

THE ECHO: A FRIDAY TIPSHEET OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY ON TWITTER

Thanks to the support of GSPM alumnus William H. Madway Class of 2013.

INSTITUTIONS



POTUS

6.7m ▼ <1%
Average 6.4m



Republicans

1.6m ▲ 14%
Average 2.4m



Democrats

1.5m ▼ 1%
Average 1.6m



U.S. Senate

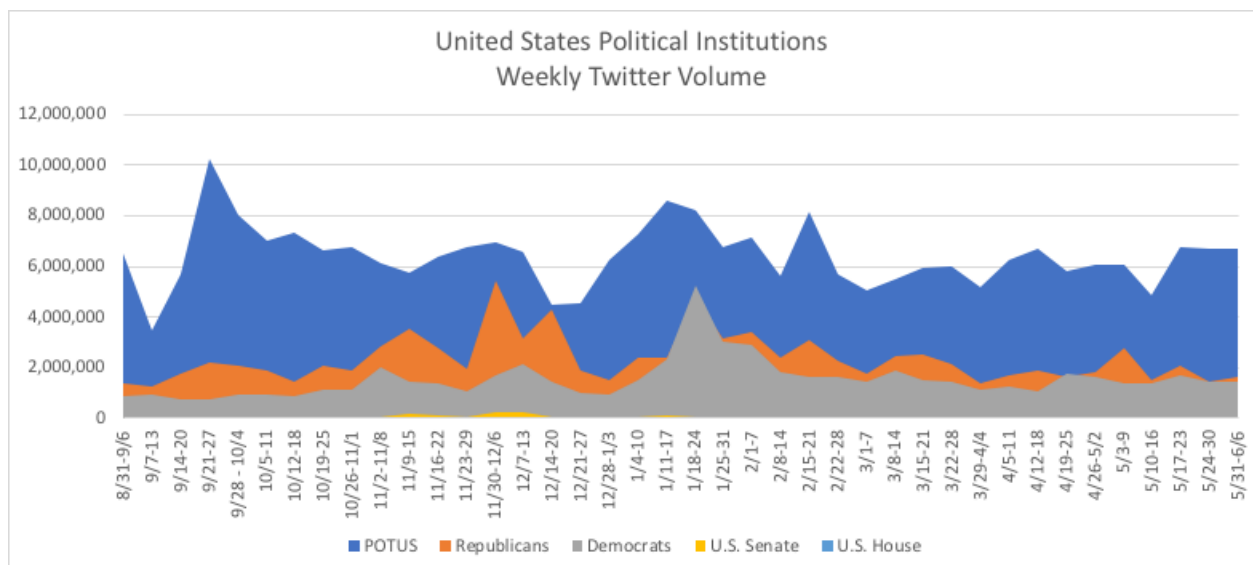
43.8m ▲ 73%
Average 59.8k

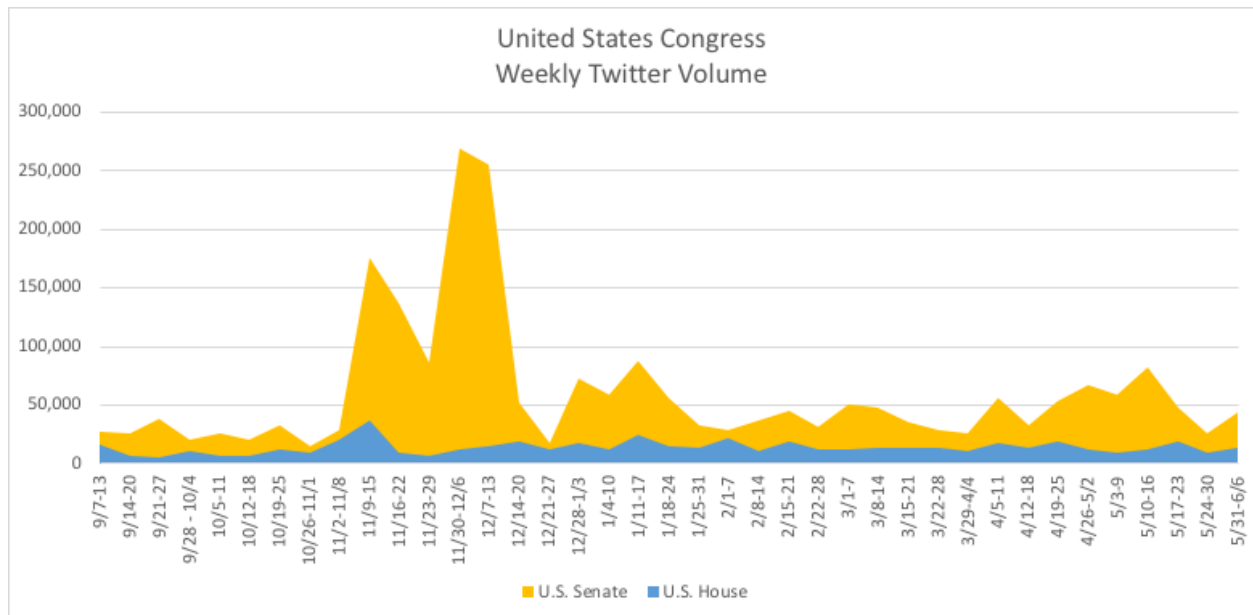


U.S. House

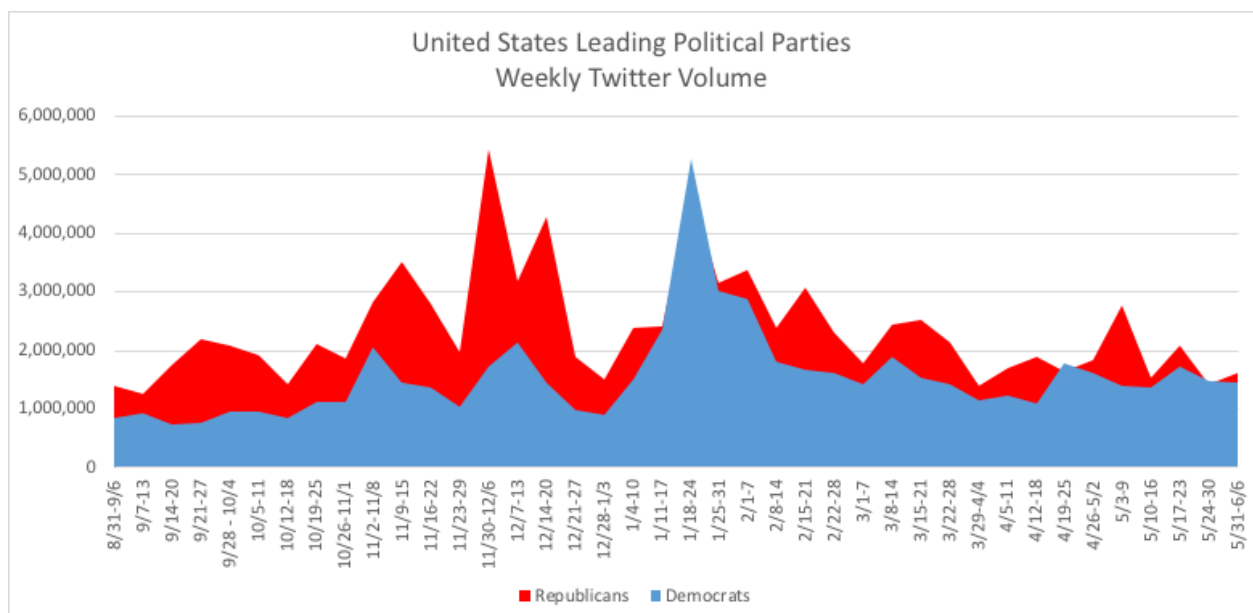
14.0m ▲ 52%
Average 13.9k

INSTITUTIONS: A big primary week drew increases in Twitter post volume related to U.S. national institutions. Tweets about the 2018 midterm elections were up 302 percent from the previous week on 834,170 related posts while, separately, the primaries in California attracted 173,581. Below is the Twitter volume for the political institutions we have been tracking; you'll note that President Trump continues to dominate and has had a three-week plateau of incoming volume. Following that chart, you can see that the Senate continues to draw more tweets than the House, but there is a specific outlier I'll highlight a bit later.





