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# Uniqueness

## Obama Wins

### Hispanics

#### Obama is winning among key Hispanic vote

Alexander **Burns**, journalist at POLITICO, **July 18th, 2012**, “Poll: Obama winning 70 percent of Hispanics”, POLITICO.com, <http://www.politico.com/blogs/burns-haberman/2012/07/poll-obama-winning-percent-of-hispanics-129308.html> SP

Latino Decisions, the polling outfit that showed a jump in Latino enthusiasm for President Obama following last month's policy shift on deportation, finds today that the president is winning 70 percent of the Latino vote in 2012. The poll is sponsored by a pair of progressive groups and finds Obama leading Romney by an even wider margin than he beat John McCain in 2008: Latino Decisions released new national poll of Latino registered voters showing Barack Obama winning 70% of the Latino vote compared to 22% for Mitt Romney. The poll, commissioned by the Center for American Progress Action Fund and America’s Voice, illustrates an increase in support for President Obama, and comes after a month of outreach to Latino voters, starting with the June 15 Dream announcement, appearances by the President and Vice President at NALEO and NCLR conferences, and comments opposing Arizona’s SB1070 immigration law. This poll marks the first time Obama has received 70% of the vote in Latino Decisions polling on the presidential election over the past 20 months. The final margin among Latinos in 2008 was a 36-point gap in Obama's favor. Right now, he's up by 48 points. Which gives you a sense of why Republican elites think it's so urgent for Romney to make up ground with this bloc.

#### Hispanics are key to the outcome of the election

Adam **Smith**, Journalist for the Tampa Bay Times and Times contributor, May 6th **2012**, “Hispanic voters hold key to 2012 Electoral map”, Tampa Bay Times/POLITICO, <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0512/75949.html> SP

At a private fundraising reception in Palm Beach recently, Mitt Romney was overheard acknowledging his weakness among Hispanic voters. If it’s not turned around, he said, “It spells doom for us.” Take a look at the electoral map, and you’ll see why. President Barack Obama starts the general election with a sizable electoral vote lead over Romney, looking strong in states totaling 247, while Romney has a strong edge in states totaling 191. It takes 270 to win. And if Romney can’t narrow Obama’s considerable lead among Latino voters, key battlegrounds including Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado and Florida could be out of reach for the Republican nominee. Even reliably Republican Arizona could wind up in play, and Obama already has five campaign offices there. “It’s about holding down the margins,” said Nathan Gonzales, deputy editor of the nonpartisan Rothenberg Political Report. “Romney doesn’t need to get a majority of Hispanics nationwide, but he has to avoid getting swamped by Obama among Hispanic voters.” (Also on POLITICO: VIDEO: 9 pols trying to habla español.) An April Pew Research Center poll found the president leading Romney among Hispanics 67 percent to 27 percent. That’s similar to the 67 percent to 31 percent margin among Hispanic voters that helped Obama handily beat John McCain four years ago. 'A lot of work needs to be done' Romney is coming off a bruising Republican primary where, except in Florida, he has done little outreach to Hispanics. While polls show immigration is not a top issue for Hispanic voters, the former Massachusetts governor did not help himself by positioning as the toughest candidate on illegal immigration and undocumented residents. He called Arizona’s immigration law a national model and said he would veto a DREAM Act that provides a pathway to citizenship for children of illegal immigrants if they serve in the military or go to college. He advocates self-deportation — essentially making life so difficult for undocumented residents that they see little option except to leave the country. “He hasn’t begun an aggressive, national campaign for Hispanics,” said Ana Navarro, a Republican strategist in Miami. “He needs to introduce himself, define himself beyond the narrow narrative coming out of the primary and, at the same time, go after Obama hard, both on immigration and economic failures.” The Obama campaign is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars advertising on Spanish language TV stations in Colorado, Nevada and Florida. But neither the Romney campaign nor the conservative political groups paying for pro-Romney ads has bought any time on Spanish networks. The landscape is not necessarily as grim for Romney as it appears, however. National polls in recent months have shown widespread dissatisfaction among Hispanics with Obama’s record on immigration reform, deportations and the economy. An earlier Pew poll found nearly six in 10 Hispanic households reported someone out of work in the past year. “Hispanics are shopping around,” said Jennifer Korn, executive director of the Hispanic Leadership Network and Hispanic outreach director for the 2004 Bush-Cheney campaign. “We’ve got six-plus months. A lot of work needs to be done between now and then, but we’ve got a lot of opportunities,” she said. “It’s a matter of making sure to have a ground game, making sure to have Spanish-language ads and making sure to utilize surrogates well.” A A presidential election is not about winning a national popularity contest, but about properly putting together the puzzle. Given the 270 electoral votes it takes to win, Obama currently has numerous plausible paths to a second term, while Romney’s paths seem much more limited. Based on current polling and past electoral performance, Obama has 19 states plus the District of Columbia — 247 electoral votes total — solidly behind him or leaning that way. Romney has 23 safe or leaning states, or 191 electoral votes. That leaves eight states — Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, New Hampshire, Ohio, Iowa, Colorado and Nevada — with 100 electoral votes as the central battlegrounds. So Obama could lose Ohio and Florida and still have multiple paths to 270. But if Romney loses Florida, his only shot at winning would be to pick up a big state that hasn’t voted for a Republican president in years, such as Michigan or Pennsylvania. The battlegrounds and electoral map are almost certain to change in coming months, and there’s every possibility that many of the states will swing dramatically one way or another come October. “As we get a better idea of not just the strength of the economy but how people feel about the economy, we’ll start to see swing states shift one direction or the other,” Gonzales said. “If Obama’s losing Ohio, then you start looking at the states around it. Does he then start losing Wisconsin? Is Pennsylvania then that much more in play?” States in play The Hispanic vote is one of the most critical obstacles Romney faces. Hispanics account for at least 13 percent of the electorate in New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado and Florida. Polls show Obama currently ahead comfortably in each of those states except Florida, where polls show a dead heat.

### Swing States

#### Obama’s lead is growing in key swing states

Robert **Bailint**, Joe **Hernandez** and Todd **Zwillich**, commentators for the alternative morning news on PRI (Public Radio International), **July 17th, 2012**, “Obama’s Lead Grows in Swing States” The Takeaway, <http://www.thetakeaway.org/2012/jul/17/obamas-lead-grows-swing-states-disclose-act-reachessenate/?utm_source=local&utm_media=treatment&utm_campaign=daMost&utm_content=damostlistened> SP

Pundits and pollsters are calling it a dead heat, but November's election may not be as close as it seems. Whichever way swing states lean could mean the victory for either of the candidates, and current polling data shows President Obama with a significant lead in those battleground regions. Takeaway Washington Correspondent Todd Zwillich looks at the numbers. While Gallup's presidential election poll has the president leading by two points, Rasmussen reports that presumptive GOP nominee Mitt Romney is leading by three. It's a different story in the swing states, however. Zwillich says that the latest polls give the president consistent leads in battleground states like Iowa, Wisconsin, and even Michigan, where Romney's father was governor. In Ohio, the Obama campaign has unleashed a constant barrage of negative ads, focusing mainly on Romney's past with private equity firm Bain Capital, which have met with success. While the former governor of Massachusetts is enjoying leads in North Carolina and Arizona, and is neck and neck with President Obama in the always-contested Florida, Zwillich says the consistency of the numbers gives the president a solid lead. "Mitt Romney is in a position where he really needs to run the table on all of these swing states. Right now, he's nowhere close to doing it," Zwillich says. "President Obama, if you look at the swing states, is comfortably in the lead in this race." Electoral votes are what matter, and while the opponents are trading the lead back and forth in the national opinion polls, the president still has the advantage in the electoral college. "[The Obama campaign has] to be happy with where they sit right now because of the consistent nature of the leads across these swing states," Zwillich says. "They can afford to lose Florida if they run the table on Ohio, Virginia, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, [and] Pennsylvania." In other Beltway news, the DISCLOSE (Democracy-is-Strengthened-by-Casting-Light-on-Spending-in-Elections) Act came to the fore in the Senate last night, with 51 senators voting for the campaign financing legislation and 44 voting against. To overcome a Republican filibuster, the bill would have needed 60 votes to pass. GOP lawmakers argued that the bill would give an unfair advantage to organized labor, as unions typically contribute to campaigns in smaller increments. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell called the proposed act "targeted speech suppression", arguing that it would unfairly target bigger campaign contributors

#### The President holds a lead in battleground states

Justin **Sink**, Political Blogger for “The Hill” a daily newspaper affiliated with the Daily Telegraph (London) covering all Congressional news on Capitol Hill, **July 9th, 2012**, “Poll: Obama holds lead in battleground states”, The Hill. <http://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/236641-poll-obama-maintains-slight-lead-in-swing-states> SP

A new poll shows President Obama maintaining a narrow lead over Mitt Romney in pivotal battleground states, posting a 2-point advantage in the 12 contests expected to decide November's presidential election. The president's 47 to 45 percent lead in the survey, released Sunday evening by USA Today and Gallup, mirrors his standing from the same poll conducted in May. The survey included voters in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, New Hampshire, Ohio, Nevada, Virginia, Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, New Mexico and North Carolina. The selection of states could partly explain the president’s lead in the poll. Great Lakes states like Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania are expected to favor Obama, as is New Mexico. Romney, meanwhile, is favored in Nevada and North Carolina. But the president's edge does inflate when the survey is expanded to include all of the United States, with voters favoring Obama over Romney 48 to 44 percent. The president has likely been buoyed by his campaign's decision to spend aggressively on advertising early in the campaign. Of those in the swing-state survey who say commercials have changed their opinion on whom to vote for, some 76 percent say they now favor Obama, versus 16 percent who say they've switched their vote to Romney. "It is becoming clear that as voters learn about the negative impact his time in business had on many middle-class families, the more concerned they are about the kind of president he would be," said former White House aide Bill Burton, who is running the super-PAC supporting President Obama, in a statement. Meanwhile, the Romney campaign issued a memo to reporters Monday morning noting that they had been outspent 3 to 1 on commercials. "Unfortunately for them, their factually inaccurate attack ads, while plentiful, have been ineffective," said Romney spokeswoman Andrea Saul in a statement, noting polls remained relatively stable over the past few months

### Women

#### Obama has strong support among women voters

Bryce **Covert**, Forbes news contributor, Editor of the Roosevelt Institutes’ New Deal Blog, **July 11th, 2012**, “Women Poised to Bring it Home for Obama in Key Swing States”, Forbes, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/brycecovert/2012/07/11/women-poised-to-bring-it-home-for-obama-in-key-swing-states-election-romney-polling/> SP

The latest poll numbers brought little comfort to the Obama campaign: yesterday’s Washington Post/ABC poll shows him in a dead heat with Romney, 47-47 among registered voters. This comes after a narrowing of the enormous gender gap earlier in the year, when women preferred Obama over Romney by 18 points. But women still hold the key to Obama’s success in November. In a CNN poll earlier this month, Obama had a three-point lead, generated mainly by a gender gap of nine points, with women going for Obama 54 percent to 43 percent for Romney. Romney, meanwhile, takes men by five points. That lead with women is going to be particularly crucial in swing states. A poll showed Obama with a slight lead in Pennsylvania and Ohio due to women leaning his way. Same in Virginia. It may be little wonder that extreme conservative Rush Limbaugh daydreams about going back to the days before women had the vote. Because that crucial gender gap in swing states looks like it will hold steady. New polling research from EMILY’s List out today shows that independent women in key battleground states are primed to vote Democrat in November. The group already conducted some online focus groups that found independent women looking for qualities in candidates that match up both with Democrats in general and female candidates in particular. This new research fills out that picture. In talking with 950 independent likely women voters, pollster Lisa Grove told me, EMIILY’s List found that Obama has a solid edge in getting their votes, up eight points over Romney, 48-40. What could be driving that preference? The birth control fight shows up: women are very angry, and in particular don’t trust Republicans to let them make choices about their own bodies. Democrats, the polling found, have a 34-point advantage when it comes to who these women think will protect a woman’s right to make her own reproductive choices. But they’re also angry about that fight because it distracted from the economy. And in fact the economy is at the forefront of their minds. When asked what issues were making these women worry, the very first was retirement security and the ability to retire with dignity – and interestingly enough, over half of women under 40 are concerned about retiring, not just the elderly. Next was the ability to access health care in a crisis, followed by losing their jobs or someone close to them getting laid off. It’s little wonder that the economy is weighing so heavily. Twenty percent of the sample polled had a relative move in with them because of the economy. “It’s very, very real and certainly not an abstraction” for these women, Grove told me. “It’s been brought home – literally.” When these women look around for solutions, they don’t see much comfort on the right. The biggest margin of advantage for Democrats is women thinking they’ll make millionaires and billionaires pay their fair share, by 37 points. Not too far behind is that women think Dems better understand how hard it is to make ends meet by 20 points. There’s a 17-point advantage for Dems in who will build an economy that will work for the middle class and a 14 point one for who is committed to protecting the social safety net that will let Americans retire with dignity. This is all part of a larger trend in which the economy drives women toward the Democratic Party. As I previously wrote, a paper published just before the 2010 midterms showed that women historically side with Democrats in supporting greater spending on the social safety net in bad times, while men defect to the GOP because they care more about lowering the deficit. The authors conclude that women are more likely to support liberal spending policies in a tough economy because “men tend to be less economically vulnerable than women, and they are less pessimistic than women about the economy.” That’s crystal clear in EMILY’s List’s recent polling. There are some pitfalls for Democrats in the polling, in particular that Republicans hold a three-point advantage on who has a concrete plan for fixing a broken economy. Yet as Ari Berman has written, Obama’s jobs plans have all been very concrete, and the ones that have passed showed real results. Romney, on the other hand, may claim that he’s going to create 11.5 million jobs in his first term, but “true to form, Romney never said how he would create that many jobs, nor has any reputable economist backed up his claim,” Berman writes. Hopefully his nonexistent math will be made clearer before we all head to the polls. If so, Obama should feel pretty optimistic about key support from women voters.

### Independents

#### The majority of Americans and Independents support Obama’s tax plan

Brett LoGiurato, political reporter for “Business Insider”, July 17th, 2012, “POLL: A Vast Majority of Americans Support Obama’s Tax Plan”, Business Insider, <http://www.businessinsider.com/obama-tax-plan-poll-independents-support-buffett-rule-romney-2012-7> SP

Americans overwhelmingly offer support for President Barack Obama's plan to end tax breaks on incomes above $250,000, according to a new poll from the Pew Research Center. It's a significant sign of support for Obama, because it's different than the so-called "Buffett Rule" he pushed earlier this year — raising taxes to 30 percent on incomes above $1 million. Most importantly, Independents support the measure by a net 23 points. Overall, voters think it will help the economy and make the tax system more "fair." The findings are not surprising. On a usually touchy subject — tax increases — Americans have always supported raising taxes on people that are richer than themselves. In April, 60 percent offered support for the so-called "Buffett Rule" in a Gallup poll. As far back as 1985, a CBS/New York Times poll found that Americans thought "people who have more money than you" did not pay their fair share in taxes.

