# Agenda Updates

## Uniqueness

### Momentum

#### Republican support now—but pc key to getting it across the finish line—angering Republicans ensures lack of passage

Voice of Russia 7-14 (The Voice of Russia, text taken from article titled, “73 Republicans call for repeal of Jackson-Vanik,” published July 14th, 2012. Text found at [http://english.ruvr.ru/2012\_07\_14/81484044/] by Hirsh)

73 U.S. congressmen sent a letter to Barack Obama on Friday in support of the speedy repeal of the Jackson-Vanik amendment. All signatories are authors of the opposition Republican Party of the United States. The letter was also welcomed by a number of American business associations. Special emphasis was placed on the document due to the fact that Russia will be joining the WTO before the end of the summer. If the country is not endowed with the status of permanent normal trade partner of the U.S., "U.S. exporters and their workers will not be able to take advantage of the benefits provided by this market," state the congressmen. They say they are willing to work together at all levels with the president to ensure the rapid passing of the necessary legislation through both houses of Congress.

#### Momentum ensures passage now—but pc key

Barkley et al 7-18 (Tom Barkley and Corey Boles, writing for the Wall Street Journal, text taken from article titled, “Senate Advances Trade Bill on Russia,” published July 18th, 2012. Text found at [http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444330904577535041366804320.html?mod=googlenews\_wsj] by Hirsh)

"This strong vote, I think, gives this a lot of momentum," Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D., Mont.) said after the vote. He added there is still hope to win congressional approval before August. U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk applauded the committee vote and said the Obama administration would work with Congress toward quick passage of the bill.

#### Will pass- push now

**The Hill 7/10** (Vicki Needham “Top US trade official urges congressional action on Russia” 7/10/12 <http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/236987-top-us-trade-official-urges-congressional-action-on-russia>)

The nation's top trade official on Tuesday urged Congress to lift a Cold War-era provision to grant Russia **p**ermanent **n**ormal **t**rade **r**elations. The call from U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk comes on the heels of the Russian Duma’s ratification of its membership into the World Trade Organization (WTO), an 18-year quest. “We are pleased to hear that Russia has completed this critical first step in its domestic process for approving the terms for becoming a member of the **W**orld **T**rade **O**rganization," Kirk said. "We reiterate our call on Congress to act now on Jackson-Vanik and Permanent Normal Trade Relations legislation,” he said. Once the upper chamber of Russia's parliament, the Federation Council, approves the accession package, it then heads to the desk of President Vladimir Putin for his signature, which is expected before the July 23 deadline.

#### Will pass- GOP push

**The Voice of Russia 7/14** (“73 Republicans call for repeal of Jackson-Vanik” 7/14/12 http://english.ruvr.ru/2012\_07\_14/81484044/)

73 U.S. congressmen sent a letter to Barack Obama on Friday in support of the speedy repeal of the [Jackson-Vanik amendment](http://english.ruvr.ru/2012_06_27/79424895/). All signatories are authors of the opposition Republican Party of the United States. The letter was also welcomed by a number of American business associations. Special emphasis was placed on the document due to the fact that Russia will be joining the WTO before the end of the summer. If the country is not endowed with the status of permanent normal trade partner of the U.S., "U.S. exporters and their workers will not be able to take advantage of the benefits provided by this market," state the congressmen. They say they are willing to work together at all levels with the president to ensure the rapid passing of the necessary legislation through both houses of Congress.

#### Will pass- top priority

**Fox News 6/27** (“Clinton cites concerns over human rights in Russia” 6/27/12 <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/06/27/clinton-optimistic-over-us-russian-relations/>)

Clinton says she expects "something to move" on both the repeal of the Jackson-Vanik law and on Congress' concerns about Russian human rights. She told reporters in Finland on Wednesday that the concerns could be expressed "without derailing the relationship (with Moscow) and that is what we are working with our Congress to do and we have every reason to believe we can accomplish that." The 1974 Jackson-Vanik Act tied trade with the then-Soviet Union to Moscow's willingness to allow Jews and other minorities to leave the country. The repeal of Jackson-Vanik is necessary if U.S. businesses are to enjoy lower tariffs and increased access to Russian markets when Russia joins the World Trade Organization this summer. Following talks with Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, Clinton told reporters that "we discussed this directly with President (Vladimir) Putin when I was with President Obama in Mexico. We made it very clear that, you know, we do have concerns about human rights in Russia." A Senate panel in Washington moved forward Tuesday on a bill that would impose tough sanctions on Russian human rights violators, a measure certain to be linked to congressional efforts to lift the Cold War-era Jackson-Vanik trade restrictions. The Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate approved the measure that would impose visa bans and freeze the assets of those held responsible for gross human rights violations in Russia, as well as other human rights abusers. Specifically, it targets those allegedly involved in the imprisonment, torture and death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who died in a Russian jail in 2009. Clinton said, "We think there is a way of expressing those concerns without derailing the relationship" with Moscow, and she added that is "what we are working with our Congress to do, and we have every reason to believe we can accomplish that." "We are very keen in the administration for repealing the Jackson-Vanik bill because we want to open doors to greater trade and investment between our two countries," the secretary said.

### Obama Push

#### Obama backs repeal

**Chicago Tribune 7/18** (“Russia backs WTO entry, U.S. friction persists” 7/18/12 [http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-trade-russia-votebre86h0lz-20120718,0,4273690.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-trade-russia-votebre86h0lz-20120718%2C0%2C4273690.story))

Jackson-Vanik, implemented in 1974, does not conform with WTO . Regarded by Moscow as an anachronism, the provision has long been a bone of contention in bilateral relations. U.S. lawmakers are also debating legislation named after Sergei Magnitsky, an anti-corruption lawyer who died in Russian custody in 2009, that would instead impose visa bans and freeze assets on Russian officials deemed to be corrupt. "Really, the last thing we want is for the anti-Soviet Jackson-Vanik amendment to be replaced with anti-Russian legislation," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov was quoted by Interfax news agency as saying after Wednesday's vote. President Barack Obama's administration backs repealing Jackson-Vanik, and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus, a Democrat, plans to push forward a PNTR bill this month, but would attach the Magnitsky bill to the measure.

## Link—Guam

#### McCain opposes the plan

Aguon ’11 (Mindy, writer for Kuam News, a Guam news publication, “McCain calls for defense spending cuts for Guam,” 12-11-11 <http://www.kuam.com/story/16352328/2011/12/19/mccain-calls-for-defense-spending-cuts-for-guam>)

Guam - Senator John McCain isn't giving up on his efforts to exclude funding for the military buildup. In a letter to Senate Committee on Appropriations Chairman Senator Daniel Inouye and Vice Chair Senator Thad Cochran, McCain urges them to cut what he calls "unneeded spending for public infrastructure on Guam" from the Department of Defense section of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which is pending action in the Senate. In the December 15 letter, McCain urges his colleagues to cut $33 million from the President's budget request for socioeconomic infrastructure improvements on Guam. With the buildup on Guam now "paused", McCain doesn't believe Congress should take money normally used for base operations, supplies and ammunition and use them to address "long standing problems on Guam completely unrelated to the Marine Corps build-up" such as building a cultural artifacts repository, purchasing 53 school buses and building the first phase of a [mental health facility](http://www.kuam.com/story/16352328/2011/12/19/mccain-calls-for-defense-spending-cuts-for-guam) to satisfy a federal injunction. McCain wrote, "I have strong concerns about the challenges and growing costs in a time of severe fiscal constraints of building large new U.S. military facilities and associated training areas on Guam for the permanent stationing of 8,700 Marines and their families.". The Arizona senator adding that the build-up on Guam is contingent on tangible progress towards the construction of a Futenma Replacement Facility which hasn't happened." As a result of these developments, we believe a pause in further obligations of either U.S. or Government of Japan funds is reasonable pending a[study](http://www.kuam.com/story/16352328/2011/12/19/mccain-calls-for-defense-spending-cuts-for-guam) of the strategy and U.S. force posture in the Pacific area of responsibility," he wrote. McCain's letter comes just days after the House and Senate passed the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, cutting $155 million for military construction projects on Guam to support the relocation of the Marines.

#### He’s influential, studies prove

U.S. Newswire 6 (May 16, 2006 – lexis)

The first analysis and ranking system of power in Congress were released today on Congress.org -- http://congress.org. Power Rankings is the culmination of a five-month research project by Knowlegis -- http://www.knowlegis.net -- that sought to measure various characteristics of power. Cont…"We integrated every available piece of publicly available data to create an assessment of each Member of Congress," Fitch said. "We developed criteria and a weighting formula that reflected how members exercise power. Cont…-- Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) scored 1st in the "Influence" Power Category (which measures ability to influence legislative agenda through indirect means), primarily due to his media visibility.

## Relations

### JV key

#### Repeal key to bilateral relations

**Chicago Tribune 7/18** (“Russia backs WTO entry, U.S. friction persists” 7/18/12 [http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-trade-russia-votebre86h0lz-20120718,0,4273690.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-trade-russia-votebre86h0lz-20120718%2C0%2C4273690.story))

If the measure is not repealed, Russia would be in a position to deny U.S. exporters the market-opening concessions it made to join the global trade group. The Federation Council upper house vote, carried easily with 144 in favor in the 166-strong chamber, was a formality after the State Duma lower house backed WTO entry last week by a 30-seat majority. The Russian government has said that it will start cutting tariffs from September 1 after agreeing to gradually lower import duties from an average of 9.5 percent now to 6 percent by 2015. Washington could, however, miss out on those trade benefits if Congress does not vote to repeal the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which links awarding so-called permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) to emigration rights for Soviet Jews. Jackson-Vanik, implemented in 1974, does not conform with WTO rules. Regarded by Moscow as an anachronism, the provision has long been a bone of contention in bilateral relations.