In light of Democrats somewhat unexpectedly being able to [post](#) a candidate for all November congressional elections as well as for governor, this week's analysis of Twitter volume may tell a counter-intuitive story. Democrats were down one percent from last week, which is in striking contrast to tweets about the Republican Party, which were up 14 percent and attracted about a million more posts on the social media platform. While Republicans maintain an edge on the metric, the gap has been narrowed considerably since the beginning of the year. An alternative view is that this may not be a good thing for Democrats as we have found with incumbent candidates that increased volume is, at times, a reflection of high interest and political weakness. It is possible there is still a third reason (among others) for this, which is the [narrowing](#) of the generic ballot from 14 percent to about 7 percent since January, according to RealClearPolitics.com.



SENATE INCUMBENT COMPETITIVE RACES



Smith (MN)
8.7k ▼27%



Nelson (FL)
8.2k ▲8%



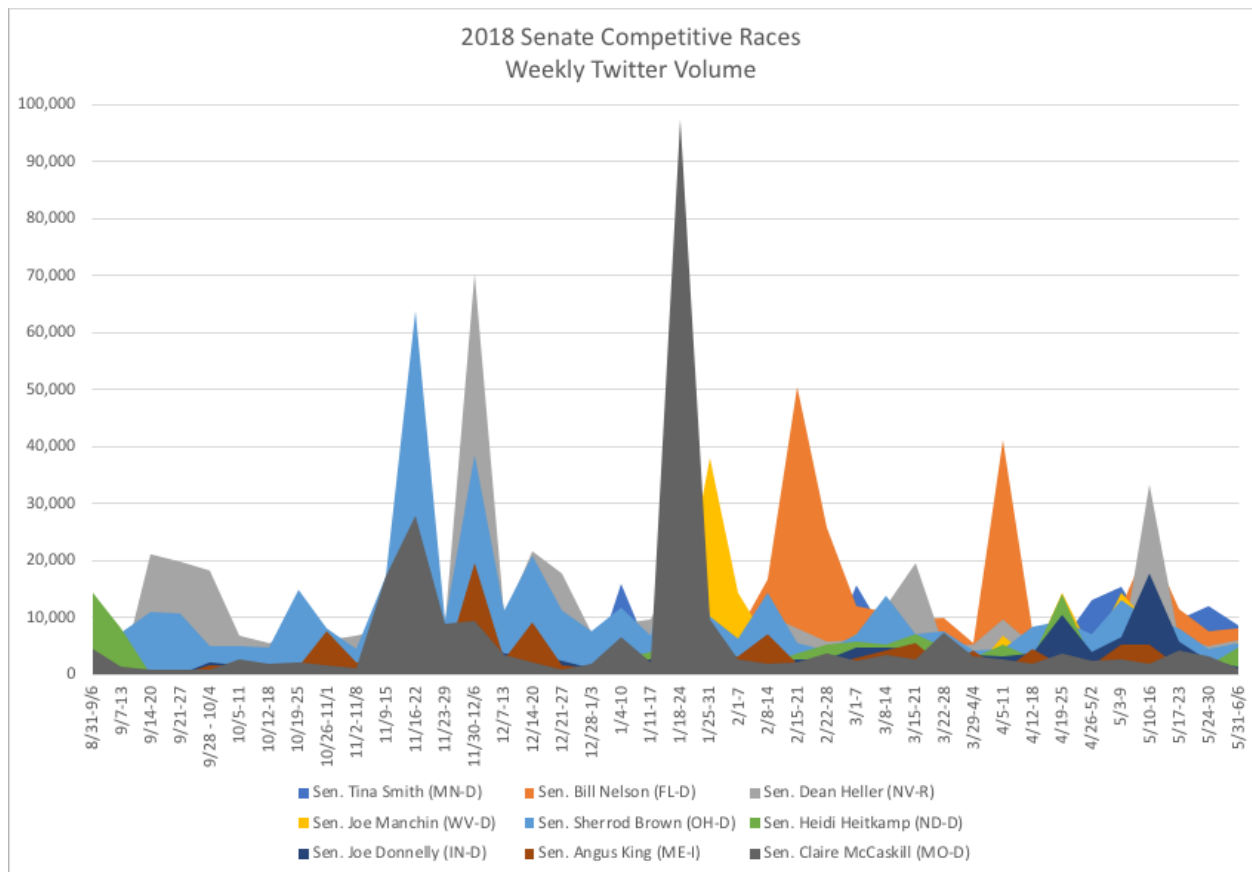
Heller (NV)
6.0k ▲18%



Manchin (WV)
5.8k ▲569%



Brown (OH)
5.6k ▲26%



SENATE RACES: Sen. Tina Smith (DFL-MN) may be challenging our impressions of what trending on Twitter might mean for incumbents. While down 27 percent from last week, she attracted the most buzz on the platform this week, finding ways to leverage her [support](#) for keeping families together when parents have been arrested or detained by immigration authorities as well as her primary [victory](#). Still, she is being challenged aggressively by Republican Richard Painter, who this week [called her out](#) for supporting sulfide mining so we'll keep an eye on this race for more context. Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) was on the other side of a [tweet](#) by Donald Trump, Jr. this week, driving an over fivefold increase in Twitter volume for the embattled incumbent.