#### Independents broadly support Obama’s Immigration Policy

Cesca Antonelli, technology team leader and journalist for Bloomberg News, June 19th, 2012 “Independents Support Obama Immigration Policy in Poll” Bloomberg News, <http://go.bloomberg.com/political-capital/2012-06-19/independents-support-obama-immigration-policy-in-poll/> SP

President Obama’s immigration policy is favored 2-to-1 among likely voters, according to a Bloomberg poll released today. Bloomberg’s Lisa Lerer reports that 64 percent of likely voters surveyed agreed with Obama’s decision to end the deportations of some illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. as children, and 30 percent said they disagreed. Independents backed the decision by an even wider margin. “At first I was really against it, but after sitting down and thinking about it, a lot of kids here are good kids,” Loretta Price, 65, a retiree and undecided independent voter from Ocala, Florida, said in a follow-up interview. “I think it was the right thing to do.” Obama’s campaign is counting on the policy change to bolster support among Hispanic voters in a tight race where most polls have him in a statistical dead heat with opponent Mitt Romney. Obama won the Hispanic vote 67 to 31 percent over Republican John McCain in 2008, according to exit polls.

#### Obama favored by Hispanics and Independents

News Column, **HispanicBusiness, July 19, 2012,** “Obama Leads Among Hispanics”, HispanicBusiness, <http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/2012/7/19/obama_leads_among_hispanics.htm>

SP

Hispanics favor U.S. President Barack Obama over presumptive Republican nominee Mitt Romney 70 percent to 22 percent, a poll released this week indicated. The poll, conducted by Latino Decisions for the Center for American Progress Action Fund and America's Voice, found Obama's support among Latino registered voters hitting 70 percent for the first time in 20 months. It was conducted after Obama and Vice President Joe Biden conducted extensive outreach to Latinos, Latino Decisions said. Obama leads Romney among foreign-born, naturalized citizens by 72 percent to 19 percent, and leads among U.S.-born Latinos 69 percent to 25 percent. Among so-called Spanish-dominant Latinos, Obama leads 76 percent to 15 percent, while the president leads 66 percent to 28 percent among English-dominant Latinos. The poll found 13 percent of those surveyed who identified as Republicans, and 60 percent of independents, said they would vote for Obama, while 2 percent of registered Latino Democrats said they would vote for Romney. Latino Decisions said there is little doubt Obama will win the Latino vote in November, but he could fare poorly overall in battleground states if the Latino voter turnout is low.

### Economy

#### Thanks to the stimulus, our economy is on the rise and better than 4 years ago

Juan **Williams**, a political analyst and journalist for Fox News, February 28th, **2012**, “Thanks to the stimulus, our economy is better off than it was 4 years ago”, Fox News, <http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2012/02/28/thanks-to-stimulus-our-economy-is-better-off-than-it-was-4-years/>

President Obama’s poll numbers are getting better every day. But one clear weakness remains in the public mind — his performance in handling the U.S. economy. The most unpopular element of his economic stewardship is the stimulus, officially titled "The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act." It turned 3 years-old last week. A new Pew poll finds 41 percent of Americans disapprove of the 2009 stimulus while 37 percent approve. In 2010, a CNN poll found three quarters of the public felt most of the stimulus was wasted and did not help the economy. Later in 2010 a Rasmussen poll found 56 percent opposed to any suggestion of a second stimulus. The upcoming presidential election is likely to be a debate about the value of the stimulus. Before the rhetoric gets too hot, a simple question begs to be answered: Is there any evidence that the stimulus helped the economy? As Sarah Palin might say, “You betcha!” But in looking back on the news coverage and the angry rhetoric used by the GOP during the congressional debate of the stimulus, it is striking how little discussion there was of what the stimulus actually entailed. First, the bulk of it was composed of tax cuts. In fact, the stimulus was one of the largest single tax cuts in U.S. history. To say the stimulus failed is to make the argument that tax cuts do not stimulate the economy. Ninety-five percent of all Americans got a tax cut under the plan. Small businesses and working families received a tax cut. First-time homebuyers received a tax credit. Parents caring for their young children received a tax credit. Some 8 million people received tax credits and financial assistance to help pay for their college education. The next time a Republican brags about his or her opposition to the failed stimulus, a cynic might respond by asking why they hate tax cuts so much. In addition to the tax cuts, the stimulus also contained emergency stopgap funding to states so local governments did not have to lay off teachers, police, firefighters and other “public sector” employees. It is important to keep in mind the dire condition of the economy when the stimulus passed. It was hemorrhaging jobs at the rate of hundreds of thousands per month. During President Bush’s last full month in office, December 2008, the economy lost 779,000 jobs. More jobs were lost that month than in any other single month in the previous 60 years. The GDP, the measure of all economic activity in the country, dropped by an unprecedented 9 percent in the final quarter of 2008. The stock market took an enormous hit, along with the values of people’s homes and other financial assets. Still, Republicans lambasted the stimulus plan as socialism, a bailout and the government picking winners and losers. President Obama and the Democratic Congress passed the stimulus bill without a single Republican vote in the House of Representatives and with only two Republican votes in the Senate. Starting in April 2009, shortly after the stimulus was enacted, the outlook began to improve. The economy began losing fewer jobs per month and eventually started gaining jobs each month. In January 2012, the economy added 243,000 jobs. GDP in the final quarter of 2011 increased at a rate of 2.8 percent. Private-sector layoffs are now well below pre-2008 crisis levels. The stock market stabilized and there are now some signs of improvement in the national real estate market. By all those factual economic measures, the stimulus was successful. The president’s critics can, however, fairly argue that the stimulus was not as successful as the Obama White House claimed it would be when it was selling it. Some of their predictions about the scale of improvements the stimulus would bring turned out to be flat wrong. The president’s economic team promised three years ago that the unemployment rate would not rise above 8 percent because of the stimulus. Last month, the Congressional Budget Office projected that unemployment will remain above 8 percent until 2014. The administration also claimed the stimulus would not add to the deficit. In fact, it will likely end up doing just that. Of course, the president will say the unemployment rate would look a lot better if congressional Republicans would just pass a jobs bill similar to the one he proposed at the end of last year. And the president can argue that if the GOP would work with him to pass a deficit-reduction plan, similar to Simpson-Bowles, which raises taxes on the wealthiest Americans, the deficit could be brought under control. When Ronald Reagan ran against Jimmy Carter in 1980, he asked the voters “Are you better off than you were four years ago?” They said no and elected Reagan in a landslide. In 2012, a similar question can be asked: “Is the economy better off than it was four years ago?” The factual answer is yes, and the stimulus is a large part of the reason why.

#### American are more optimistic about the economy and the future

Susan **Page**, political analyst for USA Today, May 15th, **2012**, “Poll: American more optimistic economy is looking up”, USA Today, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/story/2012-05-14/poll-economy-obama-romney/54958250/1>

WASHINGTON – Americans may be downbeat about today's economy, a USA TODAY/Gallup Poll finds, but they are increasingly optimistic that things are about to get better for the nation and themselves. By Rich Pedroncelli, AP A new USA TODAY/Gallup poll finds 56% of respondents, regardless of which candidate they support, predict President Obama will win in November. Though an overwhelming 71% rate economic conditions as poor, a 58% majority predict they will be good a year from now. While those surveyed are inclined to say they are worse off financially than a year ago, nearly two-thirds say they think they'll be better off this time next year. The assessment of personal finances already is on the upswing. More than a third report they are better off than they were a year ago — the highest number since before the economic meltdown in 2008. INTERACTIVE: Electoral Vote Tracker The sense that the recession's impact finally is lifting should be good news for President Obama, since an improving economy typically boosts the prospects for a White House incumbent running for re-election. Indeed, regardless of which candidate they support, those surveyed predict by 56%-36% that the president will win in November over Republican Mitt Romney. That's a bigger edge than Obama had at this point four years ago; then, by 52%-41%, Americans said he would defeat Republican John McCain. By Sue Ogrocki, AP Mitt Romney’s favorable-unfavorable rating has jumped to 50%-41%, his best ever, according to a new USA TODAY/Gallup poll. There's also encouraging news for Romney in the nationwide poll. Since becoming the presumptive Republican nominee, Romney's favorable-unfavorable rating has jumped to 50%-41%, his best ever and in the same neighborhood as Obama's 52%-46% standing. The former Massachusetts governor gets stronger ratings than the president when it comes to handling the economy, the issue likely to drive the campaign. In the poll, 55% say the economy would get better over the next four years if Romney was elected, compared with 46% who say it would improve if Obama was re-elected. Twenty-seven percent say the economy would get worse in a Romney first term, compared with 37% who say that of an Obama second term. "We're right back where we've been all along: The economy is a major issue, and it's one which neither candidate has a serious advantage on," says Gary Jacobson, a political scientist at the University of California-San Diego. "Romney gets better ratings because of his reputation as a CEO, and Obama is going to benefit from the fact that optimism is increasing. … But it looks like it's extremely close." For the first time during this campaign cycle, the GOP has an advantage in congressional elections. By 50%-44%, those surveyed say they're likely to vote for the Republican congressional candidate. The two parties were tied in the USA TODAY Poll in February, and Democrats had a 7-point advantage last August. 12 Mitt Romney has closed the gap in the critical swing state of Virginia, according to a new poll that finds...... Romney is still dealing with the aftermath of the GOP primaries. More than a third of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents say they would have preferred another nominee. Conservatives are among the least satisfied. Meanwhile, one in five Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say they would have preferred a nominee other than Obama, who didn't face a primary challenge. They include one in four white voters. Still, nine of 10 in the GOP back Romney — the same proportion on the Democratic side who back Obama.

#### Even Romney said the US economy is getting better under Obama

Steve **Benen**, writer/blogger for the Washington Monthly in Political Animal section, Jan 15th,**2012**, “Romney: US economy “getting better” under Obama”, Washington Monthly, <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/political-animal/2012_01/romney_us_economy_getting_bett034919.php/>

House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) appeared on “Fox News Sunday” yesterday and argued that President Obama’s policies “have actually made our economy worse.” Then he said it again. And again. All told, the House Republican repeated the claim five times in one interview (and in each instance, host Chris Wallace offered no pushback whatsoever). For those who care about reality, Boehner’s claim isn’t true. Since the president took office, every aspect of the American economy — job creation, economic growth, manufacturing, the stock market, etc. — has improved considerably. Repeating a lie five times doesn’t make it true. But what I find especially important about this is the extent to which Mitt Romney, the likely Republican presidential nominee, disagrees with Boehner. Consider this remarkable exchange between Romney and conservative radio-host Laura Ingraham late last week: (thanks to F.B. for the tip) INGRAHAM: You’ve also noted that there are signs of improvement on the horizon in the economy. How do you answer the president’s argument that the economy is getting better in a general election campaign if you yourself are saying it’s getting better? ROMNEY: Well, of course it’s getting better. The economy always gets better after a recession, there is always a recovery. […] INGRAHAM: Isn’t it a hard argument to make if you’re saying, like, OK, he inherited this recession, he took a bunch of steps to try to turn the economy around, and now, we’re seeing more jobs, but vote against him anyway? Isn’t that a hard argument to make? Is that a stark enough contrast? ROMNEY: Have you got a better one, Laura? It just happens to be the truth. I don’t think it’s an exaggeration to say this may be the most important statement Romney has made since launching his 2012 presidential campaign. Think about it: the likely GOP nominee argued, on the air and on the record, that the economy is getting better under President Obama, and it “happens to be the truth” that Obama took steps to turn the economy around, resulting in more jobs for American workers. If Laura Ingraham had asked a Democratic ally of the president the same question, she likely would have heard a similar answer. What’s more, as I noted over a week ago, Romney keeps saying this. He told voters in South Carolina and New Hampshire that under Obama, the economy is “getting better.” Romney’s message, of course, comes with a catch: he believes the economy is improving, but he doesn’t want the president to get credit for it. But as Ingraham noticed, that’s an argument that will fail miserably. A month into 2012, the Republican is effectively arguing, “Sure, Obama inherited a deep recession. And sure, he took a bunch of steps to turn the economy around. And sure, we’re now seeing more jobs being created and more economic growth. But vote against him anyway.”This isn’t just a tough sell; it’s an impossible one.

#### The US economy is growing under President Obama

Leslie Marshall, nationally syndicated radio host and Fox News contributor, December 22nd, 2011, “Reality Check: Under President Obama the Economy is Growing”, US News, <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/leslie-marshall/2011/12/22/reality-check-under-president-obama-the-economy-is-growing>

They say perception is reality; if that's true then many Americans need a reality check. Let's take the guy who wrote a book (and I say that very lightly) about the president and how much he knows on the economy—it's 200 blank pages. Cute. Actually, it's stupid. Anyone who would purchase a book that is empty, regardless of who is in the White House is an idiot, especially in rough economic times. I've got a pad with paper and lines on it—how much do you think I could get for it? The guy who wrote it is from Chattanooga, Tenn. and he says in his area, there is a great "hatred" for President Obama. Hatred!?! Now please understand. I reserve the word hate for people like Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein, or Osama bin Laden (who is dead by the way at the command of the guy who is so hated). It sounds more like they "hate" his political party or maybe even his skin color. Let's look at the reality rather than people's perception. True, unemployment is higher than it was when the president took office, but it fell sharply in December, from 9 percent to 8.6 percent. The economy is growing. We're not in a recession. The stimulus added jobs to U.S. payrolls. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the stimulus added up to 3.6 million jobs by the third quarter of 2010 and up to 2.4 million jobs in the third quarter of 2011. The Dow Jones is up more than 50 percent since the president took office and albeit slowly, the gross domestic product is consistently in an upward growth mode. So, you might "hate" the president because you think he has ruined the economy, and things are only getting worse; but you' d be wrong. Things are getting better, just slowly, very slowly. And remember, the tortoise did beat the hare!

