

Don't Let the Door Hit You, Congress

The United States Congress can be a little like Italy at times. It spends much of the year blowing through money it doesn't have, then heads off on vacation for the entire month of August.

Our august body (although never in August) has also resembled the ancient Rome of Brutus and Julius Caesar lately. An obscure Republican Congressman tried in vain to oust Speaker of the House John Boehner, while Republican Senator Ted Cruz flat-out called Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell a liar.

But this is not meant to be a Roman column. The House is already packed for summer break, while the Senate will stick around for a few more days. That means the upper chamber has one final chance to make a very powerful statement.

Leader McConnell has promised The Factor that the Senate will soon vote to defund Planned Parenthood. He has described the abortion provider as "scandal-plagued," which is putting it mildly. The odious organization has been caught red-handed, pardon the imagery, peddling fetal body parts.

Republican Senator Rand Paul posits that there are about 58 votes in the Senate to end Planned Parenthood's long journey on the federal gravy train; two more would be enough to pass the bill. It would of course be vetoed by President Obama, who once actually urged God to bless Planned Parenthood, but would nevertheless let the folks know who is on the side of the angels. Literally.

Planned Parenthood aside, there are two other measures that Congress can and should pass when it returns after Labor Day. One is Kate's Law, named in honor of the late Kate Steinle. It

would mandate that violent illegal aliens who defy deportation be sentenced to at least five years in the federal pen. If you believe the government's primary role is to protect citizens from harm, which it is, Kate's Law is simple common sense.

Another bill should stop federal funds from flowing to cities that provide sanctuary to illegal aliens, blatantly defying the law in the process. Once again, this is common sense and favored by a vast majority of Americans.

A Rasmussen poll reports that 62% of voters want the Justice Department to take action against cities that provide sanctuary, while just 26% oppose that idea. Even on vacation, members of Congress can count votes, and 62% – 26% is more than a landslide. It's an avalanche.

So who could be opposed to the sanctuary city deal? Well, of course there is Nancy Pelosi, who says, "I support the sanctuary." She also trots out the old standard about how "comprehensive immigration reform" would end all our woes.

But most Americans to the right of Ms. Pelosi, meaning about 99% of the USA, understand full well that protecting violent felons is downright evil. Sanctuary cities must face a choice – stop providing protection, or stop receiving federal dollars.

For the time being, Planned Parenthood will continue to get much of its financial nourishment, a half-billion dollars worth, from the federal teat. Also, taxpayer dollars will continue to flow into sanctuary cities and Kate's Law will have to wait. But we the people should put our representatives on notice that these three measures must be passed, or at least given a clean up-or-down vote.

So, Congress, those are three demands worth thinking about this August, whether you're lazing on the beach or pounding the pavement in your district. Talk to your constituents, the voters who put you in office. Unless you're in Berkeley or

Madison or Burlington, you'll probably find that they want these three bills passed.

Until then, we'll quote that catchy song recorded in 1966 by The Happenings: "Bye-bye, so long, farewell. See you in September, See you when the summer's through."