**Reset is improving relations – but JV is a key issue**

**Xinhua News** 5 – 17 – **12** (“Kremlin sees Russia-U.S. relations reset despite certain problems”, <http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-05/17/c_131594687.htm> ck)

MOSCOW, May 17 (Xinhua) -- With the "reset" of Russia-U.S. relations, progress has been made in bilateral political cooperation despite certain problems, the Kremlin said Thursday. Presidential aide Arkady Dvorkovich affirmed the progress made in political cooperation, including easing visa formalities, between the two countries. Dvorkovich said the State Duma, the lower house of the Russian parliament, would soon endorse liberalization of a bilateral visa mechanism. "We will make similar legislative decisions within weeks," he said. However, the Kremlin official criticized some politicians in Washington for their "Cold War thinking." Prejudices linger on "and Cold War biases remain in the minds of many people," Dvorkovich said. He added that not everybody "in Russia and the United States, including high-ranking politicians, have changed their attitude to the bilateral relations." Dvorkovich stressed Russia's opposition to replacing the Jackson-Vanik amendment by another legislative act. "A replacement of the Jackson-Vanik amendment by any new legislation that will tackle new political problems imagined or seen by certain American congressmen and senators is unacceptable for us," Dvorkovich said. The U.S. Congress approved the Jackson-Vanik amendment at the height of the Cold War in 1974. The law denies "most favored nation" status to those countries that restricted emigration and has been targeted specifically against the Soviet Union. U.S. Vice President Joe Biden last year urged a repeal of the law.

### Relations Low

**Reset failed – US-Russia relation will continue to deteriorate – contradicting foreign policy initiatives, ideology, and power politics**

**Minchev** 6 – 28 – **12** (Ognyan, fellow with the German Marshall Fund of the United States' Balkan Trust for Democracy, “Putin relishes deteriorating US-Russia relations”, <http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/2144/putin-relishes-deteriorating-us-russia-relations> ck)

The meeting of United States President Barack Obama and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin at the G20 summit in Mexico only underscored the chill in relations between Moscow and Washington. In fact, **relations have deteriorated** steadily since Putin replaced the ailing Boris Yeltsin in 1999, despite Obama's ambitious program to improve – or 'reset' – bilateral ties. Today **the reset is over**, and the two leaders no longer disguise their differences on most important international issues. For Obama, the interment of one of his administration's signature foreign policy efforts at the outset of a re-election campaign is an unwelcome realisation. With few triumphs in the international arena, Obama undoubtedly looked forward to citing improved relations with Russia as an unqualified asset. For their part, Russian leaders have seemed contemptuous of American hopes for renewing their strained relationship. Under Putin, Moscow has steadfastly opposed western efforts to halt civilian casualties in Syria and international efforts to block Iran's nuclear program. Most pointedly, the new US ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul – a key author of the reset strategy – was publicly ostracized in a series of Russian media exposés. Clearly, **Putin** and his government **welcome the rapidly deteriorating US-Russia relationship**. Some of the interests underlying Moscow's strategy appear obvious. For example, Russia rejected the establishment of a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation anti-missile defence shield over Europe, perceiving it as a threat. Western and US policies meant to encourage the Arab spring revolutions struck Russian authorities as part of a conspiracy aimed at – among other things – hampering Russian interests in places like Libya and Syria. Moscow sees US-led efforts to curb Tehran's nuclear programme as an attempt to provoke western or Israeli military action, with the aim of effecting regime change. This could pave the way for the US and its allies to strategically and commercially penetrate post-Soviet central Asia. The west's direct access to central Asian energy resources could cripple Russia's strategy of monopolising energy supply corridors between Europe and the east. There might also be a strong ideological element in Putin's attitudes toward the current US president. While Obama is a post-modern liberal, Putin resembles a 19th century authoritarian conservative. Curiously, most Soviet – and Chinese – orthodox communist leaders of the 20th century preferred dealing with conservative rather than liberal US statesmen. "I love the right," Mao Zedong supposedly quipped to Richard Nixon, the same ardent anti-communist with whom Leonid Brezhnev initiated détente. It was Ronald Reagan, with his vilification of the Soviet "evil empire," who ended the Cold War in partnership with perestroika leader Mikhail Gorbachev. In contrast, liberal Jimmy Carter was rewarded for his positive attitudes to Moscow with Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Putin might share some of that same distrust of liberal partners and be more apt to deal with a hard-line conservative in the White House. Yet, there would almost certainly be trade-offs. A conservative president would likely engage in more assertive policies toward Moscow. A more active US policy toward the Middle East, the South Caucasus, or Central Europe would risk clashing more openly with Russia's positions. Why would Putin want this, given the fragility of Russian power today? Threats have been a key driver of Russian power politics throughout the history of the empire. Putin's calculations could take many forms. A more active US policy on disputed issues might demonstrate not only American power but also reveal American weaknesses. A more assertive US presence in the spheres of Russian interest might also provoke more active opposition by China, and Russia may benefit from greater competition between Beijing and Washington. Or Putin might prefer an immediate, open rivalry with what he perceives to be a weakened United States across a range of issues. Putin's policy toward the US might be a combination of all these factors, underlining two basic tenets of Moscow's long-term geo-strategy. First, Russian strength is demonstrated through its rivalries, not through its partnerships. Moscow does enjoy partnerships – as it does today with China – but they constitute a policy of weakness, not of strength. Second, Russia's anti-western – and, in particular, anti-American – attitudes are at the core of its historic geopolitical identity. Pushing the US out of Europe and terminating the transatlantic link has been the backbone of Russia's grand strategy since 1945. Times are changing, of course, and long-term Russian interests would arguably benefit from closer cooperation with both Europe and the US given the growing threats in Russia's neighbourhood. Will a new mentality catch up with reality for Putin? Or are we in for an extended period of divergence between Moscow and Washington?

## Julie File

### Gridlock now

#### Gridlock – only must pass initiatives get through – and no spending will happen

Wasson 7/18/12 (Erik, The Hill, “House leaves biggest spending fight for last”, [http://thehill.com/homenews/house/238803-house-leaves-biggest-spending-fight-for-last //](http://thehill.com/homenews/house/238803-house-leaves-biggest-spending-fight-for-last%20/) Veevz)

For likely the last time before the election, the GOP on Wednesday began moving a major spending bill with detailed cuts to popular programs. The 2013 Labor, Health and Human Services spending bill passed out of an Appropriations subcommittee after a vitriolic debate. The 112th Congress has been dominated by bruising fiscal fights, but as the election nears, spending showdowns are for the most part being left behind. The Labor-HHS bill is not expected to even reach the floor for a vote as the GOP rallies around calls to repeal Obama’s healthcare law and to extend the Bush-era tax rates.

### Dem Unity High

#### Dem unity high – Tax Cut fight Demands it

Hunter 7/11/12 (Kathleen, Bloomberg, ‘Top U.S. Senate Democrats Pledge Unity on Obama Tax Plan”, <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-07-11/top-u-dot-s-dot-senate-democrats-pledge-unity-on-obama-tax-plan#p2> // Veevz)

U.S. Senate Democratic leaders say their members will support President Barack Obama’s latest push to extend most of the Bush-era tax cuts, brushing aside talk of dissension in their ranks. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has said he will schedule a vote soon on Obama’s plan to extend the tax cuts for families earning up to $250,000 a year while letting them expire for those making more than that threshold. Reid and other congressional Democrats met with the president at the White House today. Republicans want to extend the tax cuts for all income levels for one year beyond their Dec. 31 expiration. They plan to offer their proposal as an amendment to a small-business tax credit measure the Senate is considering this week.

### GOP Unity High

#### Holder Scandle proves GOP unity high

NYT 6/20/12 (“A Pointless Partisan Fight”, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/21/opinion/a-pointless-partisan-fight.html?_r=1> // veevz)

The political feud between the White House and Congressional Republicans has now culminated in a House oversight committee vote to cite Attorney General Eric Holder Jr. for criminal contempt. His supposed crime is failing to hand over some documents in an investigation of a botched gunrunning sting operation known as “Fast and Furious.”

### Bipart Low

#### **Appropriations wreck bipart – 0 risk of DA**

Herb 7/16/12 (Jeremy, The Hill, “The House will vote on the defense appropriations bill”http://thehill.com/blogs/defcon-hill/budget-appropriations/238023-week-ahead-house-takes-up-defense-appropriations-amid-sequestration-fight // veevz)

The House will vote on the defense appropriations bill this week as the warnings over the threat of $500 billion in defense cuts continue to get louder on Capitol Hill. House Republicans are expected to attack Democrats and President Obama over sequestration during the debate on the 2013 defense appropriations bill, which will likely take several days of votes to wade through potentially hundreds of amendments. The House is also planning to vote on a bill that would require reports from the Obama administration explaining how the sequester cuts would be implemented. The bill received a seal of approval from House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) Friday. And the House Armed Services Committee is holding a high-profile hearing with the chief executives of some of the biggest defense contractors, where they are expected to lay out how devastating the cuts would be to the defense industrial base. It all adds up to a busy week on Capitol Hill, where talk about sequestration has grown amid added pressure from defense hawks and the industry. But the $608 billion appropriations bill will be the largest issue tackled this week. The bill, which is $3 billion higher than the president’s request, has drawn a veto threat from the White House because of spending cuts in other parts of the budget to comply with the Budget Control Act spending caps. There are also a host of controversial issues in the bill, such as an attempt to ban military sponsorships of sporting events like NASCAR, as well as other fights than can expected to get contentious debates on the House floor.

