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BCAP NewsClips

August 14, 2020

**Telecompetitor
At Least 49.7 Million
Americans Served
by Only One
Broadband Provider**

**Fierce Wireless
Verizon pinpoints
location with
centimeter-level
accuracy for road
safety, IoT**

**Bloomberg
Apple TV+ to Launch
First Discounted
Video Content
Bundle**

**BuzzFeed
Facebook's
Preferential
Treatment Of US
Conservatives Puts
Its Fact-Checking
Program In Danger**

In the midst of the pandemic, some lawmakers say telehealth has become a vital service. "We need to build upon this platform of telehealth which has allowed us, our communities, to deliver quality care to patients across our districts," Virginia Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger said.

Spanberger is pushing a new bill to provide an additional \$200 million to the FCC's COVID-19 telehealth program. "Providing greater certainty and support for the healthcare providers that are going to use this path for providing healthcare," Spanberger said. Spanberger worries without the added funding, rural communities will no longer have this path available to them. "I think some of the vital steps forward that we've made in developing telehealth healthcare services will pause and stagnate," Spanberger said.

But other lawmakers say this bill isn't needed, because the president already addressed the issue. "When he signed the executive order, took existing money — money that's already been appropriated and not spent and the agency has been hanging on to this — he's taken that money and said 'We're going to do that anyway,'" **Pennsylvania Congressman Fred Keller (R-12th)** said. Keller says Congress should only look into this when the money from the president runs dry. "I think it's a little premature to have another bill when the president has an order out here to get things moving and it's premature to see what the right amount on that would be," Keller said. Keller says for now, Congress should focus on expanding broadband access to make telehealth more accessible. — **Nexstar Broadcasting**

[vice.com](#)
[The Post Office Is Deactivating Mail Sorting Machines Ahead of the Election](#)

Philadelphia Inquirer
[USPS says Pennsylvania mail ballots may not be delivered on time, and state warns of 'overwhelming' risk to voters](#)

Allentown Morning Call
[Pennsylvania voter mail-in ballots: This is how the state will track your ballot](#)

Philadelphia Inquirer
[Editorial: Extending statewide moratorium on utility shut-offs is the right call amid pandemic and recession](#)

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
[Editorial: Amazon comes full circle](#)

The Hill
[Election security advocates see strong ally in Harris](#)

AMC Entertainment Holdings Inc will start its first phase of reopening theaters in the United States from Aug. 20, covering more than 100 venues, the company said on Thursday. The world's largest movie theater chain said it plans to open about two-thirds of its more than 600 theaters in the United States in time for the much-anticipated Christopher Nolan film "Tenet", that is slated for a Sept. 3 release. Movie theaters across the world have been shuttered since mid-March when several countries imposed lockdowns and social distancing measures to limit the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

– *Reuters*

Citing a warning by the U.S. Postal Service about its delivery times, Gov. Tom Wolf's administration is asking the state Supreme Court to extend deadlines for mail-in ballots to be received in the November election when Pennsylvania will be a premier presidential battleground. The filing, submitted after hours Thursday to the state's highest court, cited a letter dated July 29 by the general counsel of the U.S. Postal Service, Thomas Marshall.

In it, Marshall warns that Pennsylvania's mail-in ballot deadlines are "incongruous" with the postal service's delivery standards and he recommended that voters mail in their ballots a week before the deadline for it to be received and counted. That deadline, under current law, is the close of polls on election day, Nov. 3 at 8 p.m. But Wolf's administration pointed out that state law allows voters to apply for a mail-in ballot up until a week before the deadline, nevermind mail it in. "To state it simply: voters who apply for mail-in ballots in the last week of the application period and return their complete ballot by mail will, through no fault of their own, likely be disenfranchised," Wolf administration lawyers wrote in the 13-page filing.

As a result, Wolf's administration is asking the state Supreme Court to order that ballots postmarked by 8 p.m. on Nov. 3 be counted if they are valid and received during the three days following the election. Ballots received during those three days but lack a postmark or legible proof of mailing should also be counted, the administration's lawyers wrote. The court filing [came the same day that President Donald Trump frankly acknowledged that he is starving the U.S. Postal Service of money](#) in order to make it harder to process an expected surge of mail-in ballots, which he worries could cost him the election.

[Trump's campaign and the Republican Party is also suing in federal court in Pennsylvania](#) in an effort to block the use of drop boxes, which were used in some counties in the primary to make it easier for voters to submit mail-in ballots on time. The Wolf administration's filing comes after county election offices received thousands of mailed-in ballots following the close of polls in the June 2 primary election.

That election was the first test of a 2019 state law that allows voters to mail in a ballot, without an excuse that meets narrowly tailored definitions in state law. However, demand for mail-in ballots unexpectedly skyrocketed during the pandemic, as voters preferred to vote by mail rather than go to a polling station in person. More than 1.4 million Pennsylvanians voted by mail in the primary, or about half, smashing a state record made possible by the sweeping new election law Wolf signed last fall. In the 2016 presidential election, 6.1 million voters cast ballots, as Trump's narrow victory in Pennsylvania helped pave his path to the White House. – *Associated Press*

A federal judge in Pennsylvania told the Trump campaign and the Republican Party that they must produce evidence they have of vote-by-mail fraud in the state by Friday.