### Incumbent

#### Just like 04’, the unpopular incumbent wins

The Australian 7/19 (“Obama’s Political Judo Will Deliver a Knockout”, online, 2012)

So why do I think he will still win? Notwithstanding everything listed above, Obama is still well liked. He is not loved as Ronald Reagan was, but he is not despised as Richard Nixon was, nor held in broad public contempt as was Jimmy Carter.¶ And presidential elections are a referendum on the incumbent. The anti-Obama factor is there, but it is not strong enough to guarantee his loss.¶ Enter Romney. Obama, in a brilliant if ruthless political judo trick, has taken what should have been Romney's greatest strength -- his business experience -- and made it into his greatest weakness.¶ This is what reminds me so much of 2004. In that election Kerry wanted to make a great deal of his heroic war service in Vietnam, in contrast to Bush, who had had a brief stint, part-time, in the National Guard but never served in uniform overseas. Instead, the Bush team used Kerry's political opposition to the war, and his unwillingness to disclose some elements of his war service, to build a cloud of troubling doubt about Kerry's fitness to command. Kerry gave an excruciating military salute at the Democratic nominating convention, showing he thought this was a key to his political persona, and the whole of America laughed, or felt embarrassed.¶ Thus, although the preconditions for Bush's defeat were in place, he eked out a narrow but clear victory. This is what I expect Obama to do to Romney.¶ For unknowable reasons, Romney is unwilling to release more than two years of his tax returns. Similarly, it seems unclear when Romney left the firm he founded, Bain. There is nothing to suggest any wrongdoing by Romney, who was clearly successful as a businessman, governor, and, in the Salt Lake City Olympics, an administrator.¶ Yet Romney looks now not only like a plutocrat, which Americans generally don't mind, but a shifty and deceitful one.¶ This may be unfair but it has turned his key strength into a weakness and makes it harder for him to make his key pitch, that he would be better at running the economy.¶ The polls at the moment are effectively showing a dead heat, with Obama ahead in key swing states. This could change. Generally the headline poll is very reliable in the US. It is extremely rare for a candidate to win the popular vote but lose the election by failing to gain a majority in the electoral college. Bush did in 2000 but it's rare.¶ In the electoral college for electing the president there is a small gerrymander towards small states, which tend to be rural and favour Republicans. But it is very small.¶ If either candidate wins 52-48, or even 51-49, it is all but certain that he will win the presidency. But if the margin is 50.2 to 49.8 the electoral college numbers in the swing states become very important -- the mid-west, and the rocky mountain states will be the real battleground.¶ One looming factor will be the automatic budget cuts and tax increases which kick into effect in January if there is no budget deal. These would be savage. My guess is that if Romney wins there will be a budget deal because the Democrats will feel chastened. If Obama wins by a wafer, I wouldn't guarantee a Republican propensity to compromise. Nonetheless, I think a narrow Obama victory the most likely outcome.

### Polls

#### Obama is the betting favorite

Quiellen 7/19 (Dennis, Retired Geography Professor “Election Geography Suggests Obama Win”, Greenevillonline.com, online, 2012)

Based upon current information dealing with electoral mathematics coupled with the geographic patterns of population, unemployment, and ethnic composition, it appears President Obama should be a betting favorite to be re-elected in November.¶ Our electoral system requires 270 votes for either Romney or Obama to be determined the winner. Among three of the major news sources, CNN, USA Today, and Real Clear Politics, Obama currently leads Romney in the anticipated electoral vote count. Similarities exist among the three sources, but differences are shown by the range of delegates in the camp of each candidate. President Obama shows a range of 196-247 likely votes; Gov. Romney shows 181-206 likely votes. Clearly, both are short of the needed 270 votes for election, but the needed votes are found in the seven to 12 "Toss Up" states.¶ Special attention is drawn to these key states, for they will be the states that will determine whether Obama is returned to office or whether Romney will take over. Basically, Mississippi and the large number of other non-crucial states have no further say in determining the election in November. In effect, we might as well stay home on Election Day. Politicians and fund raisers clearly get the picture, for millions of dollars of political fund raising proceeds are being heavily spent in these dozen states. For very practical reasons, little attention is being placed elsewhere.¶ For the most part, the group of "Toss Up" states is geographically contiguous to the traditional groupings of Red and Blue States. Red states are largely found in the South, the Midwest, and in the Rocky Mountain West. Blue states, by contrast, are generally associated with the Northeast, the Great Lakes states, and the Pacific Rim states. The two "Toss Up" states that are outliers are Colorado and Florida.¶ So, the election battle will center on a dozen or fewer states. All sources seem to agree on seven such states for sure: Florida, Virginia, New Hampshire, Ohio, Iowa, Colorado, and Nevada. The remaining five states, included by one or more sources, are Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina.It is generally accepted that the number one issue in the campaign will be on jobs, specifically the unemployment rate. Among the 12 crucial states, eight have unemployment rates below the national average. Among the four remaining states (with rates higher than U. S. rate of 8.2 percent), all four are showing faster decreases in unemployment than the national average. Consequently, the issue of jobs and unemployment will be relatively less an issue than in other parts of the U.S. This situation should aid Obama more than Romney.¶ The increased number of Hispanic voters is seen by some to be a factor in particular areas. Hispanics potentially account for nearly 25% of the vote in both Nevada and Florida. Obama is likely to benefit from this factor.¶ A third condition among the crucial states is the fact that Obama won 11 of the 12 current "Toss Up" states in 2008, losing only in Missouri. It is not unreasonable to assume that Obama might well retain a number of these states. A couple of wins in key states would assure his victory.¶ The mathematics of the Electoral voting can be rather involved, but a couple of examples illustrate the headwinds that Romney must overcome in order to win in November. CNN shows Obama needing just 23 additional electoral votes to reach 270. Florida alone (29 votes) provides the number needed for victory. An alternate scenario: Obama loses Florida, but takes Ohio and Iowa. That provides 24 votes, one more than needed.¶ Countless other combinations can be found through the examination of the electoral maps produced by the news sources. The path to attaining 270 Electoral votes shows President Obama having a tailwind and Romney facing a headwind. Both candidates are clearly viable candidates at this point. It simply appears at present, though, that the path to victory is easier for the incumbent Obama than the challenger, Romney.

#### History proves- Obama wins

#### **Constitution Daily 7/20** (“Historic Poll Trends Give Edge to Obama”, online, 2012)

A review of presidential polling data back to 1948 shows that Barack Obama’s edge in the latest Gallup poll is a positive sign for his re-election chances. But in two past recent elections, candidates with bigger leads than Obama lost hotly contested elections, after their opponents used hard-hitting tactics. Since 1948, candidates who led in early to mid-July polling have won 13 of 16 presidential races in November. Two of the winning candidates who trailed in the mid-summer polls were George W. Bush in 2004 and George H.W. Bush in 1988. Both candidates used aggressive ad campaigns to capitalize on missteps by front runners John Kerry and Michael Dukakis to win the fall election. Recently, some GOP supporters have urged Mitt Romney to adopt harsher attacks on Obama, including more ads that attack Obama’s character and policies. In the most recent Gallup poll, President Obama holds a 47 percent to 45 percent lead over challenger Romney.

## Romney Loses

### Afghanistan

#### Any stance on Afghanistan will split Romney’s chances with Republicans

Josh Rogin, July 16 2012, “Top senators can’t explain Romeny’s Afghanistan Policy,” Foreign Policy, <http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/07/16/top_senators_can_t_explain_romney_s_afghanistan_policy> LV

Part of the challenge for the Romney team is that Republican voters are split on Afghanistan, with 48 percent supporting withdrawing all troops as soon as possible and nearly as many, 45 percent, supporting leaving a follow-on force there until the country is stabilized. The electorate as a whole favors bringing the troops home quickly (60 percent) over keeping troops there longer (32 percent). "These numbers point to Romney's political bind," wrote James Lindsey, vice president of studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, in an online commentary. "He has talked tough on Afghanistan ever since last June, when Republican national security conservatives blasted him for what they saw as his insufficient commitment to the mission there. Romney responded with much tougher rhetoric even though the policies he favors look a lot like Obama's."

#### Romney’s unclear stance on Afghanistan puts him in a bad position with 50 NATO nations and proves he is unwilling to tackle tough issues

Josh Rogin, July 16 2012, “Top senators can’t explain Romeny’s Afghanistan Policy,” Foreign Policy, <http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/07/16/top_senators_can_t_explain_romney_s_afghanistan_policy> LV

For the Obama team and for Senate Democrats, Romney's apparent unwillingness to get more specific on Afghanistan represents a good opportunity to call into question his foreign-policy bona fides and present Obama as tougher on national security because he has committed to another decade of U.S. troops in Afghanistan.¶ "Without getting into the campaign rhetoric of what [Romney]'s asserting, I think you've got 50 nations in NATO that agree to a plan in Afghanistan," Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said on ABC's This Week in May. "It's the Lisbon agreement, an agreement that, you know, others, President Bush, President Obama, everyone has agreed is the direction that we go in Afghanistan."¶ Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin (D-MI) told The Cable that the issue is just one more example of the Romney campaign avoiding tackling tough issues.¶ "I sure don't know what [Romney's Afghanistan policy] is," Levin said. "From what I've read, I can't fathom his position on Afghanistan any more than I can fathom his position on a whole bunch of other things."¶ "I don't know that he's flip-flopped on Afghanistan. I don't know that he's ever taken a clear position. It's not like some of the other positions he's so consistently flip-flopped on," Levin said. "Here, I don't know what the flip is or the flop."

### Foreign Policy

#### No foreign policy experience on any outcome of the Romney ticket – Romney can’t win

John T. Bennett, covers national security and foreign policy for U.S. New & World Report, July 19, 2012, “GOP Ticket Could Be First in 50 Years With No Foreign Policy Experience, US News, <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/dotmil/2012/07/19/gop-ticket-could-be-first-in-50-years-with-no-foreign-policy-experience> LV

Mitt Romney, a conventional presidential candidate who rarely takes big political risks, is poised to do something historically unconventional and politically risky. The presumptive GOP nominee lacks foreign policy and national security experience, but Romney appears ready to buck the 50-year-old practice of picking a running mate who does.¶ The former Massachusetts governor, since grinding through a tough GOP primary effort, has run a presidential campaign that has focused almost exclusively on reviving the sluggish U.S. economy and creating jobs. Other than the occasional jab at President Barack Obama, Romney has focused so little on foreign policy and national security issues that even some in his own party wonder how he would manage America's diplomatic and military affairs abroad.¶ One thing appears certain, a President Romney would rely little on his No. 2 on such issues. Romney reportedly has whittled his vice-presidential short list to three: Ohio Sen. Rob Portman, former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty, and Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal. All are considered "safe picks" by political pundits, and each has the kind of economic and budget-cutting bona fides that could help Romney in an election that so far has been all about the economy and jobs.¶ Romney flirted with the notion of picking Condoleezza Rice, who was White House national security adviser and then secretary of state under George W. Bush. His campaign even leaked her name on a longer version of the short list late last week, but that trial balloon never really took flight in GOP circles.¶ If Romney selects a running mate with only domestic policy credentials, it would be the first time since 1968 either party has done so. In that election, the Democratic Party nominated Hubert Humphrey and Edmund Muskie. Both were far more experienced on domestic issues. The duo lost to Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew.

### October Surprise

#### Foreign policy is a big deal with issues surrounding October Surprise Iran, Syria, Russia, China, and Middle East

John T. Bennett, covers national security and foreign policy for U.S. New & World Report, July 19, 2012, “GOP Ticket Could Be First in 50 Years With No Foreign Policy Experience, US News, <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/dotmil/2012/07/19/gop-ticket-could-be-first-in-50-years-with-no-foreign-policy-experience> LV

Yet, a domestic policy expert as the GOP vice presidential candidate could haunt Romney if a global crisis becomes 2012's game-changing moment.¶ Andrew Smith, a political science professor at the University of New Hampshire, agrees that "this has been an economic election." But, he's quick to add "there have been a lot of balls popping around that could show there are some considerable foreign policy issues that the next president will have to deal with. You've got Russia, China, the Middle East. We could see something happen with Iran or Syria that could shake up the snow globe and cause a lot of people to question [the pick.]"¶ Smith notes that in 2008, Obama and his GOP foe, Sen. John McCain of Arizona, sparred for months over war policy and foreign policy, only to see the economic collapse late in the campaign season change the face of that race. "That easily could happen this year," says Smith.¶ Vice President Joseph Biden has a long track record of foreign policy experience, and has been involved in every major Obama administration decision on war policy and managing crucial global relationships.¶ Biden would undoubtedly seek to exploit his experience and label his GOP counterpart as unqualified to step into the commander in chief role during vice presidential debates, MacManus says. The flip side there, however, is debates between the individuals at the bottom of presidential tickets simply don't change election outcomes.

### Vice President – Portman

#### The similarities of Romney and Portman don’t give them enough diversity to win over Republican, Hispanic, or women voters

Deirdre Shesgreen, Gannett Washington Bureau, July 19, 2012, “Romney and Portman: Double bland, or doubly competent?” USA Today, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/story/2012-07-19/portman-romney-campaign/56340896/1> LV

If the two men get along well both on stage and off, perhaps it's no wonder.¶ Both are button-down policy wonks who love to talk about the economy. Both are wealthy. Both have picture-perfect families and straight-laced personas. Both have Midwestern family roots, but are also steeped in East Coast culture.¶ "They're both very capable, both very bright, both very decent and I think they'd be very compatible," said Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., who is a liaison to Congress for the Romney campaign and has served with Portman in the House and the Senate.¶ Asked to think of any differences, DeWine and others were hard pressed.¶ "Nothing jumps out at me," said Hagin.¶ Others noted that Romney has more private-sector experience, while Portman's resume is Washington-heavy. And at 65, Romney is about nine years older than Portman. And Romney is a Mormon, while Portman is a Methodist.¶ Their similarities have led to more than a few jabs suggesting that such a match-up would not electrify Republican voters. And it would be a homogenous ticket, potentially making it harder for Romney to woo Hispanic or female voters.

#### Other candidates would provide more diversity to the Romney ticket

Deirdre Shesgreen, Gannett Washington Bureau, July 19, 2012, “Romney and Portman: Double bland, or doubly competent?” USA Today, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/story/2012-07-19/portman-romney-campaign/56340896/1> LV

If the two men get along well both on stage and off, perhaps it's no wonder.¶ But other names reportedly on the vice presidential short list, such as Florida Sen. Marco Rubio and New Hampshire Sen. Kelly Ayotte, would certainly bring more diversity. Charlie Cook, a veteran political analyst, said that even former Minnesota governor Tim Pawlenty, the son of a truck driver who grew up in a town dominated by the meatpacking industry, would provide more of a contrast to Romney than Portman.¶ "The Pawlenty life story — growing up in the shadows of the meat packing district, first (in his family) to go to college — it's not Horatio Alger, but it's a hell of a lot closer . . . than Rob Portman or Mitt Romney's, which is sort of riches to riches," Cook said.

### Vice President – Rice

#### No risk Rice will be on the ticket

Brian Browndie, writer for New York Daily News, July 19, 2012, “Condolzeezza Rice tops Republican poll for Mitt Romney’s running mate,” New York Daily News, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/election-2012/condoleezza-rice-tops-republican-poll-mitt-romney-running-mate-article-1.1117820?localLinksEnabled=false> LV

Still, 32 percent of Republicans say they want Romney to pick a true conservative - a view that may disqualify Rice, who described her stance on abortion as "mildly pro-choice" in a 2005 interview with The Washington Times.¶ “Former Secretary Rice's position on the sanctity of human life makes her an unqualified candidate for Governor Romney to choose as a running mate," Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of Susan B. Anthony List, an anti-abortion group, said recently in a statement.¶ For her part, Rice has said repeatedly she has no interest in the job.