### PC Low

#### HC Screwed his PC

Politico 7/18/12 (“Biden: Obama knew health care would cost him”, [http://www.politico.com/politico44/2012/07/biden-obama-knew-health-care-would-cost-him-129410.html //](http://www.politico.com/politico44/2012/07/biden-obama-knew-health-care-would-cost-him-129410.html%20/) Veevz)

Vice President Biden said Wednesday that President Obama was fully aware of the political backlash that passing health care reform would cause — but did it anyway. "Every single time he's made a decision — and i'm not exaggerating to you — he sits there, knows the pain it's gonna cost him politically," Biden said on a call with Obama campaign volunteers. "Let's take health care," Biden said. "He used up all his political capital." "He knew — we discussed — if he pushed that, he knew he was going to spend virtually all his capital," Biden said. The decision to pursue health care reform over more stimulus or other economic measures is one of the most controversial decisions of Obama's presidency — and one that split his advisers. The bill ignited a firestorm of opposition on the right and united a dispirited Republican Party.

#### Sequestriation Blame

Hooper 7/19/12 (Molly, The Hill, “Republicans pin sequester on Obama”, [http://thehill.com/homenews/house/238999-boehner-sequestration-is-because-of-obama //](http://thehill.com/homenews/house/238999-boehner-sequestration-is-because-of-obama%20/) Veevz)

Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) on Thursday sought to blame the process of sequestration on President Obama and Democrats. Sequestration, which will lead to $1.1 trillion in automatic spending cuts to defense and non-defense spending in January unless Congress acts to prevent them, were agreed to as part of last summer’s deal to raise the debt ceiling. As the date for the cuts nears, lawmakers in both parties are growing more anxious over how the cuts would hit the economy. Boehner said Thursday that Republicans only agreed to the process of sequestration because of the demands of Obama and Democrats. He also faulted Obama for sabotaging the work of a supercommittee of lawmakers that sought to come up with an alternative budget-cutting plan.

#### Syria Sanctions – GOP blame

Pecquet 7/19/12 (Julian, The Hill, ’Republicans slam Obama on Syria after defeat of UN resolution”, [http://thehill.com/blogs/global-affairs/middle-east-north-africa/238997-republicans-slam-obama-after-un-resolution-defeat //](http://thehill.com/blogs/global-affairs/middle-east-north-africa/238997-republicans-slam-obama-after-un-resolution-defeat%20/) Veevz)

Republican lawmakers renewed their criticism of President Obama's handling of the crisis in Syria after a U.S.-backed sanctions resolution failed again at the United Nations. Thursday's vote was the third time that Russia and China had vetoed sanctions against President Bashar Assad's government since a revolt against his regime erupted 17 months ago. Senate hawks have been pushing the Obama administration to arm the rebels or take other unilateral measures to stop the bloodshed and replace Assad. “And the President watches the massacre continue...,” Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), the top Republican on the Senate Armed Forces Committee, said in a tweet.

#### Boehner just destroyed him

Kellman 12 (Laurie, Associated Press, “John Boehner: Obama Doesn't Care About The Middle Class”, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/18/john-boehner-obama\_n\_1682808.html //](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/18/john-boehner-obama_n_1682808.html%20/) Veevz)

WASHINGTON -- House Speaker John Boehner (BAY'-nur) says President Barack Obama doesn't care about the middle class. The Ohio Republican told reporters at the Capitol Wednesday that Obama's focus on discrepancies over when Romney left his private equity firm is meant to distract from the president's stewardship of the economy. Boehner said the president's focus on Romney's tenure at Bain Capital shows that Obama, in Boehner's words, "doesn't give a damn about middle class Americans who are out there looking for work." He said voters are more concerned about unemployment than what's in Romney's tax returns. Romney has said he left Bain Capital in February 1999, but federal filings list him as sole owner and CEO through February 2001. Obama's campaign and others have been pressuring Romney to make his returns public.

#### Fights go crazy – Holder

Bolton 6/23/12 (Alexander Bolton, The Hill, “Obama ups fight with Congress”, <http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/234387-obama-intensifies-fight-with-congress> // Veevz )

But tensions between Obama and the Republican House are growing with the standoff over Attorney General Eric Holder’s refusal to hand over certain documents related to the controversial Fast and Furious gun-tracking operation. Obama on Wednesday asserted executive privilege to prevent the release of the documents, and the House is expected to vote next week to place Holder in contempt of Congress. The move by Obama underlines a political strategy of running against the House GOP, which he hopes to tie to presumptive Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney. Obama has also repeatedly criticized Republicans on the student loan and transportation issues, though it is possible those measure could arrive at his desk for his signature at the end of next week.

### PC High

#### Yes – HC

Washington Post 6/29/12 (“Obama’s health care victory: a ‘yes we can’ moment”, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/therootdc/post/obamas-health-care-victory-a-yes-we-can-moment/2012/06/29/gJQAA5yr9V\_blog.html //](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/therootdc/post/obamas-health-care-victory-a-yes-we-can-moment/2012/06/29/gJQAA5yr9V_blog.html%20/) Veevz)

With swift justice handed down by our nation’s highest court, Obama may have just won reelection. At the very least President Barack Obama, with his many firsts, has secured his place among our nation’s most influential and notable presidents. In just shy of four years, Obama achieved what presidents since Harry S. Truman have attempted to engineer: affordable and expansive health care for all Americans.

#### HC victory – not wasted

WSJ 6/28/12 (Wall Street Journal, “Political Wisdom: Is the Health Ruling Good or Bad for Obama?”, <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2012/06/28/political-wisdom-is-the-health-ruling-good-or-bad-for-obama/> // Veevz)

The importance of the victory for the White House was difficult to overstate, for now at least. By winning at the court, President Obama avoided being branded as a feckless and failed leader who invested too much time and political capital trying to overhaul the nation’s health care system as the economy foundered. It is an emboldening moment that provides a fresh boost of energy for his re-election campaign at the end of an otherwise frustrating month for the president, who is locked in a tight race with Mr. Romney.

## AT: Thumpers

### AT: Jobs Report

#### Nope—two pronged strat fixed that

US News 7/16/12 (“Obama Can't Distract Voters From the Flagging Economy”, <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/boris-epshteyn/2012/07/18/obama-cant-distract-voters-from-the-flagging-economy> //Veevz)

Team Obama's response? First, President Obama asked the American public to not "read too much into" the jobs report. I will let the Labor Department address the ridiculousness of that statement. Second, the Obama campaign unleashed a furious ad onslaught. The advertising push however, was not focused on any of the president's accomplishments (Obamacare obviously didn't fit the bill due to its unpopularity), but on the business background of former Gov. Mitt Romney. Whether one believes the attacks are fair or not, and in my humble opinion they are misguided, the bigger issue for team Obama is that they simply do not work.

### AT: Econ = PC

#### Nope

Falcone & Walter 7/13/12 (Michael & Amy – Staff writers – ABC news“Democrats Launch Pre-Emptive Strike On Potential Veeps (The Note)”, <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/07/democrats-launch-pre-emptive-strike-on-potential-veeps-the-note/> // Veevz)

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A WEEK MAKES: TAX RECORDS, BAIN, CLOUD ECONOMIC DEBATE. Last Friday, Mitt Romney’s campaign was delivered a proverbial fruit basket: The monthly employment report from the government was pathetic, reports ABC’s Matt Negrin. Just 80,000 jobs were added in June, the unemployment rate was still 8.2 percent, and the dodecahedron inside the political magic 8 ball started tipping away from President Obama. The political victory, however, was short-lived, if it was lived at all. Almost immediately, Obama’s team began an offensive on Romney’s background, totally unrelated to the jobs numbers or the economy, and the narrative stuck for the whole week, erasing the poor employment report from memory.

### AT: Debt Ceiling

#### GOP won’t obstruct – must preserve election rep

**Pavgi 7-18** (Kedar, writer for Government Executive, 7-18-12, “Republicans not spoiling for a debt ceiling fight,” <http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/07/republicans-not-spoiling-shutdown-fight/56855/?oref=skybox>, YX)

Congressional Republicans are [working](http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/07/republicans-not-spoiling-shutdown-fight/56855/?oref=skybox) to pass a temporary spending bill to avoid a government shutdown at the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30, [Politico reports](http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0712/78638.html). In a bid to avert a repeat of the [debt](http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/07/republicans-not-spoiling-shutdown-fight/56855/?oref=skybox) ceiling debacle last summer, Republican leaders in both chambers of Congress are looking to pass temporary appropriations measures to take the government past the elections in November. In a statement to Politico, Sen. Jim DeMint, R-S.C, emphasized the need for Republican leaders in the House to pass a funding measure to avoid a shutdown just before the elections, which might not play well for the GOP. “Republicans need to make clear that we don’t want anything to do with a government shutdown,” DeMint told Politico. “We are going to fund the government at the Budget Control Act levels, even though I think they’re too high.” The [2011 Budget Control Act](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-112publ25/pdf/PLAW-112publ25.pdf) authorized discretionary spending of up to $1.047 trillion, and also threatened deep across-the-board cuts to spur compromise on a long-term debt plan. With no agreement in sight, sequestration is set [to begin](http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/07/republicans-not-spoiling-shutdown-fight/56855/?oref=skybox) on Jan. 2, 2013. This, along with the tax cuts set to expire in January, is likely to make for a busy lame duck session following the elections. Some Republicans told Politico that given this heavy load and the possibility the GOP could win the White House, it might be good to save the spending fight for next year. But to pass a stop-gap appropriations measure, House GOP leaders first must address divisions within their own ranks. Some Tea Party representatives are not satisfied with spending at Budget Control Act levels. They prefer the budget plan that Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., drafted, which set discretionary spending $19 billion below the Budget Control Act’s cap. “I think our conference picked the lower [Ryan] number for a reason,” Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas, told Politico. Government shutdowns have not worked in Republicans' favor; the shutdown in 1995 and 1996 [helped shape](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-20035440-503544.html)former president Clinton’s reelection campaign. While last year’s near-shutdown resulted in dismal ratings for both parties, Democrats [polled better](http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/04/06/poll-blame-for-a-government-shutdown-will-get-spread-around/) on the issue than Republicans. “I know that history shows that we don’t win when there’s a shutdown of the government,” Sen. John McCain R-Ariz., told Politico.