HOUSE INCUMBENT COMPETITIVE RACES



Rohrabacher
CA-48
25.5k ▲ 15%



Comstock
VA-10
3.4k ▲ 146%



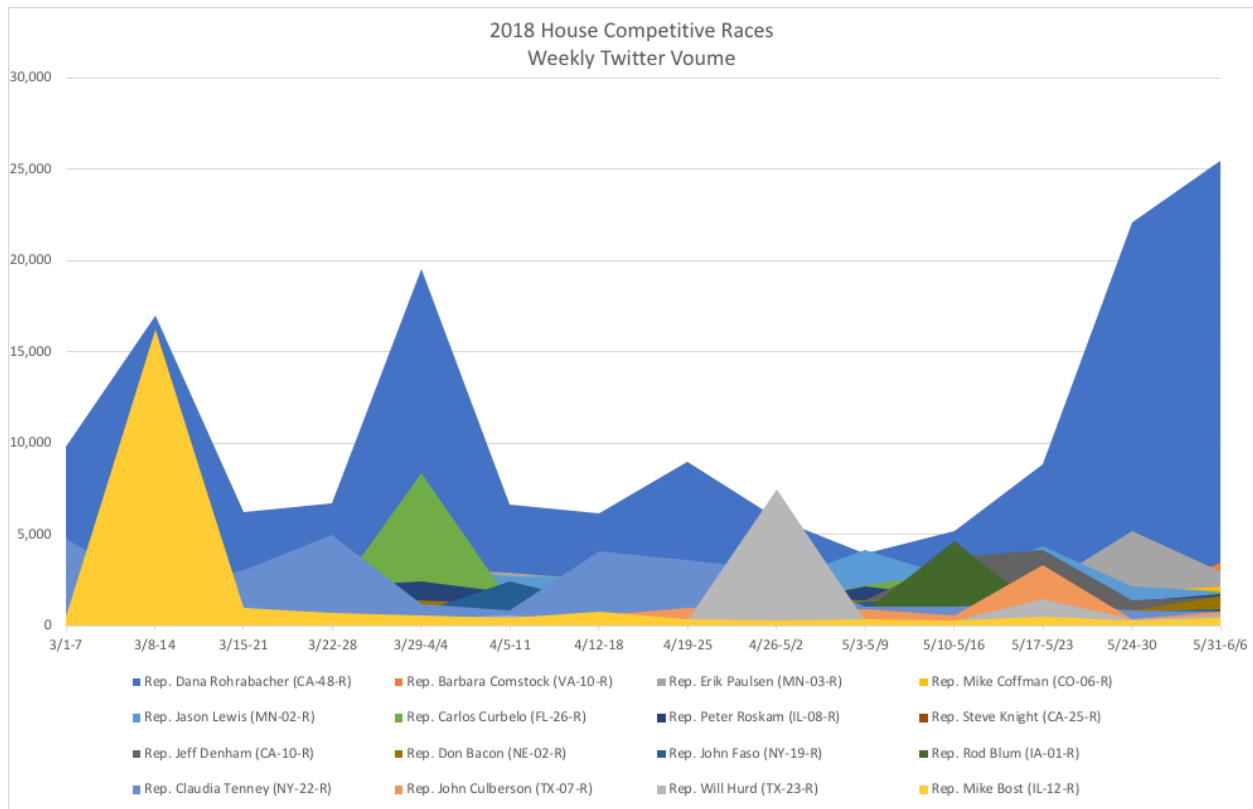
Paulsen
MN-03
3.0k ▼ 43%



Coffman
CO-06
2.1k ▲ 19%



Lewis
MN-02
1.9k ▲ 12%



HOUSE RACES: Since we added Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA-48) to our tracking in March, he has averaged 10,892 related tweets per week, and has dominated the past three weeks among all toss-up incumbents in the Senate and the House. Rohrabacher's tweet volume is over three times the number of the next cohort, which includes endangered Republican incumbents Rep. Barbara Comstock (VA-10), Rep. Jason Lewis (MN-02), and Erik Paulsen (MN-03), all featured this week above. The remaining 12 incumbents we're tracking average fewer than 3,000 related tweets weekly. Rep. Rohrabacher's plurality [victory](#) in the California primary this week drew a supportive [tweet](#) from President Trump and a group called "Stump for Trump" [tweeted](#) out its support for Rep. Comstock.

THE ECHO

ABOUT: Released weekly on Friday mornings online, The ECHO is a social media research publication of George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management's (GSPM) Public Echoes of Political Rhetoric in America (PEORIA) Project. THE ECHO is funded in part by GSPM alumnus William H. Madway and through a reduced-cost license to Crimson Hexagon.