### Vice President – Jindal

#### Jindal will not be the nominee – if he is, it would be catastrophic for Romney’s campaign

Chris Cillizza, July 19, 2012, “The case against Bobby Jindal to be vice president,” Washington Post, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/post/the-case-against-bobby-jindal-for-vice-president/2012/07/19/gJQAe5c9vW\_blog.html LV

That caraicature developed in the wake of Jindal’s much-panned 2009 Republican response to President Obama’s address to a joint session of Congress. Jindal came off as hokey (at best) and immediately became the butt of Democratic jokes. (The send-up of Jindal’s speech by Jon Stewart was particularly savage.) Even Republicans favorably inclined to Jindal admitted it wasn’t his best moment.¶ While one speech does not a political career make (or break), Jindal’s speech clearly curtailed the positive chatter surrounding the Louisiana governor as a potential national candidate. And, if you are Mitt Romney, can you watch Jindal’s 2009 speech and not feel a little bit of trepidation about how he might perform under the hot glow of the national spotlight? We say not.¶ \* How loyal? How ambitious?: During the 2012 Republican presidential primary race, Jindal was an enthusiastic and high profile endorser of Texas Gov. Rick Perry’s presidential campaign.¶ Talk to those in Romneyworld and they will insist that their candidate isn’t a grudge-holder and that the fact that Jindal endorsed his main rival (at the time) for the nomination doesn’t factor into his veep-picking at all.¶ But, shouldn’t it? After all, one of the most critical factors in a successful VP pick is a relationship with and loyalty to the nominee. Romney has to know that whoever he picks for his vice president will subjugate their own personal feelings and interests for the good of the ticket.¶ Jindal could be a question mark on that front. Not only did he endorse Perry in the primaries but he is someone who quite clearly has considerable national ambitions of his own. Recent VP picks that had a limited relationship with the nominee and a healthy dose of personal ambition haven’t succeeded; Sarah Palin for John McCain in 2008 is the ur-example but John Edwards for John Kerry in 2004 also fits that bill.¶ Some time this fall hard times will befall the Republican ticket. Romney has to pick someone who he knows will stay loyal no matter how bad things look at any given moment. Is Jindal that guy?¶ \* Mile wide, inch deep record: For years, Democrats have been insisting that everything Jindal has done — from ethics to education — in the state has been aimed at being able to quickly take credit and leverage that credit to build his national profile.¶ They point to negative press surrounding the implementation of Jindal’s education policies , questions about how Jindal will close the state’s Medicaid budget gap and even take issue with Jindal’s proposed policy prescriptions in the wake of the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon mine in 2010 — an event for which Jindal has drawn almost universally positive press.¶ For all of their talk, however, Democrats were never able to even find a credible candidate to prosecute these issues in 2011 as Jindal cruised to re-election.¶ But, while the Louisiana Democratic Party might not have been able to highlight the darker side of Jindal’s policy record, you can be sure that President Obama’s reelection campaign won’t have that same problem.¶ Running as a Republican in GOP-friendly Louisiana is one thing. Running for national office is another. Would Jindal’s allegedly sterling policy record withstand a deep dig by the Obama opposition research team?¶ \* Too many known unknowns?: Jindal’s rise in Louisiana and national politics has been as fast as anyone this side of Barack Obama. The downside of such a rapid rise is that the extended vetting process that most candidates undergo to get to such a high elevation in national politics hasn’t been conducted as thoroughly on Jindal.¶ There’s the fact that Jindal, born Piyush, decided at a young age to change his name — taking inspiration from “Bobby” of the “Brady Bunch”. Or his conversion from Hinduism to Catholicism. Or his participation in what some have described as an exorcism during his college years.¶ If you like Jindal, all of these stories are an endearing testament to someone who knows firsthand what it’s like to live the American Dream. (Except, we guess, the alleged exorcism.) But in the hands of an opposing campaign, they could be used to cast Jindal as some combination of relentless climber/religious zealot that would not be nearly as appealing to swing voters.

#### Jindal is racist

David A. Love, July 19, 2012, “Jindal, Pawlenty and Portman: How do the GOP VP frontrunners fare on race?” The Grio, <http://thegrio.com/2012/07/19/jindal-pawlenty-and-portman-how-do-the-gop-vp-frontrunners-fare-on-race/2/> LV

Last year, Jindal was accused of discriminating against minority students for the sake of saving some money when he unveiled a plan to merge historically black Southern University with the predominantly white University of New Orleans. In addition, Jindal praised Harry Lee, the sheriff of Jefferson Parish, and a Chinese-American lawman accused of a pattern of racial profiling against blacks in the predominantly white parish.

## Romney Wins

### Swing States

#### Romney is going to win almost all of the battleground states .

Dick, Morris, Author, political commentator, July 18, 2012, “Dick Morris: Romney will win battleground states”, <http://www.foxnews.com/on-air/oreilly/2012/07/19/dick-morris-romney-will-win-battleground-states#ixzz216pxvB9F>

I've been through hundreds of elections with incumbents running against challengers, hundreds of them, and the incumbent always loses the vast bulk of the undecided vote. Now, the President starts a little higher because he's got states like California and New York and Washington State, fairly significant electoral votes there. So he's starting a little bit higher than Mitt Romney. [Romney]'s going to win Virginia, Florida, New Mexico. Among those who do vote which is the likely voter poll, Scott Rasmussen today has it at 47-44 Romney. Now, when 44 percent of the people are voting for Obama and even in some of these swing states as much as 47 percent are, that means he's going to lose the state. All of these polls quota African-American turnout at 13 or 14 percent; it was 14 in `08, it was 11 in `04. But when you ask voters are you likely to vote, how much are you following the election, how interested are you, the blacks are way down, way below whites on this. And I think they'll turn out 11 percent, the historic norm.

So I think all these polls are two points wrong.

### Economy

#### Domestic issues of economy and unemployment are what voters care about – Not Foreign Policy

John T. Bennett, covers national security and foreign policy for U.S. New & World Report, July 19, 2012, “GOP Ticket Could Be First in 50 Years With No Foreign Policy Experience, US News, <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/dotmil/2012/07/19/gop-ticket-could-be-first-in-50-years-with-no-foreign-policy-experience> LV

The Romney team's vice presidential list is calculated, with opinion polls showing the economy and unemployment far outpacing foreign policy and national security issues in terms of importance to voters. That means voters might not care if Romney picks a domestic V.P. candidate.¶ "Most people are concerned about the economy, and Americans tend to turn isolationist when we have a struggling economy," says Susan MacManus, an international affairs professor at the University of South Florida. "Numerous polls show most voters want all U.S. troops to be brought home from everywhere they are. ... War, global trade, foreign aid--they're against all of it right now."¶ What's more, America has changed. Several decades into an all-volunteer military, many Americans don't know anyone who has served, fewer have worn a military uniform, and even fewer have seen combat.¶ "For for so many years, a sizable portion of lay people had military experience, or someone in their immediate family did," says MacManus. "That is simply no longer the case."

#### Economy is the only issue that matters and numbers support Romney

AFP 7/19 (Associated Free Press, “With Economy Stalled, Romney Tied With Obama: Poll”, online, 2012) PM

Although the results were within the margin of error, Thursday's poll marked the first time Romney showed a numerical edge, with 45 percent of respondents saying they would vote for him if the elections were held now, compared with 43 percent for Obama, The New York Times said.¶ And it showed a key shift in respondents' attitudes toward Obama's ability to improve the economy, with 39 percent saying they approve of his handling of the economy and 55 percent saying they disapproved.¶ In a Times/CBS poll in April, when economic prospects appeared brighter, that approval rating was 44-48 percent.¶ But Thursday's results come during a period of slackening US job growth, with Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke seeing "frustratingly slow" drops in the unemployment rate, which has hovered above eight percent for over three years.¶ With the economy clearly the number one issue for US voters in November's election, the trends in the country's jobs climate could well dictate the fate of the incumbent, regardless of events such as the Supreme Court ruling that upheld his signature health care law.¶ Voters are turning on Obama in a key measure, according to the poll, with just 36 percent of Americans viewing him favorably, compared with 48 percent who said they do not. In April, that breakdown was 42-45 percent.¶ And the study showed little recent shift in attitudes toward Romney despite extensive negative advertising by Obama's re-election campaign and extensive criticism of Romney's business record.

### Women

#### Romney wins over Republican women, shrinks popularity gap with Obama in new poll

John Cohen, and Krissa Thompson, May,30,2012, “Romney wins over Republican women, shrinks popularity gap with Obama in new poll”, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/mitt-romney-winning-over-gop-women-according-to-new-poll/2012/05/30/gJQAB2Q21U_print.html>

Republican women are rallying to Mitt Romney — their party’s now-certain presidential nominee — boosting him to his best-ever showing on a fundamental measure of personal popularity, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll.

### Campaign Strategy

#### Rope-a-Dope’ strategy guarantees Romney victory

Tracisnski 7/19 (Robert, Political Scientist with Real Clear Politics, “How the Election Will Play Out (And Why Romney Will Win)), online, 2012)

When it comes to his record and his biography, I suspect that Mitt Romney has not yet begun to fight, and that is the other big development I'm predicting for the final months of the general election.¶ I have been speculating for some time—and others have begun to say the same thing—that Romney's election strategy can be described as "rope-a-dope." This was a sports reporter's coinage for Muhammad Ali's strategy in the famous 1974 "Rumble in the Jungle" against George Foreman. Foreman was a large man known as a hard hitter, so Ali's strategy was to goad Foreman into throwing a frenzy of punches while Ali adopted a protective position and leaned against the ropes so they would help absorb the energy of the blows. Foreman fell for it and punched away in a fury, tiring himself out in the early rounds only to find himself fatigued while Ali was still fresh. Ali dominated the later rounds and knocked Foreman down long enough for the referee to call him out.¶ The analogy here is that Romney is letting the Obama campaign punch itself out, spending like crazy on a blitz of negative advertising early on, before swing voters have made up their minds or even paid much attention to the race. Meanwhile, Romney has been holding his fire and money, saving it for when it will really count.¶ Why is the Obama campaign falling for this? Because they have no other option. Here we have to refer back to the established rules of the horse-race analysis. When a president is running for re-election, it is inherently a referendum on the incumbent, so if his approval ratings are below 50%, he's in trouble. If a majority disapproves of his performance, that means they are going to be likely to cast their votes for the challenger. Obama is below 50% now. He's been around 47% in the RealClearPolitics average for a long time now, and since some of the polls tend to overestimate support for Democrats, the real number is probably a few points lower.

### Vice President – Rice

#### Rice outpaces any other candidate in terms of popularity. Romney-Rice ticket would close the gap and tie the polls between Romney and Obama

Brian Browndie, writer for New York Daily News, July 19, 2012, “Condolzeezza Rice tops Republican poll for Mitt Romney’s running mate,” New York Daily News, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/election-2012/condoleezza-rice-tops-republican-poll-mitt-romney-running-mate-article-1.1117820?localLinksEnabled=false> LV

Some GOP voters say Condoleezza Rice is a game changer.¶ Three in 10 Republicans rank the former U.S. secretary of state as their top choice to be Mitt Romney's running mate - far outpacing Florida Sen. Marco Rubio (19 percent), New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie (8 percent) and Wisconsin Rep. Paul Ryan (8 percent), according to a Fox News Poll released Wednesday.¶ Other names that have been bandied about fared worse. Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal polled 5 percent; Ohio Sen. Rob Portman 3 percent; Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell 3 percent; New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez 3 percent; or former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty 2 percent.¶ Though speculation in recent days has focused on Portman and Pawlenty as possible picks, Team Romney is guarding the veepstakes closely. Only Romney, his wife Ann, and search team chief Beth Myers are said to know the short list.¶ "I'll wait and see, too, what Mitt is going to decide," Ann Romney told "Good Morning America" in an interview that aired Thursday. "We're not quite there yet."¶ The former Massachusetts governor is expected to announce his vice presidential pick after the Olympic Games, which begin next week and conclude on August 12 - two weeks before the Republican National Convention in Tampa, the Daily News reported Wednesday.¶ While Romney trails President Barack Obama 41 percent to 45 percent) in a head-to-head matchup, the race is tied (46 percent to 46 percent) when a hypothetical Romney-Rice ticket is pitted against the pairing of Obama and Vice President Joe Biden, the Fox poll shows.

### Vice President – Jindal

#### Jindal would lead to a Romney victory

Chris Cillizza, July 18, 2012, “The case for Bobby Jindal to be vice president,” Washington Post, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/post/the-case-for-bobby-jindal-to-be-vice-president/2012/07/18/gJQAtAlctW_blog.html> LV

History recognize history: One of the major problems for Republicans in 2008 was that they were running against history. Then Illinois Sen. Barack Obama was the first African American presidential nominee for either party, and the chance to elect the country’s first black president clearly had an emotional and symbolic pull on many voters that Arizona Sen. John McCain (R) was simply unable to combat.¶ McCain and his team tried to match history against history by picking former Alaska governor Sarah Palin — she was the first Republican woman on a national ticket — but it blew up in their faces (to put it kindly).¶ Picking Jindal would allow Republicans a historic do-over; he would be the first Indian-American on either parties’ national ticket and, unlike Palin, is much more of a known commodity — and hence less of a risk.¶ If you want to know how powerful a historic vice presidential pick can be — and how it can drive a positive storyline for days (or even weeks) in the campaign — look no further than when Al Gore chose Joe Lieberman as the first Jewish vice presidential pick in 2000.¶ There’s also this x-factor: The Indian-American community can be a major source of campaign cash if they are activated to give. Picking Jindal as VP would ensure huge buy-in — figuratively and literally — from this community.¶ \* Flashy...enough: Jindal isn’t oozing charisma like New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie or Florida Sen. Marco Rubio. But neither is he labeled as a vanilla pol in the way that Portman and Pawlenty have been cast.¶ Jindal wouldn’t likely overshadow Romney — as Christie and Rubio clearly would — but neither would he be lumped in with the “boring white guy” pick that might not get Romney the sort of bump he is looking for.¶ There are other ways where Jindal is a sort of middle-of-the-road pick too. His resume — he spent several terms in Congress before being elected governor in 2007 — allows Romney to pick someone who knows how the levers of power work in Washington but who has largely built his reputation outside of the nation’s capitol. He’s an insider’s outsider. Or an outsider’s insider. Whatever. You get the point.¶ Remember that the first rule of vice presidential picking is “Above all, do no harm”. That means that a sort of “warm porridge” guy (he’s not to hot or too cold) like Jindal could have real appeal to Romney.¶ \* A reform record: In his four-plus years in office, Jindal has built a very impressive record that would fit nicely with Romney’s promises to bring conservative principles to the federal government.¶ Jindal’s top priority coming into office was ethics reform — political corruption is as common as good beignets in Louisiana — and he got it done quickly. Jindal has also pushed hard to reform the state's education system, an effort that won him praise from none other than the Wall Street Journal op-ed page. (Make sure to read HuffPo’s Jon Ward on Jindal’s impressive record.)¶ While Jindal’s aggressiveness in pushing through his agenda has made him his fair share of political enemies (Democratic operatives in the state loathe him), it has only bolstered his image with voters. Jindal was overwhelmingly reelected last fall and remains quite popular even in these lean fiscal times.¶ \* Super wonk: While Wisconsin Rep. Paul Ryan gets credit within the Republican party as their wonkiest national voice, Jindal has a case to make that he actually deserves that title. This is someone who was running the Louisiana department of health and human services at 25 and two years later was appointed the executive director of the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare.¶ If Romney wants to prove that he is serious about repealing President Obama’s health care law and replacing it with a more conservative approach, there is no one on the Republican side — with the possible exception of Romney himself — who knows the issue better than Jindal.¶ Picking someone with widely regarded policy chops like Jindal would also allow Romney to make the argument that he made a governing choice not a political choice in his vice presidential nominee — a sign that he is ready, willing and able to step into the office and do the job on day one.¶ \* Fresh face: The Republican professional class knows that the stereotype of the party as a bunch of old white guys is terrible for them — and has to change.¶ Picking Jindal would address much of that criticism. Not only is he Indian American but he is also just 41 years old — more in Barack Obama’s generation than Mitt Romney’s.¶ With Jindal as the vice presidential nominee, Republicans would not only get the White House if Romney won but would also have a presidential nominee in waiting after four or eight years. Building that next generation of leaders — particularly those who are not white men — is of critical importance for Republicans’ long term political prospects. Naming Jindal could go a long way to solving their image problems going forward.