#### **Lobbies and former lawmakers – not Obama – are involved in budget fights right now**

#### **Faler 17**

(Brian Faler, BloombergBusinessweek, "Business Leaders, Former Lawmakes US Defecit Reduction," 7/17/2012 pg online @ www.businessweek.com/news/2012-07-17/business-leaders-former-lawmakers-u-dot-s-dot-deficit-reduction//arjun)

A bipartisan group of former lawmakers, business leaders and budget experts is urging the U.S. Congress to agree on a plan to cut the government debt. Tax increases and cuts in entitlement spending are inevitable, members of the Campaign to Fix the Debt said at a Washington news conference today. The group said it would rally centrist voters who are more concerned with reducing the budget deficit than ideological battles over taxes, spending and the size of government. Neither party, “even after the election, is going to be able to impose its view on the country or other party,” said former Senator Sam Nunn, a Georgia Democrat. “The middle of America is going to have to rally and they’re going to have to support people who are willing to work together.” Among those joining him were former World Bank President Robert Zoellick, Honeywell Chief Executive Officer David Cote, retired Senator Judd Gregg, former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell and Erskine Bowles, the co-chairman of President Barack Obama’s debt commission. Lawmakers remain deadlocked over long-delayed budget decisions including the future of the George W. Bush-era income tax cuts that expire Dec. 31, automatic spending cuts set to take effect in January and raising the government’s debt limit. House Republicans propose extending the tax cuts for all income levels and cutting food stamps, Medicaid, federal workers’ benefits and other programs to avoid reductions in defense spending. Democrats are balking, threatening to go over the so-called fiscal cliff if Republicans don’t allow tax cuts for top earners to expire. November Election Most lawmakers want to postpone decisions until after the November election, with both sides predicting voters will strengthen their hand. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has estimated that uncertainty over the budget will subtract a half-percentage point from economic growth this year if Congress doesn’t act. Former Vice President Dick Cheney met with Senate and House Republicans to urge them to avert across-the-board defense spending cuts scheduled to begin in January. Gregg of New Hampshire, the former top Republican on the Senate Budget Committee, said he and Bowles met with about 40 senators to discuss deficit-reduction options.

#### No debt ceiling fights – talks

**Quinton 5-16** (Sophie, writer for Government Executive, 5-16-12, “Obama 'refuses to allow' debt ceiling fight, meets with Boehner,” <http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/05/obama-refuses-allow-debt-ceiling-fight-meets-boehner/55778/>, YX)

President Obama told House Speaker John Boehner and other congressional leaders on Wednesday that he "refuses to allow" a repeat of last year's fight over raising the [debt](http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/05/obama-refuses-allow-debt-ceiling-fight-meets-boehner/55778/) ceiling, White House press secretary Jay Carney said. "The topic did come up. The speaker raised it, and the president made clear that we're not going to repeat the debt-ceiling debacle of last August," Carney said. "The speaker said, 'Are you saying we should pass a clean debt-ceiling bill?'" Carney said, by way of clarifying Boehner's statement. The president favors a balanced approach to deficit reduction, Carney said--the same priorities he brought into last year's round of negotiations. Obama met for lunch with House and Senate leaders to discuss his "To Do list" of legislative priorities for job creation. During the meeting, the president also brought up the need to prevent the interest rates on [student loans](http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/05/obama-refuses-allow-debt-ceiling-fight-meets-boehner/55778/) from doubling this summer, Carney said.

#### Won’t be brought up until next year – sequester and tax cuts

**Quinton 5-16** (Sophie, writer for Government Executive, 5-16-12, “Obama 'refuses to allow' debt ceiling fight, meets with Boehner,” <http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/05/obama-refuses-allow-debt-ceiling-fight-meets-boehner/55778/>, YX)

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid used the meeting on Wednesday to emphasize his view that sequestration will occur if Republicans to do not agree to new tax revenue, a Democratic Senate aide said in a readout of the meeting. “Senator Reid made clear his view that absent a balanced agreement that pairs smart spending cuts with revenue measures asking millionaires to pay their fair share, the debt will be dealt with through the sequester, which will cut another $1.2 trillion in discretionary spending in a fair manner—half from military spending and half from domestic spending,” the aide said. Reid also called Boehner’s assertion that the debt ceiling should not increase without equivalent spending cuts premature, the aide said: “Since no debt-ceiling increase will likely be necessary until after the end of the year, Senator Reid conveyed his view that any discussion of the debt ceiling is premature until after the sequester takes effect or is replaced with a balanced agreement, and after Congress [deals](http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/05/obama-refuses-allow-debt-ceiling-fight-meets-boehner/55778/) with the expiring Bush tax cuts."

#### Treasury will delay deadline until after elections

**Hollander 2-21** (Catharine, writer for Government Executive, 2-21-12, “Debt limit fight looms, but not until after the election,” <http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/02/debt-limit-fight-looms-until-after-election/41248/>, YX)

The U.S. economy is finally gaining strength. Unless the recovery derails, the country is unlikely to see another bitter showdown over raising the [debt](http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/02/debt-limit-fight-looms-until-after-election/41248/) limit before the Nov. 6 election. The fight will surely be nasty, but just how nasty depends on how the election turns out. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said last week the U.S. debt ceiling, now $16.4 trillion, will probably be reached by the end of 2012. “I think even with agreement and prospect on the [payroll](http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/02/debt-limit-fight-looms-until-after-election/41248/) tax, we still do not expect [to hit] the debt limit until quite late in the year, significantly after the end of the fiscal year, but before the end of the calendar year,” Geithner told the Senate Budget Committee. The fiscal year ends on Sept. 30. Whether the debt limit is reached before the presidential election (a third of Senate seats and all House seats will also be at stake and control of one or both could change, setting up a particularly nasty fight along party lines) depends on how well the economy performs. But even if the recovery slows down, or simply doesn't speed up, and the limit is reached before the election, the Treasury Department can—and likely will—use "extraordinary measures" to push back the drop-dead deadline for raising it. Republican Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio, a former director of the Office of Management and Budget, predicts the debt ceiling will be hit in mid-October unless the administration reins in spending or the Treasury Department uses those measures. “Without a change in the debt trajectory, the debt ceiling will be eclipsed by October 15, 2012, unless the Department of Treasury again uses emergency protocols to shift that date past Election Day 2012,” Portman said in a [statement last week](http://www.portman.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=01f733b4-1390-433a-ae50-c1a8716d6813). A stronger economy is good news for the debt limit; the more the economy grows, the less likely the limit is to be reached early on. Though optimistic about the recovery's course, analysts at Capital Economics were cautious last week. “The U.S. economy has already been at this point twice before since the recession began, in early 2010 and then early 2011, only for growth to fall back sharply,” they wrote. Economic forecasters tick off now-familiar election-year headwinds: the European sovereign debt crisis, oil prices, and the threat of another [natural disaster](http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/02/debt-limit-fight-looms-until-after-election/41248/) disrupting global supply chains. Even without those problems, it would take a huge unexpected surge to get the economy going to the point where the debt-ceiling forecast would change meaningfully. “As far as growth is concerned, I just don’t see the potential for the economy to grow [enough] … to have a really material impact on when the ceiling is hit,” said Jeffrey Greenberg, an economist at Nomura Securities International. “I think the debates will come up again soon and it probably would be at an uncomfortable time for politicians.” How uncomfortable will be determined by the election's outcome and how long Treasury pushes the deadline back. A debt-limit fight between a GOP White House and a Republican-controlled Congress could lead to larger disagreements over government spending and whether the country should default rather than raise the debt ceiling. Another nasty—and quite possible—scenario would be split party control over the White House and Congress. A lame-duck fight would be deja vu. To buy time, or move the deadline past the election or even into next year, the Treasury Department can suspend the sales of certain state and local Treasury securities, as well as the reinvestment of the Government Securities Investment Fund and the Exchange Stabilization Fund, and redeem existing investments of the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund while suspending new ones. But Treasury can’t push off the deadline indefinitely. The debt limit was set to be reached in May, but Treasury made it until Aug. 2 last year. With a similar three-month delay in hand, it would take a serious economic blow for the debt fight to happen before Election Day. After, though, expect a fresh round of brinkmanship.

