



Demonstrators gather on 42nd Street in Manhattan on Saturday during a benefit for the Republican Party and the president's re-election.

PROTESTING TAX BILL, HEALTH CARE CHANGES

BY NICOLE FULLER
nicole.fuller@newsday.com

President Donald Trump was greeted by hundreds of protesters outside a midtown Manhattan restaurant where he headlined a fundraiser on Saturday, hours after the Senate Republicans' nearly \$1.5 trillion tax overhaul passed a crucial vote.

The demonstrators, organized by the New York State Democratic Party and labor unions representing teachers and health care workers, held signs decrying both the Senate's passage of the tax bill early Saturday and changes to Obamacare. Some chanted "Corporate greed has got to go!" and "New York hates you, lock him up!" as a man played the drums.

Trump attended the morning fundraiser for his re-election

campaign at Cipriani on 42nd Street, across from Grand Central Terminal. In addition to the \$1,000-a-ticket Cipriani fundraiser, Trump attended two other functions on the Upper East Side — a luncheon at The Pierre hotel near Central Park, and another event at a private residence, according to The Associated Press. The fundraisers benefited the Republican National Committee and Trump's re-election committee.

Barricades and scores of NYPD officers lined 42nd Street, which was closed in sections to traffic. City sanitation trucks were parked outside the restaurant as a security buffer.

Protesters were kept across the street, outside Grand Central, where they chanted and waved signs, including "GOP tax scam," for about three hours. An

NYPD spokeswoman said there were no arrests.

Lisa Goldberg, a private-school teacher from Manhattan, said she joined the protest because she believes the tax bill was approved without enough public discussion of its provisions.

"These are exactly the people that will benefit from the tax cut," said Goldberg, 43, pointing to fundraiser attendees waiting to get inside. "It's satisfying to show our rage in general, but to these people in particular."

Some fundraiser attendees could be seen filming the protesters on their cellphones, but barricades prevented reporters from interviewing them.

Geoff Berman, executive director of the New York State Democratic Committee, said in an email urging supporters to at-

tend the protest: "We are fighting against attacks on our health care system, a tax plan that gives millions to corporations at the expense of the middle class, and politics that threaten Dreamers, women, people of color, the LGBTQ community, workers and many more."

Trump also had fans who gathered outside to see him.

Jessi Byrd, a hairstylist and makeup artist from Dothan, Alabama, was going with her family to see the Rockettes perform, but stopped in time to see the president's motorcade depart. "It was absolutely awesome," said Byrd, 23, moments after it passed.

Byrd said she voted for Trump and was pleased the tax bill was on the verge of becoming law. "It's going to be good," she said. "He's done a lot in the first 10 months of his presidency."

REACTION TO SENATE TAX BILL

"In my long career in politics, I have not seen a more regressive piece of legislation, so devoid of a rationale, so ill-suited for the condition of the country, so removed from the reality of what the American people need."



— Senate Minority Leader
Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.)

"This bill was designed to take from everyday Americans and give to wealthy CEOs and corporations."



— Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand
(D-N.Y.)

"The tax plan is going to be devastating for New York as it is for every state where you have middle class and working families, because it is all focused on a tax cut for the rich."



— Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo

"It's a bad bill for New York and it's a bad bill for Long Island. This is really going to damage New York, Long Island and the Northeast . . . I'd rather it die than it be enacted."



— Rep. Peter King
(R-Seaford)

"If [Long Island] school districts and local government believe it will be business as usual under this tax proposal, they are in for a seismic shock."



— Laureen Harris, president
of The Association for a
Better Long Island