## Obama Loses

### Economy

#### Obama’s handling of the economy dooms him- public perception is already set

NBC News 7/20 (“Polls Suggest the Economy is Becoming Heavier Burden for Obama”, online, 2012)

It's tough to imagine, though, a scenario in which Obama could do much to dramatically redirect the trajectory of the economy. And voters' perception about the economy is likely to harden by the end of the summer, if history is any guide.¶ It explains the Romney campaign's zen-like handling of the questioning -- even from conservatives -- of its strategy. The Republican's campaign has long regarded discussing anything but the economy as mostly a distraction, keeping its focus squarely on Obama's economic record in hopes of transforming the campaign into a referendum on just that.¶ It also helps to distill the Obama campaign's need to go on offense versus Romney, looking to poison swing state voters on Romney's chief qualification as a turnaround expert and experienced businessman.¶ But the NYT/CBS poll contained one of the bleakest numbers for Obama. Fully 45 percent of registered voters said his policies are not improving the economy, and probably never will.¶ And in an election in which the economy is the top issues, that sort of bleakness could prove to be Romney's greatest advantage.

## Thumpers

### Transportation

#### Ports & 43 other projects being expedited now

Keith Laing, July 19, 2012, “White House announces expedited East Coast port expansions,” The Hill, <http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/ports/239019-white-house-announces-expedited-east-coast-port-expansions> LV

The White House said Thursday that it was expediting the expansion of five ports along the East Coast as a part of President Obama's “We Can’t Wait” campaign against Congress.¶ The projects, in Jacksonville and Miami, Fla.; Savannah, Ga.; Charleston, S.C.; New York and New Jersey, have long been sought by transportation officials in those states.¶ Obama said Thursday that building them quickly would boost the national economy. ¶ “One way to help American businesses grow and hire is to modernize our infrastructure,” Obama said in a statement released by the White House. “That’s why in March I asked my administration to identify important projects across the country where Federal review could be expedited. Today’s commitment to move these port projects forward faster will help drive job growth and strengthen the economy.”¶ The White House said the ports — along with building an intermodal container facility for cargo shipping in Jacksonville and increasing the height of a bridge between New York and New Jersey - would be the first of 43 projects that will ultimately be expedited by Obama.

## CTBT Now

#### **Obama will pass CTBT**

Chris Schneidmiller, As Obama Prepares to Push Nuclear Test Ban, Technological Basis Still Debated, 7.20.11, http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/as-obama-prepares-to-push-nuclear-test-ban-technological-basis-still-debated/

Since the early days of his term, President Obama has made it clear he intends to submit the accord for approval by the Senate as part of his administration's broader nonproliferation campaign. Top officials have discussed the general outlines of a strategy for securing ratification, but it remains to be seen when it will be put into play. Treaty proponents argue that the United States should now feel assured it can keep its nuclear arsenal in working order without actually setting off weapons, and can be confident that no other nation could carry out a secret test blast. They say the time is right for lawmakers here to ratify the treaty, furthering its chances to become a global regime and taking another step to stem the spread of nuclear weapons

#### **U.S. looking to ratify CTBT**

**G**lobal **S**ecurity **N**ewswire, Obama Administration Promotes CTBT Ratification, 2.22.12, http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/white-house-again-lobby-congress-ctbt-ratification/

The White House remains intent on persuading Congress to ratify an international pact that would prohibit nuclear-weapon testing, the State Department's top arms control official recently said (see GSN, July 20, 2011). The United States is one of eight nations that still must ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty before it can enter into force. President Obama early in his tenure called for Senate passage of the pact, which last came up for a vote in the upper chamber in 1999, Defense News reported on Tuesday. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has been ratified by 157 countries. A total of 44 "Annex 2" nations must deliver legislative approval for its entry into force; the holdouts from that group are China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the United States.

#### Obama administration pushing for CTBT

KATE BRANNEN, Obama Administration Renews Case for Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, 2.21.12.,

http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120221/DEFREG02/302210006/Obama-Administration-Renews-Case-Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty

That is the case the Obama administration is making as it pushes for reconsideration of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which the U.S. Congress voted not to ratify in 1999. The treaty, which was negotiated between 1994 and 1996, would ban all nuclear explosions for military and civilian purposes, including the testing of nuclear weapons. The United States, along with China, Iran, Israel and Egypt, have signed the treaty, but have yet to ratify it. India, North Korea and Pakistan have not signed it. In April 2009, in a speech he delivered in Prague, President Barack Obama called for U.S. ratification of the CTBT. Now, his administration is working hard to convince Congress and the American public why the case for ratifying the treaty has grown stronger since its defeat in 1999, Rose Gottemoeller, acting undersecretary of state for arms control, told reporters. The Obama administration is “committed” to working with Senators of both parties to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), National Security Advisor Tom Donilon said March 29, “just as we did for New START.” This was one of the most significant, high-level statements from a senior administration official on the test ban since April 2009, when President Obama called on the Senate to reconsider the treaty. Donilon said the administration would stress three essential points as it makes its case to the Senate and the American people. “First,” he said, “CTBT ratification serves America’s national security interests because it will help lead others to ratify the treaty and thus strengthen the legal and political barriers to a resumption of nuclear testing, which would fuel the nuclear build up in Asia.” Second, he said “more than a decade since the Senate last considered – and rejected – the CTBT, we are in a stronger position to effectively verify the Treaty through the global monitoring system set up under the Treaty and our own strengthened national capabilities.”

# Links

## HSR UNPOPULAR

HIGH SPEED RAIL UNPOPULAR

The Economist Newspaper Limited. Jul 9th 2012 .<http://m.economist.com/gulliver-21558442.php>. California is the last remaining proponent of Barack Obama's vision of a modern railroad network in America, an idea that has grown increasingly unpopular  [as projected costs have risen](http://www.economist.com/blogs/gulliver/2012/06/high-speed-rail-california) . Rail has become, like many of the president's priorities, an issue of political identity, and opposition to rail projects is a great way for GOP governors to thumb their nose at the federal government—and, by extension, Mr. Obama himself.

HSR UNPOPULAR TO LOCALS
California High Speed Rail, 2008-2012. <http://www.cahsrblog.com/2012/04/the-important-detail-the-la-times-left-out-of-their-hsr-story/>.The state rail authority has grossly underestimated future operating costs of California’s proposed bullet train, meaning taxpayers potentially will have to provide billions of dollars annually once the system is running, according to an analysis released Monday by a group of outside financial experts. An elevated railway would be hideous and intolerably noisy. We like to eat outdoors in the summer, but with such noise we would not be able to hear each other talking. And it would wake people at night. It would transform our pleasant semi-rural environment into an ugly urban environment.

#### USR BAD IDEA IN US- CHINA PROVES

[MARC SCRIBNER](http://www.openmarket.org/author/marc-scribner/)*on*APRIL 26, 2011. <http://www.openmarket.org/2011/04/26/high-speed-rail-a-bad-idea-in-the-u-s-a-bad-idea-in-china/>.The meager ticket sales to China’s growing urban professional class (which would also be the targeted demographic in the United States) can’t even cover interest on the construction debt, let alone operating costs and ongoing capital costs related to expansion and maintenance. Mr. Kunz claims he recognizes the severity of China’s high-speed rail corruption and shoddy construction problems, and that these sorts of issues should be “weeded out.” However, he doesn’t mention the consequences of the inherent risk to the taxpayers of such giant undertakings: [cost overruns of 40 percent or more](http://flyvbjerg.plan.aau.dk/COSTFREQ4.pdf) are the norm in public rail infrastructure projects.

#### BURDEN ON TAXPAYERS FOR HSR

Amy Alkon. July 14, 2012. [http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/). The congressmen rode the subsidy train to re-election, flogging the 135,000 jobs that the construction would supposedly create in the Central Valley. To be sure, Mr. Costa denies trading his Obama Care vote for high-speed rail money: "That's not something I do," he tells me. Besides, he says, the train "had already become unpopular by the election," so it couldn't have accounted for his victory. Next year taxpayers will have to start paying interest on the rail bonds--about $380 million annually for the next 30 years--assuming investors bite. That's nearly as much as the governor is proposing to cut from higher education if voters don't approve his millionaires' tax initiative in the fall.

**VOTERS QUESTION HSR TAX RAISES**
Adam Nagourney, July 24, 2012, The International Herald Tribune. [http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/). What is frustrating for many Republicans is that this should be a moment when they could step in. Though voters might have diverged from Republican Party orthodoxy on social issues, they have, almost without exception, voted against initiatives on the ballot to raise taxes over the past decade. Two weeks ago, Democrats pushed through approval of nearly $9 billion in financing for a high-speed rail project from Los Angeles to San Francisco that polls suggest has grown increasingly unpopular since it was approved by voters in 2008. ''While there are always woes in California, now is worse than ever,'' said Connie Conway, the Assembly minority leader. ''Now the majority party in the Legislature has decided that this train to nowhere is a good idea. A lot of people are really questioning that these days. Californians are waking up.''

**HSR COMPLETION IS FAR OFF**
Jeff McKown, July 13 2012. <http://www.examiner.com/article/california-simply-can-t-afford-to-build-a-high-speed-rail-system>. Since Californians initially voted in 2008 to approve $10 billion in bonds to partially fund the project, the notion of a high-speed rail system has become increasingly controversial and even more costly. In 2008, the project carried an estimated price tag of $33 billion and had an estimated completion date of 2020. Today, estimates put the cost of the system at $68 billion, with the estimated completion date pushed back to 2028.

#### TAXPAYERS HATE HSR

Mark Vargo, April 17, 2012. <http://www.revoterail.com/>. **A plan that promises travelers that electrified Metrolink and Caltrain track will be as fast as new high-speed rail**. Already ticket prices raised to $81 - a 62% fare increase over what voters were promised.Plans to tax businesses to pay for high-speed rail coupled with a plan to raise income and sales taxes on everyone else in our near bankrupt state.

#### HSR TOO EXPENSIVE AND FAR OFF

Mark Vargo, April 17, 2012. <http://www.revoterail.com/>. Plans to spend between $68 and $107 billion **connecting only San Francisco and Los Angeles, utilizing all the rail bonds, and selling all operating profits to investors** virtually guaranteeing that high-speed rail **to Sacramento and San Diego** will never be built**.** Current plan promises **to connect only San Francisco and Los Angeles via the Central Valley with** high-speed trains sometime between 2028 and 2033.

**HSR UPKEEP IS ALSO SPENDY**
The future of Caltrain has now been tied to a key vote set for Friday on the California High-Speed Rail project that could also determine the future of Gov. Jerry Brown’s push to raise taxes. When lawmakers vote on whether to start building the $69 billion high-speed rail system, they must also authorize $700 million to electrify Caltrain on the Peninsula and $500 million for rail upgrades in Los Angeles.

HSR PLAN HAS CHANGED FOR THE WORSE
Kole Upton, June 30 2012. <http://www.familiesprotectingthevalley.com/news.php?ax=v&n=10&id=10&nid=201>. To pass high-speed rail in California it was originally sold as a $33B project, but after several incarnations including one of $98B, it now purports to cost $68B. Almost everything about it has changed since voters passed it: it costs more, the entire plan is different, it's not really high-speed (but has been changed to low-speed at twice the cost), the ridership numbers have been debunked, the jobs numbers were phoney, the environmental destruction is immense and the timeline for completion is totally wrong.

ALTS TO HSR
Doug Liser, June 21 2012. <http://www.familiesprotectingthevalley.com/news.php?ax=v&n=10&id=10&nid=201>. This is graceful way out of this doomed project. Just blame it on some turtle, bird or snake. Fix the trains you have. They suck. How much could it cost to put a version of the Northeast Acela on LA-San Diego or Emeryville - Sac? Both routes could be dropped to an hour without exotic technology. Fix the train to Tahoe - it takes like 8 hours from the Bay Area.

**HIGH SPEED RAIL UNSAFE**
Zhang Tie, July 27 2011. <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90780/7452703.html>. Unfortunately, many risks are unavoidable in the process of modernization. Urbanization, industrialization, information and modernization have brought both benefits and risks to the people. Therefore, people should be vigilant against possible dangers and develop effective countermeasures in order to attach a "safety belt" to the "era of rapid development." When high-speed trains are "flying like a bullet," a safety belt made up of a sound management system and great consciousness of responsibility should be fastened.

HSR SCARES OFF PRIVATE INVESTORS
Kevin Freking, 12/16/11. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/12/16/republicans-high-speed-rail_n_1153777.html>. Lawmakers also questioned the wisdom of starting construction in the state's farm belt — the Central Valley. Proponents said the flat terrain allows for lower acquisition and construction costs, and that it would not take as long for construction to begin there. He said that private investors are interested in the project, but it's not realistic to expect substantial private investments until after initial construction. He voiced concern that private investors could be scared away.

**HARD TO FUND HSR**
Kevin Freking, 12/16/11. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/12/16/republicans-high-speed-rail_n_1153777.html>. Republican lawmakers expressed doubts Thursday about the viability of California's high-speed rail project, indicating that it will be extremely difficult for supporters to generate the tens of billions of dollars in federal investment that will be needed to complete the proposed 800-mile line. A House panel held an oversight hearing examining the project's status after recent costs estimates more than doubled to $98.5 billion.