### AT: EPA Regs

#### Ruling won’t spill over to legislative battles

**Wald 6-26** (Matthew L., 6-26-12, “Court Backs E.P.A. Over Emissions Limits Intended to Reduce Global Warming,” <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/science/earth/epa-emissions-rules-backed-by-court.html>, YX)

WASHINGTON — A federal appeals court on Tuesday [upheld a finding](http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/opinions.nsf/52AC9DC9471D374685257A290052ACF6/%24file/09-1322-1380690.pdf) by the [Environmental Protection Agency](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/e/environmental_protection_agency/index.html?inline=nyt-org) that heat-trapping gases from industry and [vehicles](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/science/earth/epa-emissions-rules-backed-by-court.html) endanger public health, dealing a decisive blow to companies and states that had sued to block agency rules. A three-judge panel of the [United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia](http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/home.nsf) declared that the agency was “unambiguously correct” that the[Clean Air Act](http://www.epa.gov/air/caa/) requires the federal government to impose limits once it has determined that emissions are causing harm. The judges unanimously dismissed arguments from industry that the science of [global warming](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/science/topics/globalwarming/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier) was not well supported and that the agency had based its judgment on unreliable studies. “This is how science works,” they wrote. “The E.P.A. is not required to reprove the existence of the atom every time it approaches a scientific question.” In addition to upholding the E.P.A.’s so-called endangerment finding, the court let stand related rules setting limits on greenhouse gas emissions from cars and limiting emissions from stationary sources. Opponents had also challenged the agency’s timetable for enforcement and its rules singling out big polluters, but the court said the plaintiffs lacked the standing to do so. Fourteen states, led by Virginia and Texas, had sued to block the rules. Fifteen states, including New York, California and Massachusetts, went to court to support the agency. Massachusetts and California were among the states that [won](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/03/washington/03scotus.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all) a landmark [Supreme Court decision in 2007](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/03/washington/03scotus.html?ex=1333339200&en=e0d0a1497263d879&ei=5124&partner=permalink&exprod=permalink), Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency, that led to the agency’s endangerment finding. The attorney general of Virginia said he would appeal Tuesday’s ruling. In 2009 and 2010, Congress debated whether to legislate limits on carbon dioxide emissions, with backers arguing that imposing agency rules instead would be clumsy and expensive. The House passed a bill, but the legislative effort died in the Senate. “This decision ensures that a regulatory approach to emissions cuts will take place, whether or not Congress acts legislatively,” said Paul Bledsoe, a senior adviser at the[Bipartisan Policy Center,](http://bipartisanpolicy.org/) a nonprofit group that specializes in energy and environmental issues. “The question is, does the industry push Congress to develop a more efficient, less costly approach now that regulation is inevitable?” But Representative [Fred Upton](http://upton.house.gov/), the Michigan Republican who is chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, said that Congress’s refusal to approve greenhouse gas limits constituted a decision and that lawmakers should act now to reverse the E.P.A. emissions rules. Carbon regulation “threatens to drive energy prices higher, destroy [jobs](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/science/earth/epa-emissions-rules-backed-by-court.html)and hamstring our economic recovery,” he said. Industry is divided on regulating climate-changing gases, with the oil, gas, [coal](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/c/coal/index.html?inline=nyt-classifier) and most of the electricity sectors opposing emissions limits and [automakers](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/science/earth/epa-emissions-rules-backed-by-court.html) supporting them. In a statement, the [Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers](http://www.autoalliance.org/) noted that car companies had made huge [investments](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/science/earth/epa-emissions-rules-backed-by-court.html) to improve fuel economy and thus reduce carbon dioxide emissions and that a unified emissions standard was among its “top national priorities.” At the [National Association of Manufacturers,](http://www.nam.org/) Jay Timmons, the president and chief executive, [called the ruling](http://www.nam.org/Communications/Articles/2012/06/EPAs-Greenhouse-Gas-Regulations-Will-Hurt-Jobs.aspx) “a setback for businesses facing damaging regulations from the E.P.A.” The [Clean Air](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/science/earth/epa-emissions-rules-backed-by-court.html) Act was not designed for greenhouse gases, he said. Environmental groups cheered the decision. “This is a slam-dunk victory for E.P.A. and for the Clean Air Act,” said Frank O’Donnell, the president of the group [Clean Air Watch](http://www.cleanairwatch.org/). Joseph Mendelson III, a lawyer with the [National Wildlife Federation](http://www.nwf.org/) who was involved in persuading Massachusetts to [file](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/27/science/earth/epa-emissions-rules-backed-by-court.html) a suit demanding that the E.P.A. regulate greenhouse gases, noted how long the battle over climate-altering gases had dragged on. The decision “puts to rest the big polluters’ attempts to deny the E.P.A.’s ability to limit carbon pollution,” he said.

### **AT: LOST**

#### LOST is Dead

Bentley 7/18

(Linda Bentley, 7/18/12 "Law of the Sea Treaty dead in the water" pg online @ www.sonorannews.com/archives/2012/120718/frontpage-seaTreaty.html//arjun)

WASHINGTON – On Monday, July 16, Sens. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, and Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., as ranking members of the Committee on Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities and Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, respectively, sent a letter to Majority Leader Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., expressing opposition to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea Treaty (UNCLOS), occasionally referred to as LOST, a treaty completed in 1982 and modified in 1992. President Obama indicated he was prepared to sign the treaty. However, with 34 members of the Senate opposed to the treaty on Monday, it did not have the required two-thirds vote for ratification. In their letter, Portman and Ayotte wrote, “After careful consideration, we have concluded that on balance this treaty is not in the national interest of the United States. As a result, we would oppose this treaty if it were called up for a vote.” They pointed out proponents of UNCLOS “aspire to admirable goals, including codifying the U.S. Navy’s navigational rights and defining American economic interests in valuable offshore resources.” However, they said the treaty’s terms reach beyond those good intentions, and said, “This agreement is striking in both the breadth of activities it regulates and the ambiguity of obligations it creates. Its 320 articles and over 200 pages establish a complex regulatory regime that applies to virtually any commercial or governmental activity related to the oceans – from seaborne shipping, to drug and weapon interdiction, to operating a manufacturing plant near a coastal waterway.” They also said the terms were not only expansive but often ill-defined, quoting from various articles of the treaty, including Article 293, which “empowers tribunals to enforce not only the treaty provisions but also ‘other rules of international law not incompatible with [the treaty],’” and pointed out it would bind the United States to yet-unknown requirements and liabilities, an uncertainty they called “reason for caution” on its own. The letter to Reid went on to say, “The treaty's breadth and ambiguity might be less troubling if there were adequate assurance that it will be enforced impartially and in a manner consistent with U.S. interests. But that is not so. The United States could block some but not all actions of the International Seabed Authority, a legislative body vested with significant power over more than half of the earth's surface. Further, the treaty's judicial bodies are empowered to issue binding judgments even over U.S. objections. In some cases, the United States could elect to resolve disputes before a five-member arbitration tribunal, in which we would choose two arbitrators.” However, the United States would have no hand in selecting the decisive, fifth arbitrator, unless it agreed with the opposing party. Other cases would be decided by the International Tribunal, a body even less accountable to the United States, comprised of 21 foreign judges with no guarantee of U.S. representation. Portman and Ayotte expressed concerns over the method of executing tribunal judgments, which they said were unlike many international agreements, whereas key provisions of UNCLOS were drafted to be “self-executing,” meaning certain tribunal judgments would automatically constitute enforceable federal law without congressional legislation or meaningful review by our nation’s judiciary. “In other words,” they wrote, “the treaty equates tribunal decisions with decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court. This means that private litigants will likely be able to invoke tribunal judgments as enforceable in U.S. courts – against the government and possibly against U.S. businesses. The United States will have no lawful choice but to acquiesce to tribunal judgments, however burdensome or unfair.” They wrote, “In short, we are deeply concerned about the treaty's breadth and ambiguity, the inadequate U.S. input in the treaty's adjudicative bodies, and the automatic enforcement of tribunal judgments in the United States. Against these risks to U.S. sovereignty, however, we have also carefully weighed the potential benefits of the treaty.” Portman and Ayotte, as members of the Armed Services Committee, said they were mindful, and took seriously, the Defense Department’s belief that the treaty would help secure the navigational freedom of our fleet and provide an additional tool to our diplomatic and military leaders in resolving maritime disputes, as well as codify rights to resources in the U.S. exclusive economic zone, the extended continental shelf, and the deep seabed. They said they believed the United States’ maritime interests are “best secured by maintaining U.S. naval power beyond challenge.” At issue isn’t whether the United States will defend its maritime rights, they said, “but rather who will have final say on the scope of those rights.” They stated, “We simply are not persuaded that decisions by the International Seabed Authority and international tribunals empowered by this treaty will be more favorable to U.S. interests than bilateral negotiations, voluntary arbitration and other means of resolving maritime issues. No international organization owns the seas, and we are confident that our nation will continue to protect its navigational freedom, valid territorial claims, and other maritime rights.” They concluded with, “On balance, we bclieve the treaty's litigation exposure and impositions on U.S. sovereignty outweigh its potential benefits. For that reason, we cannot support the Law of the Sea treaty and would oppose its ratification. Without a two-thirds vote to ratify UNCLOS, it is now dead in the water for this year.

### AT: Magnitsky Thumper

#### Obama will delete Magnitsky

Reuters 7-19 (Reuters, text taken from article titled, “UPDATE 3-US Senate Panel approves Russia trade, rights bill,” published July 19th, 2012. Text found at [http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/07/18/usa-russia-trade-idINL2E8II9S320120718] by Hirsh)

Both the Democratic Obama administration and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp, a Republican, have said they would prefer a "clean" PNTR bill, free of any human rights provision that would irritate relations with Russia.

#### No impact to Magnitsky

Financial Times 7-15(The Financial Times, text taken from article titled, “The Sergei Magnitsky Bill,” published July 15th, 2012. Text found at [http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/295012c2-cce3-11e1-9960-00144feabdc0.html#axzz215jjRUez] by Hirsh)

Nor is there strong reason to believe the Magnitsky bill would alter Russia’s behaviour for the worse. Passage of Jackson-Vanik was followed by one of the longest periods of detente in the cold war. Both Russia and China are relatively cold-eyed in determining what is in their national interest. If drafted sensibly, the Magnitsky bill might even be helpful. Finally, lawmakers should give full latitude to US diplomats in deciding who should appear on the list. There has been talk of adding a broader range of names, including Russian parliamentarians. Congress should resist that impulse and grasp its own limits. If properly handled, and better drafted, the Magnitsky bill could become a useful tool in the US diplomatic arsenal.