The judge's order, in a high-profile case about vote-by-mail in the battleground state, essentially forces the Trump campaign to try to back up President Donald Trump's false claims about massive voter fraud in postal voting. [The federal lawsuit filed in Pittsburgh claims](#) that as voters jumped to make use of the greatly broadened eligibility for mail-in ballots during the June 2 primary,

practices and procedures by elections officials ran afoul of state law and the state and federal constitutions. "The Court finds that instances of voter fraud are relevant to the claims and defenses in this case," District Judge J. Nicholas Ranjan wrote on Thursday, telling Republicans that they need to provide evidence of fraud to the Democratic Party and the Sierra Club, which are part of the lawsuit.

The Democrats had asked for information and documents that would show steps the Republicans took to study the possibility of fraud, especially related to the use of dropboxes, ballot collection and mailed-in ballots in the primary elections. The Trump campaign and Republicans had refused to do so. But with Thursday's court order, they must answer questions from the Democratic groups and turn over records of communications — or say they have none. The Trump campaign has until Friday to respond, the judge said.

Pennsylvania Democrats wrote to the court Wednesday. The Democrats have called the Trump lawsuit an attempt to stoke fears about unproven fraud related to mail-in voting in the battleground state. The Trump campaign "should not be permitted to raise such spectacular fraud related claims, particular in this national climate," lawyers representing the Democrats wrote. The Democrats have called the Trump lawsuit an attempt to stoke fears about unproven fraud related to mail-in voting in the battleground state. Trump has repeatedly claimed there is massive voter fraud — something that CNN's fact-checking team has repeatedly debunked. Legal scholars from both parties, and nonpartisan experts, acknowledge that there is no widespread fraud in US elections.

The case is one of the boldest attempts by the Trump campaign in court to curtail mail-in voting in the 2020 election. The Trump campaign had claimed mail-in voting could prompt questions about the accuracy of election results "and ultimately chaos," according to the court record. Ranjan, the judge overseeing the suit, was appointed by Trump. A hearing about the evidence is set for late September. — **CNN**

President Donald Trump says he wants to save the suburbs. First step: He needs to build a time machine to go back to the dated demographic he's been talking about. Maybe the president can [splurge on a DeLorean](#), so he can [get back to this timeline](#) by the Nov. 3 general election, [flux capacitor willing](#).

Trump has been bragging for two weeks about ending a looming wave of low-income housing allegedly about to wash over suburbia, [imperiling "the American dream"](#). It's a racist, George Wallace-esque trope — the suburbs as white refuge under attack — that misses decades of demographic and political trends. Maybe that's why [the effort is falling flat](#). "The 'suburban housewife' will be voting for me," [Trump tweeted Wednesday](#). "They want safety & are thrilled that I ended the long running program where low income housing would invade their neighborhood."

Trump must not know that [most parents work](#) and [how untrue that "Leave It to Beaver" depiction of family is](#). He went on to claim former Vice President Joe Biden "would reinstall" the program and put in charge U.S. Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey, a Black politician [who made opposing housing discrimination](#) part of his presidential campaign. Asked [at the White House on Wednesday](#) to explain his talk of invasion, Trump alleged a Democratic effort to "destroy suburbia" and specifically linked that notion to Black, Asian, and Hispanic people moving to and living there.

This all tracks back to the Trump administration's two weeks ago undoing the [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule](#) put in place in 2015 by then-President Barack Obama, adding to the 1968 Fair Housing Act, passed to combat segregation and discrimination in housing. The rule required local governments to study and address discrimination in housing. It did not set off a low-income suburban housing boom. Democrats [capitalized on that](#) in the

midterm elections two years ago. Clout suspects that is Trump's real fear — of suburbia, not for it.

Heather Heidelbaugh's first television commercial as the Republican nominee for Pennsylvania attorney general takes aim at the not-so-distant political ambitions of her incumbent opponent, Democrat Josh Shapiro. "I'll keep our community safe, keep politics out of the office, and serve my full term," Heidelbaugh says to the camera, sticking the landing on that last phrase.

[Shapiro is widely expected to run for governor](#) in 2022 when Gov. Tom Wolf 's second term wraps up. How widely? Clout [asked Wolf about that future race for governor](#) on Election Day last year. "That's my guy there," Wolf said, nodding toward Shapiro, who declined to comment about 2022. Heidelbaugh, [a Pittsburgh trial lawyer](#), has staffed her election squad with veterans of U.S. Sen. Pat Toomey's campaigns. [Toomey is seen as mulling a bid](#) for the Republican nomination for governor in 2022.

Any hits Heidelbaugh lands on Shapiro in the 12 weeks between now and the Nov. 3 general election could, by proxy, help Toomey in a race two years from now. Her campaign said it's spending \$200,000 to air the ad on television in the Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Scranton/Wilkes-Barre media markets. Shapiro's camp, asked if he had ever promised to serve a full second term, responded: "The promise AG Shapiro makes is to wake up every day focused on protecting people over powerful special interests. There are too many important battles to wage right now to be speculating about what might happen in politics years from now." Shapiro holds a significant cash advantage, reporting \$4.14 million in his campaign account as of June 22, while Heidelbaugh had \$208,871.

Heidelbaugh is getting a boost from [the Commonwealth Leaders Fund](#), a political action committee [founded and funded by conservative activists](#). The PAC, which gave her \$50,000 in June, has booked \$435,000 worth of air time to support her, according to the ad tracking firm website Advertising Analytics. The rest of Heidelbaugh's ad serves as an introduction to voters of a candidate who lacks strong name recognition. Her personal story is about overcoming early struggles in life. "My dad left us when I was just 8," she says. "I know what it's like to grow up hungry, to go to bed cold, to get knocked down and to get back up. I understand the problems people face. And I know how to help." – **Chris Brennan's "Clout" column in *Philadelphia Daily News***



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