HSR NOT GOING TO HELP US- SPENDING BAD
Henshaw, 1/28/11. <http://www.dailyplunge.com/2011/01/high-speed-rail-is-still-a-bad-idea/>. There’s been a great deal of coverage of the President’s State of the Union speech. In November the electorate was pretty clear that we need to reduce government spending. Unfortunately, the President’s speech offered a whole new list of government spending initiatives. I guess the American populace is just too brain-dead to realize that we’re broke. One of President Obama’s biggest initiatives is the high speed rail plan, despite the vast amount of economic research that proves rail transit is a bad idea. I won’t go further into it because I’ve written about high speed rail [time](http://www.dailyplunge.com/2009/03/why-rail-transit-doesnt-work/) and [time again](http://www.dailyplunge.com/2009/04/more-high-speed-rail-nonsense/). It’s depressing that [the problems](http://stossel.blogs.foxbusiness.com/2010/01/21/the-rail-scam/comment-page-1/) with high speed rail aren’t well known, and it’s annoying that no one in the mainstream media questions it. The nation is bankrupt and yet no one asks the President, “How the hell is building rail going to make the United States better?

HSR LOSES PEOPLE MONEY
Brandon Greife, 02/02/2011. <http://ourtab.org/content/runaway-train-%E2%80%93-obama%E2%80%99s-high-speed-rail-%E2%80%9Cinvestments%E2%80%9D-bad-idea>. Despite this reality, when Obama sold his stimulus plan he said, “I am always jealous about European trains. And I said to myself, ‘why can’t we have high speed rail?’ And so, we’re investing in that as well.” Apparently jealousy trumps sound-economics in this White House. The United States’ experience with government run rail is similarly disastrous. Amtrak lost money on 41 of its 45 train lines in 2008, according to a [study](http://www2.tbo.com/content/2009/oct/27/amtrak-still-losing-money-most-passengers/) done by Pew Charitable Trust. The average loss per passenger on trains was approximately $32. One train, serving the east cost from New York to Miami, which you would assume would be one of its more profitable lines, had a $145.23 per passenger loss. It literally costs taxpayers hundreds of dollars every time someone stepped on that Amtrak train.

#### High speed rail popular in long run.

* Staff Writer at [Philadelphia Inquirer](http://www.linkedin.com/company/philadelphia-inquirer?trk=ppro_cprof) Student Media Advisor at [UCLA](http://www.linkedin.com/company/ucla?trk=ppro_cprof) City desk stringer & intern at [Los Angeles Times](http://www.linkedin.com/company/los-angeles-times?trk=ppro_cprof)

The government-owned railroad company is betting (or wishing, at any rate) that the political zeitgeist will change, that America someday will rediscover its long-lost love for great public works projects. Philadelphians should hope Amtrak is right. On a national level, high-speed rail is no slam-dunk investment. There's a lot of research out there that suggests that high-speed rail costs more than it generates in increased economic activity. And in some car-dependent areas, such as California, Texas, and Florida, there are legitimate worries that people are too accustomed to driving as a way of life to switch en masse to trains. But the Northeast is a train-loving region, with a long rail-riding tradition. If Amtrak builds it here, people will come. And while the return on investment may indeed be bad in other sections of the country, high-speed rail would work economic wonders in Philadelphia. In fact, perhaps no city in the nation would benefit more from a fast, modern, intercity rail network.

#### High speed rail delivers many layers of economic benefits

US High Speed Rail Association

Capitol Hill Office at Union Station 10 G Street NE, Suite 710 Washington, DC  20002

High speed rail delivers fast, efficient transportation so riders can save time, energy, and money.  HSR is extremely reliable and operates in all weather conditions.  HSR is not subject to congestion, so it operates on schedule every day without delay - especially during rush hour and peak travel times. HSR spurs the revitalization of cities by encouraging high density, mixed-use real estate development around the stations.  HSR also fosters economic development in second-tier cities along train routes.  HSR links cities together into integrated regions that can then function as a single stronger economy.  HSR broadens labor markets and offers workers a wider network of employers to choose from.  HSR encourages and enables the development of technology clusters with fast easy access between locations.  HSR also expands visitor markets and tourism while increasing visitor spending.  The many benefits HSR delivers spread throughout regions that have HSR, encouraging economic development across a large area.

#### HSR beneficial and for the people of the U.S.

www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/Research/FinalFRA\_HSR\_Strat\_Plan.pdf

Rail is a cost-effective means for serving transportation needs in congested intercity corridors. In many cases, modest investment on existing rights-of-way can result in high-speed rail (HSR) and intercity passenger rail (IPR) service with highly competitive trip times, while also providing ancillary benefits to energy-efficient freight rail service. IPR and HSR also have a strong track record of safety in the United States and overseas. In Japan, for instance, the Tokaido Shinkansen trains have operated without a derailment or collision since the inception of operations in 1964. America’s transportation system is the lifeblood of the economy. Providing a robust rail network can help serve the needs of national and regional commerce in a cost-effective, resource-efficient manner, by offering travelers and freight convenient access to economic centers. Moreover, investment in HSR/IPR will not only generate high-skilled construction and operating jobs, but it can also provide a steady market for revitalized domestic industries producing such essential components as rail, control systems, locomotives, and passenger cars.5

#### HSR beneficial all around

#### JOINT TRANSPORT RESEARCH CENTRE Discussion Paper No. 2008-16 revised Prepared for the Round Table of 2-3 October 2008 on Airline Competition, Systems of Airports and Intermodal Connections

Investing in HSR infrastructure is associated with lower total travel time, higher comfort and reliability, reduction in the probability of accident, and in some cases the release of extra capacity which helps to alleviate congestion in other modes of transport. Last but not least, it has been argued that HSR investment reduces the net environmental impact of transport and boosts regional development. We have already shown that the environmental benefits of HSR are not so important and that in any case depend heavily on the deviation of traffic from more environmental damaging modes, the source of electricity generation and the density of urban areas crossed. Expected regional development effects are also controversial.

#### People like hsr because it creates mobility

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| --- |
| 8th UIC World Congress on High Speed Rail Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA 10th - 13th July 2012 The creation of high speed lines has been proven very efficient for increasing rail market share partly by diverting customers from the other transport modes and by increasing people’s mobility. However, the high speed travellers have no direct perception of the speed: - on board high speed trains they may just “feel” the speed and/or feel a difference from other trains, - and in stations high speed trains are standing still. They know of the speed, the shape of the train, and its schedule. These three components are the main features that can be perceived and experienced at once about high speed rail. That raises the question whether there is even a need to build new stations or adapt existing ones when a high speed line is operated. |
|  |

#### High Speed Rail popular all around

States News Service November 11, 2010 ELECTION 2010 FALLOUT - WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF HIGH-SPEED RAIL? http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?

The U.S. is far behind Europe, Japan and China when it comes to high-speed rail, a clean transportation option that is popular among environmentalists because of its potential to get Americans out of our cars, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions. High-speed rail is also popular among advocates of working people, because it could deliver major economic benefits to communities in desperate need in the form of construction, operations and manufacturing jobs. The Obama administration and Congress included $8 billion for high-speed rail in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act; and the Surface Transportation Authorization Act proposed by U.S. Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN), who was voted out of office last Tuesday, included $50 billion over six years for high-speed rail.

#### HSR trumps alternative modes of transportation

Roy Kienitz U.S. Department Of Transportation - Under Secretary, Policy U.S. Department of Transportation Under Secretary, Policy Roy Kienitz Testifies Before Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee – Final September 27, 2010

This program must have a number of key elements. We need to continue the commitment by the President and the Congress to expand our high-speed rail program. As the Secretary has traveled around the country meeting with people in outreach sessions on our surface transportation program, a recurring theme is that people want high- speed rail. They don`t want to have to wait in crowded airports or drive for hours on congested highways to get where they want to go. They want another choice. They want high-speed passenger rail. We need to make achieving a state of good repair in our transportation infrastructure a national priority. Our highways, our bridges, our transit systems, our waterways, our ports, and our railroads have in some cases been allowed to deteriorate to the point that they are not safe, are not reliable, and don`t provide an adequate level of performance for the American people. As we repair and rehabilitate our infrastructure, we can build in new safety features and new technology that will improve our transportation system`s performance, so that, in every mode, we have a truly 21st Century transportation system.

#### The majority of people support high speed rail

By Gary Richards San Jose Mercury News July 17, 2003 California High-Speed Rail Agency Kicks Off Voter-Approval Campaign

"If you ask people if they like high speed rail, polls say over 80 percent do," said Rod Diridon, the former Santa Clara County supervisor who chairs the rail commission. "When asked if they'd be willing to tax themselves, it came out 65 percent. That is remarkable." The effort would be among the biggest public works projects ever in the state. It received another boost earlier this month when the House of Representatives Transportation Committee approved setting aside $ 60 billion for high speed train projects across the country. If approved by Congress and President Bush, Diridon believes California could land as much as $ 9 billion extra from Washington. Despite its popularity with voters, the bullet-train must jump through many hoops before crews start laying track. An environmental review to be released later this summer is sure to draw close scrutiny to the routes trains will take into the Bay Area. Several routes are under consideration. Trains would run through the Central Valley, veer west near Merced, and then tunnel under Henry Coe State Park near Morgan Hill. Or, the line would cross Pacheco Pass east of Gilroy before turning north along the present Caltrain corridor. Environmentalists, many of whom support high-speed trains, are dead set against carving up Coe Park, the state's second largest park.

#### Voters want high speed rail

Michael Cabanatuan, Chronicle Staff Writer Main News; Pg. A1 September 11, 2008 http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?

Early polls show voters like high-speed rail even if they aren't familiar with the details of the bond measure. A Field Poll in July found that just 22 percent of likely voters were aware of the proposition. But when read a brief description, 56 percent favored the measure, and 30 percent were opposed. The state's official interest in high-speed rail dates to 1993, when the Legislature appointed a commission to study the feasibility of a fast-train network. Their cautious but affirmative conclusion led to the creation of the High Speed Rail Authority in 1996. Since then, the authority has completed an overall environmental study for the project, determined alignments and station locations, completed a business plan and gathered ridership studies and cost estimates. Critics say the business plan is outdated. If passed, construction would not begin until 2011 and would take seven to 10 years for the first segments to be built. Legislation signed two weeks ago requires it to be updated. Mehdi Morshed, executive director of the authority, said most of the information that would be included in a new business plan is available but can't be compiled into an updated document until 45 days after the state budget is signed and the authority gets the money to prepare the report.

#### High speed rail develops cities

Andy J. Wang Curbed SFMay 11, 2009 http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?

[High-speed rail, should a city get dragged kicking and screaming into getting a station, should boost local real estate.](http://www.forbes.com/2009/05/05/state-of-the-city-opinions-contributors-high-speed-rail.html) According to Reconnecting America, new rail increases property values” near newly announced station areas in L.A. commercial property values rose 78 percent, compared to 38 elsewhere. Meanwhile, a high-speed rail advocacy in the U.K. has this to say: "It is clear that high-speed train services ... can serve as a major factor in the development of city economies, supporting city development plans and the regeneration of rundown areas." Transbay Terminal neighbor Millennium Tower should be pretty stoked.

#### There is not stopping high speed rail

Liberally Conservative July 17, 2012 Forget We the People http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?

There s no turning back on this. We re not going to turn back. And you know why? Because that s what the people want. That s why there s no stopping high speed rail. What the people want? As the people in California find out the real costs of this boondoggle they are beginning realize they ve been lied to. Polls show public support for the rail plan has dropped below 40 percent. Gov. Jerry Brown, like [LaHood and Obama,](http://www.lexisnexis.com:80/lnacui2api/search/XMLCrossLinkSearch.do?bct=A&risb=21_T15195647941&returnToId=20_T15195647959&csi=299488&A=0.6954217171958741&sourceCSI=9369&indexTerm=%23PE000A1OG%23&searchTerm=LaHood%20and%20Obama,%20&indexType=P) is a big-time Leftist. He thinks government is the answer to everything. Yet, in states with Conservative Governors, Ohio, Florida and Wisconsin, stimulus money from the federal government was turned down as fiscally irresponsible. Communism does not work, central planning by a few does not work. Politicians and their so-called experts don t work, they think up ideas for votes, under the guise of what s good for the public.

#### High speed rail is coming

Washingtonpost.com October 23, 2011 'We need to find pots of money to do big things' Pg. G05 http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?

We have aging transit systems all over America. People get up every day in New York and here in Washington and Chicago and all over America and get on buses and trains on systems that were built 40 and 50 years ago or longer.

The president's vision is on high-speed passenger rail, to connect 80 percent of America in the next 25 years at a cost of about $500 billion.

There's a pent-up demand in America for high-speed rail. People want it.

I think we're going to see California with true high-speed - over 200 mph. In Illinois, speeds up to 110 mph. Along the Northeast Corridor we just made a $1 billion investment with Amtrak to begin to fix up the tracks and get the higher speed. Look, you've all ridden Amtrak along the Northeast Corridor. You know it's shoehorned between communities, so we're probably never going to get the same kind of passenger rail that they have in California. But it will be efficient. It will probably go at a little-bit higher speeds, but connectivity will be provided from Boston all the way to the Canadian border and then through the Carolinas.

#### Florida considers HSR

Sanjay TendersInfo August 14, 2010 United States : Crist on board for rail services http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?

The funding would pay for eight passenger stations on the FEC corridor, construction of a connector between the FEC and South Florida Rail Corridor lines at West Palm Beach, other capacity improvements to facilitate 90 mph service, and the purchase of locomotives and associated passenger cars. The project has received tremendous support from Congressional and legislative leaders, local governments, private organizations and the public.  Florida is uniquely positioned to bring to life the Vision of High Speed Rail in America by starting HSR Express service in 2015 in the heart of America s most popular family tourist destination and showcasing this technology and its benefits to tens of millions of Americans each year, said Crist in his letter to U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and FRA Administrator Joseph Szabo.  The remaining $1.1 billion is all that is needed for the Tampa-Orlando service to make this $2.6 billion project a reality. The Florida Department of Transportation s Florida Rail Enterprise has about two-thirds of the capital funding for the project, including substantial right of way in hand, federal stimulus dollars and state funds needed to meet the 80/20 match for the application. In January, Florida received a $1.25 billion high speed rail grant from the federal government for the project.

#### The people of California want HSR, they need funding.

Robert Cruickshank Calitics November 16, 2010 Redirect HSR Money to California http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?