#### Russia delegation ensures Magnitsky separated

Reuters 7-13 (Reuters, text taken from article titled, “Russia’s ‘Magnitsky bill’ draws protest,” published July 13th, 2012. Text found at [http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/russias-magnitsky-bill-draws-protest-7939602.html] by Hirsh)

A Russian parliamentary delegation is visiting the US capital this week to lobby American lawmakers against a bill sanctioning Russian officials implicated in human rights abuses – a move Moscow considers offensive outside interference in its affairs. The four-man delegation met US lawmakers in Washington on Wednesday, making a case against the "Magnitsky bill," named after Sergei Magnitsky, an anti-corruption Russian lawyer who died in 2009 after a year in Russian jails.

#### Obama pushing to distinguish Magnitsky and JV

**Russian International News Agency 7/18** (RIA Novosti 7/18/12 <http://en.ria.ru/world/20120718/174667628.html>)

The Jackson-Vanik Amendment, passed in 1974, barred favorable trade relations with the Soviet Union because it would not let Jewish citizens freely emigrate. The restrictions imposed by Jackson-Vanik are often waived, but remain in place and are a thorn in the side of Russia-U.S. trade relations. The Magnitsky case, along with the Jackson-Vanik Amendment and the rift over the[Syrian crisis](http://en.beta.rian.ru/trend/protests_syria_2011/), is a major stumbling block in the “reset” of U.S.-Russian relations. The Obama administration, which has been evasive about the proposed legislation, said on June 18 it considers it necessary to distinguish between the adoption of the Magnitsky blacklist and the repeal of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment.

### AT: HC = Victory

#### **Not even close.**

US News 7/16/12 (“Obama Can't Distract Voters From the Flagging Economy”, <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/boris-epshteyn/2012/07/18/obama-cant-distract-voters-from-the-flagging-economy> //Veevz)

Much of the country has been in successive heat waves for the past month, while President Obama and his campaign have experienced a continued pesky cold streak. Not even a victory in the Supreme Court over Obamacare could shake them out of the doldrums. Why? Because the Obamacare decision was followed by a jobs report a week later containing nothing even close to good news. That jobs report was vital because if it had showed economic improvement, it would have given the Obama campaign something to build momentum on. Instead, it served as a reminder to the American voter that while President Obama may have won in the Supreme Court on healthcare he is losing in the fight for economic recovery.

# Aff Updates

## Uniqueness

#### Won’t pass until after the election and does nothing for relations

**Reuters 7/12** (“House vote on Russia trade bill in doubt” [http://news.terra.com/us-house-vote-on-russia-trade-bill-in-doubt,adda666a77d78310VgnVCM10000098cceb0aRCRD.html](http://news.terra.com/us-house-vote-on-russia-trade-bill-in-doubt%2Cadda666a77d78310VgnVCM10000098cceb0aRCRD.html) 7/12/12)

The Congress appears increasingly unlikely to approve a controversial bill to upgrade trade relations with Russia before the November elections, despite a push by the White House and U.S. business groups for votes this month. "I think practically speaking no one expects Congress to deal with (permanent normal trade relations) before the lame-duck" session after the elections, said Gary Hufbauer, a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, referring to the period between the November 6 congressional elections and the start of the new Congress in January, 2013. "I think there's a background fear that this will become a political football if the House moves forward," Hufbauer said. Congress is under pressure to lift a Cold War human rights provision known as the Jackson-Vanik amendment and approve "permanent normal trade relations," or PNTR, because of Russia's expected entry into the World Trade Organization in August. If it does not act, Russia could deny U.S. firms some of the market-opening concessions it made to join the WTO, putting those companies at a disadvantage to foreign competitors in one of the world's 10-largest economies. However, the push to pass the legislation comes at a low point in U.S.-Russia relations, with many U.S. lawmakers angry over Moscow's support for the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and questioning Russia's commitment to democracy and human rights. "Members are rightly concerned over recent developments in Russia, as well as Russia's policies with respect to Syria and Iran. This makes it incumbent upon the President to show leadership and for these issues to be addressed in a bipartisan fashion, enabling PNTR to move forward," a House Republican aide said.

## Thumpers

### Outsourcing

#### Outsourcing Bill thumps

Washington Post 7/19/12 (“Senate Republicans kill Obama-backed measure to curb job ‘outsourcing’”, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/senate-republicans-kill-obama-backed-measure-to-curb-job-outsourcing/2012/07/19/gJQAjfdCwW\_story.html //](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/senate-republicans-kill-obama-backed-measure-to-curb-job-outsourcing/2012/07/19/gJQAjfdCwW_story.html%20/) Veevz)

WASHINGTON — Senate Republicans on Thursday killed a measure backed by President Barack Obama that would encourage companies to bring overseas jobs back to the United States. The measure being pressed by Obama’s Democratic allies is rich with political symbolism, but whether it would have had much practical impact on decisions by companies to “outsource” jobs to lower-wage countries is open to question. Democrats brought the measure to the Senate floor in concert with political attacks on Mitt Romney, whose private equity firm, Bain Capital, promoted the practice of outsourcing jobs to countries like China and India.

### Tax Cuts

#### Fights inev

O’Brien 7/9/12 (Michael, NBC news, “Obama calls for extending most tax cuts, setting up election year fight”, <http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2012/07/09/12643446-obama-calls-for-extending-most-tax-cuts-setting-up-election-year-fight?lite> // Veevz)

President Barack Obama urged Congress on Monday to extend expiring tax cuts for most American households, injecting the issue of tax fairness into the 2012 campaign. The president, speaking early this afternoon at the White House, again voiced support for allow tax cuts for households earning over $250,000 per year to expire at the end of 2012, while also preserving existing rates for households earning less than that. “We don't need more top-down economics. We tried that theory ... we can't afford to go back to it,” Obama said. “That's why I believe it's time for the tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, including myself, to expire.” Congress is likely to do anything but that, though. Republicans who control the House of Representatives quickly rejected Obama’s proposal as a tax hike, though the president sought to decouple the middle class tax cuts from the high-end breaks. Obama urged lawmakers to act now to extend most of the expiring tax cuts, and have a second debate – likely to be decided in November’s election – on the tax cuts for the wealthiest. "My opponent will fight to keep them in place; I will fight to end them,” Obama said in reference to Mitt Romney, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee.

#### Fights y’all

Paletta 6/29/12 (Damian, WSJ, “White House to Dems: Fight Back on GOP Tax Attacks”, <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2012/06/29/white-house-to-dems-fight-back-on-gop-tax-attacks/> // Veevz)

The White House urged congressional Democrats to fight back aggressively against Republican attacks that President Barack Obama has moved to raise taxes on the middle class – the latest salvo in a battle that is likely to continue through the November elections. White House senior adviser David Plouffe sent a memo to congressional Democrats with the subject line “Winning the Middle Class Tax Battle,” which is meant to counter fresh Republican attacks that the health care law – when fully implemented – would be a giant tax increase on Americans. They have cited the Supreme Court’s Thursday ruling that the health care law is constitutional because the fees it assesses are essentially taxes. Mr. Plouffe wrote that “Republicans in Washington are trying to deliberately misrepresent the President’s record of cutting taxes for the middle class. We welcome the debate on middle class taxes, and we urge you to seize this opportunity to go on offense to illustrate how the President and Democrats in Congress are standing up for the middle class.” Mr. Plouffe’s memo comes after Republicans pounced on the high court decision, using it to attack Democrats. “The Supreme Court has spoken. This law is a tax,” Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky declared, adding that it would fall squarely on the middle class. If Democrats wait too long to formulate their response, they could let Republicans win the public relations battle and find themselves playing defense as Congress debates what to do about the expiring Bush-era tax cuts at the end of 2012. Democrats have already splintered to a certain degree over what to do with the expiring tax cuts. The White House wants the Bush-era tax cuts to expire for upper income taxpayers and has pushed for tax increases on wealthier Americans to help reduce the deficit. Many Republicans have rejected those calls, and the fight over revenue is expected to be a key one on the campaign trail.

### Continuing Rez

#### Spending Cuts thump

Wasson 7/18/12 (Erik, The Hill, “House leaves biggest spending fight for last”, [http://thehill.com/homenews/house/238803-house-leaves-biggest-spending-fight-for-last //](http://thehill.com/homenews/house/238803-house-leaves-biggest-spending-fight-for-last%20/) Veevz)