METHODOLOGY: The ECHO features U.S. data collated by sets of keywords on the Crimson Hexagon platform. The first value represents the number of related tweets including the name or topic and the second demonstrates its increase or decrease over the week. Our analysis is informed by further research using Crimson Hexagon's additional features, which allows us to quickly view trending topics and search terms.

Top Institutions include five components. We track both parties, chambers of Congress, and the presidency with several related terms beyond their official accounts on Twitter. For example, the presidency includes @POTUS and @realDonaldTrump as well as "Donald Trump", "President Trump" and "DonaldTrump" as search terms. Rolling averages are published since late summer 2017 after the launch of The ECHO.

Key Races are determined on a rolling basis based on our editorial team's evaluations of campaigns rated as "Toss Up" by the Cook Political Report, Sabato's Crystal Ball, and Inside Elections with Nathan L. Gonzales. We feature the top five races in the Senate and the House as a function of seven-day related-tweet volume on Twitter. They are listed in order of the total number of times each were mentioned on Twitter over the past seven days (Thursday to Wednesday).

CONTACT: Sign up to receive The ECHO in your Inbox every Friday [here](#). For questions about The ECHO, please contact its author Dr. Michael D. Cohen at GSPM by email at michaeldcohen@gwu.edu. For more information about the GSPM Global Center for Political Management and The PEORIA Project, please contact Dr. Michael Cornfield by email at corn@gwu.edu. For questions about GSPM, please contact Dr. Lara Brown by email at lambrown@gwu.edu. All can be reached by phone at 202-994-6000.