This is an excellent move by California's two Senators. The people of California have twice now shown their support for high speed rail, both with the approval of Prop 1A in November 2008 and their rejection of anti-HSR candidate [Meg Whitman](http://www.lexisnexis.com:80/lnacui2api/search/XMLCrossLinkSearch.do?bct=A&risb=21_T15195712546&returnToId=20_T15195728630&csi=299488&A=0.37682369094523027&sourceCSI=9369&indexTerm=%23PE0009XEU%23&searchTerm=Meg%20Whitman%20&indexType=P) in the November 2010 election. Recent polling from [across California](http://www.cahsrblog.com/2010/07/chsra-poll-76-support-high-speed-rail/) and [on the Peninsula](http://www.cahsrblog.com/2010/08/poll-shows-continued-support-for-hsr-on-the-peninsula/) shows HSR is still widely popular.  Californians understand that high speed rail is necessary to the state's economic recovery - we want the jobs it will bring. Californians understand that high speed rail is necessary to improve our transportation system - we want the fast, reliable, convenient travel options it will bring. Californians understand that high speed rail is necessary to improve our environment and deliver energy independence - we want to slow global warming and reduce carbon emissions by using high speed rail.  We also want to see a broader national HSR system built. We need to improve passenger rail across the country, and that includes states like Wisconsin and Ohio. It's worse than shameful - it is tragic - if their right-wing governors want to shackle their states to driving and risk their economic futures through dependence on oil. But if they do succeed in rejecting the money, it ought to be redirected to a state where the HSR plans are sufficiently advanced where we can put it to immediate use - and that's here in California.  With Republicans like new House Transportation Committee chair John Mica [agreeing that California's HSR project is worth funding](http://www.nytimes.com/gwire/2010/11/08/08greenwire-wis-halts-rail-project-as-election-fallout-beg-32870.html?pagewanted=2), now is the time to increase our funding allocation. If that comes from states whose governors foolishly rejected it, well, at least we know the money will be used effectively.

Benefits outweigh flaws.

New York Time July 9, 2012 http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/h/high\_speed\_rail\_projects/index.html

California plans to build a 520-mile [high-speed rail line linking Los Angeles to San Francisco](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/27/us/california-rail-project-advances-amid-cries-of-boondoggle.html?pagewanted=1&sq=high-speed%20rail&st=cse&scp=2&adxnnlx=1322515110-z6inix6eFOKxhtL9FWbBaw), a project that would not be finished until 2033. And they are doing it in the face of what might seem like insurmountable political and fiscal obstacles. In July 2012, despite deepening doubts about the cost and feasibility of the $70 billion project, California’s State Senate [narrowly approved legislation to spend $8 billion](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/07/us/california-senate-narrowly-approves-rail-project.html?ref=highspeedrailprojects) in federal and state money to begin construction, starting with a 130-mile stretch through the rural Central Valley. The vote came as the federal government threatened to withdraw $3.3 billion in financing for the project if the Legislature did not approve the release of state bond money to begin construction. Democrats and Republicans expressed fear that the project could be remembered as a boondoggle passed when the state is struggling through a fiscal crisis. The vote was a major victory for Gov. Jerry Brown, a Democrat, who had strongly urged lawmakers to approve the project. He described it in keeping with the state’s tradition of grand projects and said it would pump money into the ailing economy. The California High-Speed Rail Authority has projected that the bullet train would create 100,000 jobs. The authority has proposed that the project be built in phases, and that no phase be started until all the financing was in place. Yet there is widespread skepticism that the train would ever attract the promised ridership, in no small part because unlike, say, the Amtrak Northeast Corridor, the bullet train would go into cities that do not have particularly extensive public transit networks, forcing people to rent cars once they arrive.

## AACs

#### New poll proves-Americans don’t want new military spending

Current, 7-19-2012, “76% of Americans favor cutting military spending,” <http://current.com/community/93846835_76-of-americans-favor-cutting-military-spending.htm>

So with over 3/4 of Americans wanting cuts to the bloated defense budget what do you think will happen! The results of a new survey indicate that most Americans, from both Democratic and Republican congressional districts, support the reduction of the country’s military spending. The result of the poll, published on July 16, indicated that 76 percent of Americans favored slashing of the defense budget, while only 20 percent approved of increasing the military spending. The poll was conducted by the Program for Public Consultation (PPC), a newly-established joint program at the University of Maryland, US-based nonprofit investigative journalism organization, the Center for Public Integrity, and the Stimson Center, a nonprofit global security think tank. According to Steven Kull, the director of the PPC, those respondents, who lived in Republican districts advised a 15-percent reduction in defense spending, while those from Democratic districts proposed an average 28-percent cut. The poll further showed that the main reason behind the American citizens’ support for the cuts is their strong belief that a large amount of the military budget goes to waste. The view is held by 80 percent of the participants in Republican districts and 86 percent of the respondents in Democratic districts, the study showed. The soaring military spending comes despite the Obama administration's cuts in public spending to compensate for the budget deficit. The US has reportedly spent over USD one trillion in taxpayer money on its wars in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001.

#### **Voters don’t want more spending on military- they want cuts**

The Atlantic, 5-10-2012, “On Defense Cuts, Both Parties Are Far Out of Step With Voters,” <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/05/on-defense-cuts-both-parties-are-far-out-of-step-with-voters/256960/>

While politicians, insiders, and experts may be divided over [how much the government should spend on the nation's defense](http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/01/will-cutting-the-defense-budget-leave-america-at-risk/252010/), there's a surprising consensus among the public about what should be done: They want to cut spending far more deeply than either the Obama Administration or the Republicans.¶ That's according to the results of an [innovative, new, nationwide survey by the Center for Public integrity, the Program for Public Consultation, and the Stimson Center](http://www.iwatchnews.org/2012/05/10/8856/public-overwhelmingly-supports-large-defense-spending-cuts). Not only does the public want deep cuts, it wants those cuts to encompass spending in virtually every military domain -- air power, sea power, ground forces, nuclear weapons, and missile defenses.¶ According to the survey, in which respondents were told about the size of the budget as well as shown expert arguments for and against spending cuts, two-thirds of Republicans and nine in 10 Democrats supported making immediate cuts -- a position at odds with the leaderships of both political parties.¶ The average total cut was around $103 billion, a substantial portion of the [current $562 billion base defense budget](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/02/the-real-defense-budget/253327/), while the majority supported cutting it at least $83 billion. These amounts both exceed a threatened cut of $55 billion at the end of this year under so-called "sequestration" legislation passed in 2011, which Pentagon officials and lawmakers alike have claimed would be devastating.¶ "When Americans look at the amount of defense spending compared to spending on other programs, they see defense as the one that should take a substantial hit to reduce the deficit," said Steven Kull, director of the Program for Public Consultation and the lead developer of the survey. "Clearly the polarization that you are seeing on the floor of the Congress is not reflective of the American people."¶ A broad disagreement with the Obama Administration's current spending approach -- keeping the defense budget mostly level -- was shared by 75 percent of men and 78 percent of women, all of whom instead backed immediate cuts. That view was also shared by at least 69 percent of every one of four age groups from 18 to 60 and older, although those aged 29 and below expressed much higher support, at 92 percent.¶ Disagreement with the Obama administration's continued spending on the war in Afghanistan was particularly intense, with 85 percent of respondents expressing support for a statement that said in part, "it is time for the Afghan people to manage their own country and for us to bring our troops home." A majority of respondents backed an immediate cut, on average, of $38 billion in the war's existing $88 billion budget, or around 43 percent.¶ Despite the public's distance from Obama's defense budget, the survey disclosed an even larger gap between majority views and proposals by House Republicans this week to add $3 billion for an extra naval destroyer, a new submarine, more missile defenses, and some weapons systems the Pentagon has proposed to cancel. They also supported, on average, a 23 percent cut for ground forces, a 17 percent cut for air power, and a 14 percent cut for missile defenses.¶ While Republicans generally favored smaller cuts, they overwhelmingly agreed with both independents and Democrats that current military budgets are too large. A majority of Republicans diverged only on cutting spending for special forces, missile defenses, and new ground force capabilities.¶ The survey, which was conducted in April, was designed differently than many polls on defense spending, which have asked respondents only if they support a cut. Its aim was instead to probe public attitudes more comprehensively, and so it supplied respondents with neutral information about how funds are currently being spent while exposing them to carefully drafted, representative arguments made by advocates in the contemporary debate. The respondents then said what they wished to spend in key areas.¶ The survey's methodology and the number of respondents -- 665 people randomly selected to represent the national population -- render its conclusions statistically reliable to within 5 percent, according to the Program on Public Consultation.¶ Somewhat surprisingly, all of the pro and con arguments about cutting defense spending attracted majority support, suggesting that respondents found many elements in the positions of each side that they considered reasonable. It also suggests that the survey fairly summarized contrasting viewpoints. ¶ Sixty-one percent agreed, for example, with a statement that the U.S. has special defense responsibilities because it is an exceptional nation, while 72 percent said the country is "playing the role of military policeman too much." Fifty-four percent agreed that cutting defense spending is problematic because it will cause job losses, while 81 percent -- in one of the largest points of consensus -- agreed with a statement that the budget had "a lot of waste" and that members of Congress regularly approve unneeded spending just to benefit their own supporters. ¶ The survey suggested, in short, that most people do not see the issue in starkly black or white terms, but instead hold complex views about the appropriate relationship between defense spending and America's role in the world.

#### **Military Spending will be a key election issue**

Daniel Goure, PhD, 5-25-2011, “Defense Secretary Gates tees up Major 2012 Election Issue,” Lexington Institute, <http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/defense-secretary-gates-tees-up-major-2012-election-issue?a=1&c=1171>

All the pundits are certain that the dominant issue in the upcoming 2012 election will be the state of the economy. No doubt this will be a key determinant of winners and losers. But a sleeper issue that may come to the fore is the role of the United States in the world and our willingness to maintain a strong and capable military. ¶ This will be the case if outgoing Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has his wish. In his response to President Obama’s call for a $400 billion reduction in projected security spending over the next twelve years, Gates has focused not just on where and how to cut but on the implications of such reductions on U.S. military capabilities and, in turn, on this country’s ability to project power and influence in the world. In a series of speeches over the past several weeks, the Secretary warned against so-called “salami slicing” cuts to the defense budget that threaten to create a hollow force. ¶ The reality is that to maintain a military force of the size and character of that deployed today, including paying escalating pay and benefits costs, ensuring modernization of equipment, sending people and platforms around the world and supporting a large infrastructure requires more than 4 percent of GDP. This is below the historic post World War Two average. Yet, as the Secretary noted, conditions today make it unlikely that the nation will be willing to pay this bill. Moreover, he admitted that the efforts to squeeze savings out of the department have not met with the degree of success he would like. This is the result, in part, of the inability of DoD to generate accurate information on spending and personnel. ¶ Yesterday, at the American Enterprise Institute, Gates made the most forceful exposition of his view that the nation’s leaders must grapple with the strategic implications of slashing the defense budget. “If we are going to reduce the resources and the size of the U.S. military, people need to make conscious choices about what the implications are for the security of the country, as well as for the variety of military operations we have around the world if lower priority missions are scaled back or eliminated. They need to understand what it could mean for a smaller pool of troops and their families if America is forced into a protracted land war again -- yes, the kind no defense secretary should recommend anytime soon, but one we may not be able to avoid. To shirk this discussion of risks and consequences -- and the hard decisions that must follow -- I would regard as managerial cowardice.” ¶ Gates went on to assert the importance of maintaining a superbly trained and equipped force, even if it must shrink in size and divest of some less-critical missions. The Secretary stressed the need to continue with vital modernization programs including, specifically, the new aerial tanker, F-35 fighter, Navy shipbuilding and Army and Marine Corps vehicles and helicopters and ballistic missile submarines. To this he might have added fielding a new bomber, developing the next generation of unmanned aerial platforms for the Air Force and Navy, providing for cyber defense, deploying advanced missile defenses and a new electronic warfare capability. The point is that if the choice is between a military that is large and obsolescing or smaller but modern, the Secretary would choose the latter. ¶ After the end of the Cold War the nation avoided the obvious debate on America’s role in the world and the military requirements for global leadership. For the past twenty years administrations of both parties have been kicking the can down the road, finding the existence of a large and powerful military to be an asset without having to justify its costs. Gates is saying that this debate can no longer be avoided. The question of America’s willingness to invest in the military could be a major issue in the 2012 campaign.

Military spending no longer sacred cow- not immune to spending concerns and cuts

# Impacts

## Obama Good

### Tax Reform

#### **Obama Supports tax reform**

Jeanne, Sahadi, Jeanne Sahadi is a senior writer at CNNMoney.com, where she currently covers issues related to taxes, Sahadi holds a B.A. from Haverford College in Haverford, Pa. “Obama tax plan would hit the rich” March 22, 2012. http://money.cnn.com/2012/03/21/pf/taxes/obama-tax-plan/index.htm

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- Wealthy taxpayers would see a big jump in their tax bills under President Obama's latest budget proposal, according to a new independent analysis. In fact, those in the top 1% of income would see an average tax increase of nearly $109,000 in 2015, according to the Tax Policy Center. The increase is relative to what people would pay if lawmakers chose to extend a number of policies, such as the Bush-era tax cuts, that are otherwise set to expire) In the Tax Policy Center's analysis, the top 1% are those with cash income of at least $630,000. That number counts paychecks, investment income and other less obvious sources of money such as the subsidy employers pay for their workers' health insurance. Overall, an estimated 16% of households would end up with lower tax bills under Obama's proposal, which was laid out last month in the president's 2013 budget. And about 33% of households would face a higher tax bill, but for many of them, the increases would likely be small, Roberton Williams, a senior fellow at the Tax Policy Center, wrote Wednesday in a blog post. For instance, nearly 63% of tax filers with incomes between $100,000 and $200,000 would see a larger tax burden, but the average increase would be less than $500, according to the center. But those making $200,000 to $500,000 -- of whom 73% would get a tax hike -- would pay $4,942 more on average. The increased tax bills for the rich are driven by three Obama proposals. He is calling for the top two income tax rates -- currently 33% and 35% -- to rise to 36% and 39.6%. He would raise the tax rate on capital gains and dividends for high-income households to 20% from 15% today. And he would limit the value of their itemized deductions. The increased burden on high-income taxpayers under Obama's budget stands in contrast to the tax plans of his potential Republican rivals in the presidential election. Their proposals would end up cutting taxes for most households, but the biggest breaks would go to the top 1%. The same is true in terms of overall federal revenue. Over the next decade the president's budget would raise about $2.1 trillion more than would be the case if Congress just extended today's tax policies, the center estimates. Under Mitt Romney's tax plan, the federal government would lose $3.4 trillion. That's in large part because Romney has not yet specified how he would pay for his proposed 20% reduction in tax rates across the board.

#### **Obama avoides fiscal cliff and raising taxes on middle class**

Kristen, Welker. Welker, a native of Philadelphia, graduated from Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts with a bachelor's degree cum laude in American History Kristen Welker joined NBC News as a network correspondent in Burbank, California in 2010 “Obama WH comments on ‘fiscal cliff’”

July 17 2012 http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/\_news/2012/07/17/12794623-obama-wh-comments-on-fiscal-cliff?lite

Is the Obama White House willing to follow Senate Democrats off the so-called "fiscal cliff"?