For likely the last time before the election, the GOP on Wednesday began moving a major spending bill with detailed cuts to popular programs. The 2013 Labor, Health and Human Services spending bill passed out of an Appropriations subcommittee after a vitriolic debate. The 112th Congress has been dominated by bruising fiscal fights, but as the election nears, spending showdowns are for the most part being left behind. The Labor-HHS bill is not expected to even reach the floor for a vote as the GOP rallies around calls to repeal Obama’s healthcare law and to extend the Bush-era tax rates. The Defense spending bill on the House floor this week is expected to be the last bill to reach the floor. Lawmakers are expected to approve a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government funded before the fiscal year ends on Sept. 30. The current plan is a three-month CR that allows for negotiations in a lame-duck session, although there is some talk among rank and file of a longer one that could punt decisions into the next Congress and administration. The CR favored by GOP leadership would adhere closely to the current spending level of $1.043 trillion, below the 2013 spending level of $1.047 trillion in last August's debt deal, but above the $1.028 trillion level in the House budget. While the Senate favors the August deal level, Senate Democrats do not appear to be opposed to a temporary measure at the $1.043 lower level. Public weariness with government showdowns appears to play into the GOP strategy. While voters in polls say they favor balanced budgets, they have also been weary of political brinksmanship and cuts to social programs that may be needed to achieve fiscal balance. Still, Republicans have found political advantage in blasting the Senate for refusing to pass any spending bills, and they used the Labor-HHS fight to sustain those attacks. Although House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) in 2010 vowed to pass all 12 bills individually, it looks like the full House will only consider seven. Leadership blames the Senate, which is not moving any bills at all. On Wednesday, the Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies subcommittee voted to slash the labor, health and education bill by $6.3 billion. The debate was a return to the heated atmosphere of last summer’s budget shutdowns. And Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-Mont.), the chairman of the subcommittee, found himself in the middle of the fight. Rehberg is running as a centrist against Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.) this year, and has been touting his vote against the House-passed budget of Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) in Senate campaign commercials. “I have lost a lot of sleep preparing for all these issues,” Rehberg admitted after the markup. He joked that he hopes he is heading for greener Senate pastures and “hopefully not cattle pastures.” Rehberg was able to move the bill, which stalled in subcommittee last year, after promising a conservative member the right to offer an amendment more than doubling the cuts. With Rep. Cynthia Lummis’s (R-Wyo.) vote, the bill passed 8 to 6. House Appropriations Committee ranking member Norm Dicks (R-Wash.) said he hopes the bill helps Democrats reclaim the House. “I hope the American people will judge them as we judge them,” he said. “They ought to support Democrats, who will not come up with cuts like this.” Rep. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.), who is trying to become chairman of the spending panel next year, said the bill was part of a GOP “war on women,” a key Democratic talking point this year. House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) said “this is a tough subcommittee. This is where a lot of our ideological differences clash.” But he defended the $150 billion bill as an example of the GOP taking the national debt seriously. “In this bill, we do what we can to address the runaway spending created by ObamaCare and continue to eliminate duplicative and ineffectual programs as we have for the last two years,” he said. The legislation does not cut some of the most popular programs, shielding the GOP from some criticism. Head Start funding is increased, as are college Pell Grants. But other areas are slashed. The bill ends President Obama’s signature Race to the Top education initiative and cuts millions from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which funds NPR and PBS. The agency that monitors child labor abroad is cut by 68 percent, and the agency that distributes Social Security payments gets cut by $764 million. It also would cut funding for Planned Parenthood if the organization continued to provide abortions, and contains many riders related to worker rights and union elections. The bill also forbids Obama's healthcare law from being implemented and counts $8.6 billion in savings from that action. Lummis and Rep. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), who is running for the Senate, argued that using the savings from not implementing the healthcare law to justify other spending was a “gimmick.” Lummis offered an amendment that would dedicate all those savings to deficit reduction, forcing an additional 5.5 percent cut to all other programs in the bill. The total cuts in the bill would have reached $15 billion if the amendment had been adopted. That amendment was defeated on a voice vote after Rehberg argued against the deeper cut. Rehberg said the across-the-board cut would penalize smaller, efficient programs especially, and he was supported by Democrats in defeating the Lummis effort. That was it for bipartisanship during the meeting, which ranked as one of the most divisive the House Appropriations Committee has held in this Congress.

### Debt Ceiling

#### Debt ceiling ensures fights

**House 7-17** (Billy, writer for Government Executive, 7-17-12, “Another debt ceiling fight could be brewing,” <http://www.govexec.com/oversight/2012/07/another-debt-ceiling-fight-could-be-brewing/56840/?oref=river>, YX)

House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer on Tuesday said he will urge Republican leaders to allow a vote in the "very near term" on increasing the nation's borrowing authority, signaling what may be yet another fight brewing over the debt ceiling. "Do it now. Stop pretending this is a political position on which there are two reasonable positions," said the Maryland Democrat, while meeting with reporters. "There are not." Hoyer's comments come after Republican Speaker John Boehner has been saying he will insist that any increase in the debt limit must be offset by cuts in spending and tax reforms before the end of the year. But Hoyer said, "I would urge Mr. Boehner not to use this as a leveraging tool."

#### **Obama Using PC on budget fights Now**

UPI 7/18

(United Press International, 7/18/12 "White House: There's a Way to Avoid Sequester," pg online @ www.hispanicbusiness.com/news/newsbyid.asp?idx=289180//arjun)

President Obama believes there are ways of dealing with the deficit that won't result in gutting the defense budget, spokesman Josh Earnest said. En route Tuesday to campaign appearances in Texas, Earnest told reporters aboard Air Force One Obama is urging Republicans to compromise to avoid the drastic cuts worked out when the congressional supercommittee failed to come up with a plan last year. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., a member of the Senate Budget Committee and former member of the defunct supercommittee, said Monday she'd be willing to let the debate continue into next year to prevent Republicans from locking in tax cuts for the wealthy. House Speaker John Boehner said allowing the cuts to take effect would "tank" the economy. The Aerospace Industries Association issued a report Tuesday saying the sequestration cuts could cost 2 million jobs and trim $215 billion from the gross domestic product, Politico reported. "If [the cuts] are allowed to occur as currently scheduled, the long-term consequences will permanently alter the course of the U.S. economy's performance, changing its competitive position in the global economy," the report says. Earnest said Obama believes there are ways of dealing with the deficit that don't "involve historic funding cuts that are included in the sequester." "There is bipartisan agreement about the fact that the cuts that are included in the so-called sequester would not be good for our economy, and you've even heard the secretary of defense raising concerns about the impact that it could have on national security. Democrats and Republicans -- a majority of Republicans -- voted for the sequester in an effort to force Congress to act to reach a long-term solution to our deficit challenges. "The president has put forward an approach that mirrors the approach that has been taken by a wide range of bipartisan commissions that have looked at this problem, and the only thing that is standing in the way are congressional Republicans who are fighting tooth and nail to protect tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans." Asked about reported meetings between Republicans and former Vice President Dick Cheney, Earnest said he finds it "odd" Republicans would be taking budget advice from somebody "who famously declared that 'deficits don't matter.'" "The president obviously has a different view, which is that deficits do matter, which is why the president has laid out a balanced approach to dealing with our long-term deficit challenges."

### EPA Regs

#### EPA ruling ensures congressional fights

**Volvovici 6-28** (Valerie, writer for Reuters, 6-28-12, “Court ruling to shift greenhouse gas fight back to Congress,” <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/28/us-emissions-court-idUSBRE85R0C120120628>, YX)

(Reuters Point Carbon) - An appeals court decision to uphold proposed federal greenhouse gas rules may shift the fight over regulating the heat-trapping emissions back to Congress, where lawmakers may step up efforts to diminish the EPA's power or renew efforts to set a price on carbon, experts said. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia on Monday unanimously ruled that the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) finding that carbon dioxide is a public danger and the decision to set limits for emissions from cars and light [trucks](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/28/us-emissions-court-idUSBRE85R0C120120628) were legal. The ruling upheld the underpinnings of the Obama administration's push to regulate carbon dioxide emissions, dealing a blow to the heavy industries including electric utilities and states like Texas who have sought to strip the EPA of its authority. Despite the legal victory by the EPA, experts are expecting opponents to [continue](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/28/us-emissions-court-idUSBRE85R0C120120628) their challenge to the greenhouse gas regulations in Congress, where both industry and environmental groups are expected to try to torpedo or protect the controversial rules. "As for more legal challenges, the various petitioners are still looking at their options, but I think they face an uphill battle," said Jeff Holmstead, head of the environmental strategies group at law firm Bracewell & Giuliani. "The action will mainly shift to the Hill, and I think there will be an effort to limit or even eliminate EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gases under the [Clean Air](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/28/us-emissions-court-idUSBRE85R0C120120628) Act," he added, referring to the existing law, which the EPA will expand to tackle carbon. One opponent of the EPA's greenhouse gas rules said that after the court decision, Congress must pass bills that have been floated in the House and Senate to try to strip the EPA of its authority to use the Clean Air Act to regulate carbon. "Congress now has a responsibility to reform the Clean Air Act to remove the deference most courts give to EPA's technical judgment and to refine the definition of air pollution in the act," said Kathleen Hartnett White, director of the Armstrong Center for Energy and the Environment at the conservative Texas Public Policy Foundation. She said the Senate should follow the lead of the House of Representatives, which passed such a bill last year. Bracewell's Holmstead said the upcoming presidential election will influence congressional action on the regulation. Presumptive Republican nominee Mitt Romney has vowed on the campaign trail to weaken the EPA's use of the federal Clean Air Act for regulating greenhouse gases, while President Barack Obama said in an interview in April that climate change will be a big issue in the 2012 election. Although an Obama win would not lead to a new attempt to pass comprehensive climate change legislation, it may lead to a discussion on implementing a carbon tax that could replace the EPA's greenhouse gas rules and help beef up weakening federal budgets, Holmstead said. Others said that with the EPA given the green light to continue issuing its greenhouse gas regulations, industry may seek to push Congress to pass legislation that offers a market-based approach to reducing carbon instead of direct regulation. "The ruling significantly reduces the regulatory uncertainty facing major emitters so they can begin factoring carbon reductions into their [investment](http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/28/us-emissions-court-idUSBRE85R0C120120628) decisions," said Paul Bledsoe, senior advisor to the Bipartisan Policy Center. He said that once the EPA rolls out the suite of new regulations, industry will realize that complying with the rule will be expensive, which may push lobby groups to lobby Congress to adopt market-based approaches to curb carbon. "Given that certainty, will Congress be keen to engage in much cheaper regulatory approaches?" he said. In the meantime, the Clean Air Act will continue to fill the void left by Congress' failure to enact a comprehensive energy and climate change bill. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson told Reuters last Friday on the sidelines of the Rio+20 U.N. sustainable development conference in [Brazil](http://www.reuters.com/places/brazil) that she was confident the court would uphold the greenhouse gas regulations. She said President Obama supports the EPA's ongoing work to address greenhouse gas emission in spite of constant challenges by Republican lawmakers. "I've said all along - that I believe the Clean Air Act is the statute that allows the kind of flexibility that allows us to make reasonable common sense steps toward a lower carbon future, and in the absence of a new law, which is definitely something the president champions, it is a great tool in the toolkit," she said

