outlets. Quantifying the actual Delaware impact is essential for calibrating Katz's response.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's government restructuring experience (his Delaware Senate legislation establishing an independent council for a five-year government reorganization plan), Katz can empathize with affected federal workers while arguing that smart reform — not Coons's blanket opposition — is the answer. Katz should propose targeted protections for mission-critical federal employees at Dover AFB and VA facilities while supporting efficiency reforms in administrative overhead.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- I'll protect every mission-critical job at Dover AFB and the Wilmington VA — but I won't protect waste.
- Smart reform means keeping the people who serve veterans and defend our country while cutting bureaucratic bloat.
- Coons opposes all reform because he's never run anything — I've managed complex organizations and know the difference.
- Delaware's federal workers deserve a Senator who fights for them AND respects the taxpayer.

SOURCES: [OPM.gov](https://www.opm.gov) · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov)

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FOREIGN POLICY & DIPLOMACY

WAR POWERS / IRAN / FOREIGN RELATIONS

## Iran War Powers Debate — End-of-Week Status: No Floor Vote, Coons Continues Push to Constrain Commander-in-Chief Authority

Coons remains a vocal supporter of Sen. Tim Kaine's War Powers Resolution aimed at restraining the President's ability to take military action against Iran without prior congressional authorization. No new floor vote has been scheduled as the Senate heads into the weekend. Coons has continued to make the case in committee and media appearances that the President must seek congressional approval before any military engagement with Iran, framing it as a constitutional prerogative issue. Staff should monitor for any new cosponsors or scheduling developments heading into next week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform supporting strong defense and Commander-in-Chief authority, this is a clean contrast. Katz believes the President must have operational flexibility to respond to imminent threats — tying the Commander-in-Chief's hands with pre-authorization requirements in a volatile Middle East environment endangers American lives and emboldens adversaries like Iran.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- The Commander-in-Chief needs the authority to protect Americans — not a permission slip from Congress.
- Iran doesn't wait for Senate debate before threatening our troops and allies.
- Coons wants to telegraph our military limitations to Tehran — that's dangerous, not principled.
- I support robust congressional oversight, but not pre-authorization that handcuffs our military in a crisis.
- As a physician, I know that in emergencies you act decisively — you don't convene a committee first.

SOURCES: Senate Foreign Relations Committee · Coons.senate.gov

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GOVERNMENT REFORM / FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## DOGE Cuts to State Department / USAID — Coons Opposition Continues Into Weekend

Coons has continued his vocal opposition to DOGE-driven workforce reduction plans targeting the State Department and USAID, arguing that the cuts undermine American diplomatic capacity and national security. As Congress heads into the weekend, Coons is expected to continue making this case through media appearances and constituent communications. No new legislative vehicle has emerged to block the cuts, and the Republican majority has shown no appetite for intervention.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's fiscal responsibility and economy platform, he can frame USAID and State Department bloat as a symptom of Washington's spending addiction. Katz should argue that diplomatic effectiveness comes from strategic focus, not headcount — and that Coons's reflexive defense of every government employee abroad while Delawareans struggle with inflation reveals misplaced priorities.

### • TALKING POINTS

- Coons fights harder for USAID bureaucrats in foreign capitals than for working families in Wilmington.
- Diplomacy is about strategy, not headcount — we can be more effective with a leaner, more focused State Department.
- Every dollar spent on bloated foreign aid bureaucracy is a dollar not invested in Delaware's future.
- I'll prioritize American interests abroad — not the career interests of Washington's foreign policy establishment.

UKRAINE / FOREIGN AID

## [STAFF VERIFY] Ukraine Supplemental Aid — Status Update Heading Into Weekend

Coons has been one of the Senate's most vocal advocates for continued military and economic assistance to Ukraine. Staff should verify whether any new supplemental aid package language has been circulated, whether any floor votes are expected next week, and whether Coons has made new public statements this week on Ukraine funding levels. Also check whether any bipartisan negotiations on a scaled-down package are underway that might create a messaging challenge for Katz.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's fiscal responsibility platform, Katz should frame Ukraine aid as requiring accountability, transparency, and a clear strategic endgame — not the blank-check approach Coons favors. Katz can support Ukraine's sovereignty while demanding that every dollar is accounted for and that European allies carry their fair share of the burden.

### • TALKING POINTS

- I support Ukraine's sovereignty, but I demand accountability for every taxpayer dollar — Coons writes blank checks.
- Our European allies need to step up — America can't be the world's only checkbook.
- Coons has never met a foreign aid bill he wouldn't vote for — Delaware's priorities come last.
- Support for Ukraine must come with a strategy to end the conflict, not just fund it indefinitely.

## 2026 RACE CONTEXT

CAMPAIGN INTELLIGENCE

### Race Snapshot: Coons vs. Katz (General: Nov. 3, 2026)

Sen. Coons (D) is running for a third full term. Republican primary: Dr. Mike Katz vs. John Shulli — primary set for September 15, 2026. Delaware is historically Solid Democratic. Coons has missed 3.0% of Senate roll call votes since 2010. His legislative profile focuses on International Affairs (27%), Commerce (21%), and Labor (10%). Committees: Appropriations (Defense Subcommittee Ranking Member), Foreign Relations, Judiciary. No new public polling has been released this week. Staff should monitor for any Q1 2026 FEC filings from Coons's campaign committee, which may be due in April, to assess his fundraising posture.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Strategic note for Katz: This week's hearing series gave Coons sustained defense-focused media coverage as Ranking Member. Key vulnerabilities remain: Iran war posture (Katz supports Commander-in-Chief authority), DOGE/government spending debate (Katz has restructuring credentials from SB establishing five-year government reorganization plan), ICE oversight bill (Katz supports strong enforcement), healthcare policy (Katz's home turf as a physician with 40+ years of experience), and Delaware business climate erosion (Katz authored SB 100 to repeal corporate income tax). Weekend focus: Southern Delaware veteran outreach to neutralize Coons's VA advocacy advantage.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Coons has been in Washington for 14 years — what has actually changed for Delaware?
- I'm a physician, business owner, and former state senator — I've solved problems, not just talked about them.
- This race is a choice: a career politician focused on foreign capitals, or a doctor focused on Delaware families.
- Patients Over Politics — that's not a slogan, it's how I've lived my entire career.

SOURCES: GovTrack — Sen. Coons · FEC.gov

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Sources: Congress.gov · GovTrack · NPR · Coons.senate.gov · Ballotpedia · C-SPAN

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