



Political notebook

Campaign trail: National Right to Life endorsed 5th District Congressman James Lankford, the Republican nominee for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Tom Coburn.

Gov. Mary Fallin's campaign sent out an email last week announcing a National Rifle Association endorsement with a photo of her firing what appears to be a semi-automatic rifle.

Democrat Matt Silverstein, trying to unseat U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe, called the three-term incumbent's refusal to appear in public with him part of a "pattern of disturbing behavior."

Port of call: House Transportation Chairman Bill Shuster of Pennsylvania and 2nd District Congressman Markwayne Mullin will meet with officials and users of the Port of Muskogee on Tuesday morning.

Shuster visited the Port of Catoosa with Mullin in April 2013.

Mullin, a member of the committee, has been working to get money for McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation Channel System maintenance, and to allow private companies to invest in the system.

"We will be showing (Shuster) what a great job Oklahoma is doing, working together with the public and private sector to enhance our infrastructure."

EPA report: U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe complained to the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Inspector General last week about its unfinished report on state hydraulic fracturing regulation.

Inhofe said the report will be "duplicative" and beyond the office's mission scope.

"The report your office is developing falls squarely in the category of regulatory investigations, which is wholly inappropriate, particularly as it relates to its review of state based regulations," Inhofe wrote the agency.

Inhofe and oil and gas industry interests are concerned the EPA report will not agree with one produced by an association of state regulatory agencies that says they are doing a good job of protecting water resources from fracking-related pollution.

Security concerns: Coburn, ranking member of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Services Committee, and Chairman Tom Carper of Delaware continued to press their inquiry into USIS, a private security firm that conducts background checks for sensitive federal agencies. Among those cleared by USIS checks were National Security Agency leaker Edward Snowden and Aaron Alexis, who went on a 2013 shooting rampage at the Navy Yard in Washington after being hired to work on military computers despite a history of violence and mental instability.

More recently, hackers accessed the personnel files of thousands of Department of Homeland Security employees.

Meetings and events: Inhofe, Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam, Mayor Dewey Bartlett and state Republican Party Chairman Dave Weston are among those scheduled to appear at a Republican fundraiser Tuesday evening at the Summit Club.

A sponsors' roundtable at 5:30 p.m. will be followed by a general reception at 6:15 p.m. See bit.ly/1tnqwPf for sponsorship and ticket information and reservations.

Lt. Gov. Todd Lamb is hosting a young professionals conference from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Devon Tower in Oklahoma City. Register at www.okypl.com. Legislators will discuss the upcoming election at the Tulsa Democratic Party luncheon at 11:45 a.m. Friday at Baxter's Interurban, 717 S. Houston Ave.

Third District Congressman Frank Lucas has several town halls in the Tulsa area scheduled for October, including:

- Perkins, 11 a.m., Wednesday, Perkins Community Center, 750 N. Main St.
- Sapulpa, 3 p.m., Oct. 16, Collins Building Ballroom, 317 E. Lee.
- Pawhuska, 10:30 a.m., Oct. 17, Pawhuska Community Center, 520 Lynn Ave.
- Pawnee, 1:30 p.m., Oct. 17, Pawnee City Hall, 510 Illinois St.

The Tulsa Democratic Party's annual bean dinner will be 6-9 p.m. on Oct. 28 at the Greenwood Cultural Center.

One-liners: Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt has formed an anti-Money Laundering Division. ... Steve Russell, Republican nominee in the 5th Congressional District, caused a mild stir last week when he skipped a scheduled debate with Democrat Al McAffrey to campaign for candidates in Montana and New York. ... Jo Glenn has been appointed vice-chairwoman of the Tulsa County Democratic Party. ... The libertarian Cato Institute gave Gov. Mary Fallin a "B" for "fiscal responsibility." The four governors who received an A included embattled Kansas chief executive Sam Brownback and Maine's Paul LePage, who Politico calls "America's craziest governor." ... Meanwhile, the Secular Coalition for America, an atheist organization, gave 1st District Rep. Jim Bridenstine and U.S. Senate candidate James Lankford each an "F" for their positions on the separation of church and state. It was unclear why the organization listed Bridenstine in its voter guide, since he is unopposed for re-election. ... A poll for Griffin Communications released last week showed Inhofe and Lankford with comfortable leads over

their Democratic opponents. Inhofe led Matt Silverstein 56-32, while Lankford led state Sen. Connie Johnson 56-28.