### Tax Cuts

#### Tax cut extension ensures a partisan battle

**Tau 7-9** (Byron, writer for Politico, 7-9-12 “Obama: Limit Bush tax cuts to $250K incomes,” <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0712/78234.html>, YX)

President Barack Obama will Monday spark a new partisan battle over taxes and spending, calling on Congress to extend the George W. Bush-era tax cuts for one year on taxpayers making less than $250,000. The president will speak just before noon in the East Room, flanked by middle class families and workers, where he will make the case for a single year extension on the cuts that are due to expire at the end of December, according to an administration official. House Republicans are planning a vote later this month on a one-year, across-the-board extension for all taxpayers — and have framed all proposed tax increases on higher earners as a drag on the economy and job creation. But the White House is looking to set the terms as middle class security and fairness — portraying the Republicans as standing in the way of a middle class [tax cut](http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0712/78234.html) in order to preserve tax breaks for the rich. “President Obama today will push for extension of middle class tax cuts. Will the GOP join him to provide certainty for 98% of Americans?” White House communications director Dan Pfeiffer wrote on Twitter Monday. Enacted in two waves in 2001 and 2003, the Bush tax cuts lowered top rates for almost all U.S. taxpayers following beginning of the decade budget surpluses. The cuts were extended in 2010 as part an agreement between the White House and congressional Republicans — over the objection of many Hill Democrats, who wanted upper income increases. Both sides acknowledge that the again impending expiration of the tax cuts, coupled with deep spending cuts set to kick in automatically — the so-called fiscal cliff — is causing uncertainty in financial markets, and could depress already-anemic growth in a still sluggish economy. But even lading Congressional Democrats, including Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and House minority leader [Nancy Pelosi](http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0712/78234.html) (D-Calif.), have diverged from what the president is now proposing. They prefer letting the tax cuts lapse only on incomes over $1 million — not $250,000, as the White House has proposed. Obama will also push the tax cut extension in interviews with local television stations in Miami, Fla.; Manchester, N.H.; Raleigh, N.C.; Davenport, Iowa; Milwaukee, Wis.; Las Vegas, Nev.; New Orleans, La.; and Louisville, Ky. He’ll then travel to Iowa Tuesday to appear with a middle class family to highlight the additional tax burden they will face. The Obama campaign is planning a series of events designed to frame the tax cut issue, with surrogate events in Concord, N.H., Las Vegas, Nev., Colorado and Florida

#### Obama using PC on Tax Cuts Now

AP 7/17

(AP, 7/17/ "Obama presses Congress again to pass his tax plan," pg online @ www.dailyastorian.com/news/nation\_world/obama-says-congress-has-more-to-do/article\_eaa18f66-a96b-5db1-b0e3-0a58976d125f.html//arjun)

President Barack Obama is prodding Congress to "skip the unnecessary drama" and pass his proposal to extend Bush-era tax cuts to families earning less than $250,000 a year but not for those who earn more. In his weekly radio and Internet address, Obama denounces what he calls "needless delays" and "partisan posturing." He has been pushing the idea hard all week, but congressional Republicans aren't buying it. Obama says that will "hold the vast majority of Americans and our entire economy hostage." In the Republican address, Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio says Obama's proposal would punish many small business owners who report business profits as personal income. He says that raising taxes on job creators "makes about as much sense as cutting off the water supply during a drought."

#### Obama will push tax cut extension

**Bolton 7-9** (Adam, writer for the Potential Traders news quoting Gibbs, senior Obama campaign official, 7-9-12, “Obama Will Push to Extend Bush Era Tax Cuts,” <http://www.pt-news.org/obama-will-push-to-extend-bush-era-tax-cuts/125822/>, YX)

President Obama on Monday will launch a push to extend the so-called Bush era tax cuts for low and middle-income Americans, and he intends on fighting the cuts which, expire on Jan. 1, for the people earning more than $250,000. According to a senior Obama campaign official, President Obama would officially announce his call for an extension of one-year to the tax cuts for Americans at or below that income threshold in a news conference on Monday. Robert Gibbs clearly hinted at the announcement on Sunday and said the president was “100 percent committed” to allowing some Bush-era tax cuts to expire. These series of tax cuts were originally passed and implemented in 2001 and 2003 during George W. Bush’s presidency, and are set to expire at the end of this year. President Obama agreed to a two-year extension of bush era tax cuts back in 2010, hinting to the Obama’s campaign plan to block another extension for couples making more than $250,000. From a public opinion standpoint, Obama’s campaign is hurting because Obama should have let the tax cuts for the rich expire long ago.

#### Obama using PC on Tax Cuts Now

#### **AP 7/14**

(AP, 7/14/11 "Obama presses Congress again to pass his tax plan" pg online @ www.krgv.com/news/obama-presses-congress-again-to-pass-his-tax-plan-178871//arjun)

WASHINGTON (AP) President Barack Obama is prodding Congress to "skip the unnecessary drama" and pass his proposal to extend Bush-era tax cuts to families earning less than $250,000 a year but not for those who earn more. In his weekly radio and Internet address, Obama denounces what he calls "needless delays" and "partisan posturing." He has been pushing his proposal hard all week, but congressional Republicans are blocking it. Obama says that will "hold the vast majority of Americans and our entire economy hostage." In the Republican address, Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio says Obama's proposal would punish many small business owners who report business profits as personal income. He says that raising taxes on job creators "makes about as much sense as cutting off the water supply during a drought."

#### **Fights over Tax Cuts Now**

#### Politico 7/14

#### (Politico, "Obama:GOP ignoring facts on cut," 7/14 pg online @ www.nj.com/us-politics/index.ssf/2012/07/obama\_gop\_ignoring\_facts\_on\_cu.html//arjun)

President Barack Obama said that Republicans in Congress were "ignoring the facts" in the escalating partisan battle over the extension of the George W. Bush-era tax cuts. Last week, Obama proposed extending the tax cuts only for income brackets below $250,000 — something that he said is crucial to guaranteeing stability for an overwhelming majority of taxpayers. Republicans countered that many small business owners — who sometimes file as individuals — would be hit with a tax increase under Obama's plan. "The folks in Congress and on the campaign trail who oppose this plan warn that it would somehow hurt small businesses and job creators," Obama said in his weekly address. "They’re completely ignoring the facts." "Under my plan, 97 percent of small business owners would avoid getting hit with any income tax hike whatsoever. In fact, I’ve cut taxes for small businesses eighteen times since I’ve been president. And just this week, I ordered a series of new steps to help our small businesses grow and hire," Obama said. "The only place we disagree is whether we keep giving tax cuts to the wealthiest 2% of Americans. Republicans in Washington want more of those tax cuts. With the deficit we have, I don’t think we can afford them," the president said. The tax cuts, last extended in 2010, are set to expire in December, setting up a partisan showdown between Republicans intent on preventing all tax hikes and Democrats who want the wealthiest to pay more. Obama said the parties should act now to extend the middle class portions of the tax cut, while settling the debate over the upper earners after the election. "Let’s not hold the vast majority of Americans and our entire economy hostage while we debate the merits of another tax cut for the wealthy. Let’s skip the unnecessary drama, the needless delays and all the partisan posturing and let’s just do the right thing for the people who sent us here to serve," Obama said. "Even if we disagree on the tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, we all agree that no American should pay more taxes on the first $250,000 of their income. So let’s at least agree to do what we all agree on. That’s what compromise is all about," Obama said. Obama also firmly staked out his position as a middle class warrior, pushing back against Republicans who insists that he has raised taxes. "I’ve cut middle-class taxes every year that I’ve been President – by $3,600 for the typical family. And that’s why, this week, I called on Congress to immediately stop the January 1st tax hike from hitting any American on the first $250,000 of their income," Obama said. Republicans offered no apologies for their tax rhetoric in their weekly address — insisting that Obama's plan would raise taxes on small businesses.

### XT: PC priced in

#### Obama prices in all of his decisions – takes out the internal link

**Tau 7-18** (Byron, writer for Politico, 7-18-12, “Biden: Obama knew that healthcare would cost him,” <http://www.politico.com/politico44/2012/07/biden-obama-knew-health-care-would-cost-him-129410.html>, YX)

Vice President Biden said Wednesday that President Obama was fully aware of the political backlash that passing health care reform would cause — but did it anyway. "Every single time he's made a decision — and i'm not exaggerating to you — he sits there, knows the pain it's gonna cost him politically," Biden said on a call with Obama campaign volunteers. "Let's take health care," Biden said. "He used up all his political capital." "He knew — we discussed — if he pushed that, he knew he was going to spend virtually all his capital," Biden said. The decision to pursue health care reform over more stimulus or other economic measures is one of the most controversial decisions of Obama's presidency — and one that split his advisers. The bill ignited a firestorm of opposition on the right and united a dispirited Republican Party. "This guy acts on what he genuinely believes is in the interest of the country, even if he thinks it will cost him an election," Biden said. Biden said that the issue at stake in the 2012 campaign was character — drawing an implicit contrast with Mitt Romney, who he repeatedly criticized as out of touch. "The decisions our guy made -- the decisions he made -- to rescue the credit system, which is about as popular as legalizing rattlesnakes in your hometown downtown streets, bailing out the banks, letting credit flow, keeping us from moving into a [depression](http://www.politico.com/politico44/2012/07/biden-obama-knew-health-care-would-cost-him-129410.html), reconstituting the automobile industry when even a lot of Democrats thought its was a bad idea," Biden said, arguing those moments showed Obama's character. Biden also addressed the administration's tax policy — saying that most Americans don't even realize that the administration cut [payroll](http://www.politico.com/politico44/2012/07/biden-obama-knew-health-care-would-cost-him-129410.html) taxes for everyone. "We don't boast enough about it," Biden said. "The problem with us is that we didn't go out there and beat our chest enough about what we'd done."