Not exactly. The White House today weighed in with a slightly different message: Congress should prevent the fiscal cliff -- the prospect of all the Bush-era tax cuts expiring, as well as automatic spending cuts taking effect -- from ever happening. During a gaggle aboard Air Force One, Deputy White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest was asked if the president supports Democrats who threatening to let all the Bush tax cuts expire -- for both the wealthy and middle class -- if they don't get a "good deal" from Republicans. ”The president believes firmly that there is a way for us to deal with our deficit challenges," Earnest said. He added that this potential way forward could also avoid the $1.2 trillion in automatic budget cuts (including defense spending) that will occur after the end of this year. Earnest’s comments stopped short of endorsing what Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) said Democrats were willing to do if Republicans refused to raise taxes on the wealthy. Speaking at the Brookings Institution on Monday, Murray said, “If we can’t get a good deal, a balanced deal that calls on the wealthy to pay their fair share then I will absolutely continue this debate into 2013,” meaning after the economy would presumably plunge off the cliff. Earnest also echoed a message that President Obama has touted for the past several days -- that the Congress should extend the Bush-era tax cuts for folks making less than $250,000.“The president does not believe that it's just middle-class families that should have to sacrifice to deal with our deficit challenges. We're all in this together, and that includes asking those wealthiest 2% of Americans, millionaires and billionaires, essentially, to do their fair share.to do their fair share.” Republicans have fired back. On Monday, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell accused Congressional Democrats of waging an “ideological crusade.” McConnell said, “Let me boil it down. Faced with the slowest economic recovery in modern times, chronic joblessness, and the lowest percentage of able-bodied Americans actually participating in the workforce in decades, Democrats’ one-point plan to revive the economy is this: you earn, we take. That’s apparently the only thing they’ve got. “According to a recent poll by the Pew Research Center, 44% of people believe increasing taxes on those making more than $250,000 would help the economy, versus just 22% who believe it will hurt it.

### Climate

#### Obama Supports Climate Legislation

Darren Samuelsohn is a senior energy & environment reporter for POLITICO Pro. He spent nearly a decade dominating the beat for E&E Publishing's Greenwire and Environment & Energy Daily “Climate bill needed to 'save our planet,' says Obama”. Feb 29, 2009 <http://www.nytimes.com/cwire/2009/02/25/25climatewire-emissions-bill-needed-to-save-our-planet--oba-9849.html?pagewanted=all> E.P.

President Obama lent his voice last night to the push for a mandatory cap on greenhouse gas emissions, using his first speech to a joint session of Congress to lobby for controversial legislation sure to spark a heated debate during tight economic times. Obama campaigned for president last year with climate change and energy issues atop his agenda. And he returned to those themes yesterday, saying that a cap-and-trade bill would help spark economic recovery by giving U.S. companies greater incentive to start producing more wind turbines, solar panels, biofuels and battery-powered automobiles. "To truly transform our economy, to protect our security, and save our planet from the ravages of climate change, we need to ultimately make clean, renewable energy the profitable kind of energy," Obama said in his address to Congress. "So I ask this Congress to send me legislation that places a market-based cap on carbon pollution and drives the production of more renewable energy in America. That's what we need." In his next breath, the president teased a key climate-related component in his upcoming budget proposal to Congress. "To support that innovation, we will invest $15 billion a year to develop technologies like wind power and solar power, advanced biofuels, clean coal, and more efficient cars and trucks built right here in America," Obama said, referring to a budget plan that would assume government revenue from the allowances sold to companies for compliance with the cap-and-trade system. Obama also appealed to lawmakers by acknowledging the difficulties associated with voting on a climate plan that is sure to carry a large price tag. "None of this will come without cost, nor will it be easy," the president said. "But this is America. We don't do what's easy. We do what's necessary to move this country forward. "Nearly all House and Senate Democrats gave Obama a standing ovation for his climate change comments, with Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) even turning behind him to give a high five to Senate Environment and Public Works Chairwoman Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.). A small group of moderate Senate Republicans also rose at Obama's mention of cap-and-trade legislation, including Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe of Maine, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, Mel Martinez of Florida, and John McCain of Arizona. Obama's global warming comments lacked many of the specifics that will surely be at the center of the Capitol Hill debate set to unfold over the next several months. The president also stayed well clear of the looming question of whether to combine energy and climate change bills into one big package or splinter them into separate pieces. Instead, Obama stuck to general themes, lumping energy in with health care and education as "the three areas that are absolutely critical to our economic future." Advocates of cap-and-trade legislation welcomed the president's remarks and pledged in varying degrees that they would soon deliver a major climate bill for his signature. "President Obama asked Congress for legislation that places a market-based cap on carbon pollution and we intend to give it to him," said Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.), the chairman of the House Energy and Environment Subcommittee, which will be the point of origin for the legislation. "It is extremely helpful," Boxer added. "He has asked Congress to come forward, so we are very ready and my committee is very ready to do that." Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) predicted Obama was only getting started in his appeals for support on climate change. "When he used the term the 'ravages of climate change' he is clearly talking passionately about this issue," Udall said. "He clearly believes in this issue and I think we are going to see him push in a big way, in a bold way, to get something done." Leaders on both sides of Capitol Hill have sent signals they too are ready to meet Obama's request. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) said earlier this week that he wants to hold a floor debate on a bipartisan climate bill by the end of the summer, specifically singling out McCain as a Republican who he is looking to for support. In the House, Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) has also pledged a first-ever climate vote this year on cap-and-trade legislation that Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) expects to mark up before Memorial Day (E&E Daily, Feb. 9). But Republican leaders, as well as several rank-and-file members, suggested last night that they have no plans to line up behind Obama's climate agenda. "We need to lead the country on the basis of a sound economic energy policy," said House Minority Whip Eric Cantor (R-Va.). "We cannot exist by thinking we can tax our way into the future. You may very well close out the manufacturing sector to this economy if we're not careful. We've got to strike the right balance in terms of energy and environmental policy." 'Cap and trade won't work' As the climate debate proceeds, Obama's biggest challenge may be winning over lawmakers who represent districts and states with large industrial bases. "I think that is going to fall largely along regional lines, rather than along party lines," Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) said last night, adding, "I personally am not going to be supporting a cap-and-trade proposal." Indeed, several Democrats are sure to present Obama with obstacles. Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.), for example, gave reporters an emphatic "no" when asked whether he thought Obama's comments about cap-and-trade legislation would build momentum for climate legislation. "Cap and trade won't work," he said. Rockefeller is part of the "Gang of 15," a collection of moderate senators from the Midwest, Rust Belt and West who say the climate debate to date has not taken their interests into account (E&E Daily, Feb. 10). Some other Democratic lawmakers in the coalition said they are still open to compromise. "Congress is of a mind to do this, but we want to do it in the right way," said Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.).Sen. Ben Nelson (D-Neb.), who was one of a handful of Senate moderates who helped pass the $787 billion stimulus bill earlier this month, said Obama could use his influence to prod Congress -- but should pay attention to the national mood. "Under the right set of circumstances he can, under the wrong set of circumstances, it shouldn't happen," Nelson said. Obama also will need to work on the very same set of Senate Republicans who stood up to applaud his mention of climate change. "Times are terrible," explained Florida's Martinez. "We cannot do something that's going to be costly to consumers or unduly burdensome on industry. So we've got to do it in a way that is reasonable and for the times." South Carolina's Graham said he appreciated Obama's climate change position. But he found a big problem in what Obama did not mention: nuclear power. "It was a glaring omission to me," Graham said. "I'm sure the left doesn't want him to talk about it. But if you're serious about a cap-and-trade system that will work, and you have the power you need to keep a vibrant economy, wind and solar isn't going to get you there. To say otherwise is just not honest." Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), a senior member of Boxer's EPW Committee and a veteran of past climate debates, may have summed up Obama's challenge the best. "On a good day," he said, "it's going to be difficult to move climate change legislation."

### Women

#### Obama is pro-women issues

Lucy Madison Political Reporter, CBSNews.com “Amid perceived advantage, Obama touts pro-women message”

April 6, 2012http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544\_162-57410569-503544/amid-perceived-advantage-obama-touts-pro-women-message/?tag=contentMain;contentBody

Amid an ongoing debate over what some Democrats are calling the Republican "war on women," President Obama on Friday touted a distinctly pro-women agenda, delivering a personal message about his commitment to increasing equality and opportunities for women and girls of "all stages of life." The president, speaking at a White House forum on women and the economy, reflected on recent debates over political issues relating to women and women's health, arguing that "the conversation's been oversimplified." "Women are not some monolithic bloc. Women are not an interest group," he said. "You shouldn't be treated that way." The panel comes just days after a new USA Today/Gallup poll showed that women in 12 top battleground states favor the president by 18 points when matched up against Mitt Romney, the man many believe will be his Republican rival for the presidency come November. That's a 7-point boost for the president since the poll was conducted in January and February, and since the explosion of a number of controversial debates surrounding contraception and Planned Parenthood. Among men, the poll showed Romney leading Mr. Obama by one point. The national data shows a similar gender disparity: According to a Pew poll from March, Obama leads Romney 58 percent to 38 percent among women voters, while the two run about even among men. Surrounded onstage by a diverse group of accomplished women on Friday, the president talked about gender barriers that women in his own life have struggled to overcome. He pledged that for him, achieving equality is a "personal matter." "When I think about these efforts, when we put together this Council on Women and Girls, this is personal. That's what is at the heart of all our efforts. These are the experiences -- the prism through which I view these efforts," he said. "That's what we mean when we say that these issues are more than just a matter of policy. And when we talk about these issues that primarily impact women, we've got to realize they are not just women's issues; they are family issues, they are economic issues, they are growth issues, they are issues about American competitiveness, they are issues that impact all of us." The president cited legislation like the Lily Ledbetter Act for fair pay-- the first bill he signed into law upon taking office -- as well as efforts to help women business owners as evidence of his commitment to women. Still, he acknowledged, "once [women] get out of college we still have a lot of ground to cover." "Just 3 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs are women," Mr. Obama said. "Fewer than 20 percent of the seats in Congress are occupied by women." "Is it possible that Congress will get more done if there were more women in Congress?" he joked, laughing. "Is that fair to say, Joe? I think it's fair to say. That is -- that is almost guaranteed." Romney's relationship with women voters has come under increased scrutiny as he appears increasingly poised to lock up the Republican presidential nomination. In a recent interview with Newsmax, the former Massachusetts governor seemed to acknowledge the disparity in the polls, responding to a question about the polling data that "I think this will pass as an issue as people understand our real position" on issues like birth control. He has also referred to his wife Ann as something of an ambassador to women, telling journalists in a speech at the American Society of News Editors (ASNE) earlier this week that his wife had been sending him "reports" about the issues women prioritize. "My wife has the occasion, as you know, to campaign on her own...She reports to me regularly that the issues women care about most is the economy and getting good jobs for their kids and for themselves. They're concerned about gasoline prices," Romney said. "That's what women care about in this country and my vision is to get America working again, short term and long term. "Democrats have wasted few opportunities to target Republicans over their positions on issues related to women. In a Friday interview with MSNBC, Democratic National Committee (DNC) chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz lambasted "Romney and the Republicans" for being "callously indifferent" to women's interests. "You know, what Mitt Romney and the Republicans have been doing to themselves every single day is showing women in this country day after day that they are callously indifferent to women's health, the priorities of women," she said. "You know, if they're still wondering why there's an 18-point gender gap and President Obama is ahead of Mitt Romney by that many points, then they really -- they really must believe these things that they're saying. Shocking."

### Afghanistan

#### Obama will end arduous war in Afghanistan

The Long War Journal **“**US withdrawal from Afghanistan: the plan for 2012, 2013, and 2014”March 18, 2012 http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/03/us\_withdrawal\_from\_a.php

In June 2011, President Obama announced that the US would begin withdrawing military forces from Afghanistan and transferring responsibility for security to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The US goal is to be substantially out of Afghanistan by 2014, with ANSF responsible for the entire country. The implementation plan for 2012 has been publicized over the past nine months and is recapped below. The plan for 2013 is now emerging; what is known is summarized here for the first time. The plan for 2014 is still speculative. The plan for 2012 starting this spring, the US will draw down its troops from the current 90,000 to 68,000 by October 2012. Essentially, the surge of US forces deployed to Afghanistan in early 2009 is being withdrawn. As the withdrawal proceeds, the ANSF is expected to assume leadership for security operations in a large portion of the country. By the end of 2012, the areas of Afghan responsibility will contain about 50% of Afghan's population. This will become a significant test of ANSF capabilities, and will be an important indicator of the ANSF's ability to continue to expand its areas of responsibility into 2013.The ANSF will reach its end state goal of 352,000 troops by October 2012 and then stop growing. Significant shortfalls in quality, organizational structure, and capability will still exist, however. The US will deploy a large contingent of military trainers and advisers to Afghanistan this summer to address these issues. The plan for 2013The plan for 2013 is currently being developed. The final version will be presented for approval at the NATO summit in Chicago in May. While still incomplete, portions of the plan have been disclosed or can be deduced. According to The Guardian, Obama described the next phase of the transition as follows: "This includes shifting to a support role next year, in 2013, in advance of Afghans taking full responsibility for security in 2014. We're going to complete this mission, and we're going to do it responsibly." The most significant element of the plan is that US and ISAF forces will stop conducting combat operations in late 2013. The ANSF will then be responsible for executing all combat operations in Afghanistan. Security responsibility for additional areas of Afghanistan will be transferred to the ANSF during 2013. Perhaps 75% of Afghan's population will be living in areas under ANSF security leadership by the end of 2013. These areas will include substantial portions of the northern, western, and southern regions. Due to the stronger Taliban organization in the eastern region, however, it is likely to lag behind. The size of the ANSF will be maintained at 352,000 troops. US and ISAF mentoring and advising teams will concentrate on improving the quality of existing troops. Organizational development will focus on standing up support functions that are currently being performed by US and ISAF units. The number of US troops to remain in Afghanistan during 2013 is still being decided, but it appears that three options are being considered. According to a New York Times report, the three options are: A drawdown from 68,000 to 58,000 troops by the end of 2012, with a further drawdown to between 38,000 and 48,000 by June 2013. This would be a continuation of the current policy of gradual drawdown. Obama has stated that he prefers a gradual drawdown. Therefore, this is the most likely option. Maintaining 68,000 troops through the end of 2013. This is the US military commanders' preferred option since it maintains US force levels through the summer fighting season in 2013. However, US military commanders had previously wanted to maintain 90,000 troops through the end of 2012, and that plan was rejected last year. So, maintaining 68,000 troops in 2013 is probably a less likely option. A large and rapid drawdown, perhaps to 20,000 troops, by the end of 2013. This would leave only Special Operations Forces, counterterrorism forces, military trainers, and some support and security staff in Afghanistan. This is Vice President Biden's preferred option. But this option also was considered and rejected for 2012. And Obama has stated that a rapid drawdown was not his preferred option, either. Therefore, this too is an unlikely option. The plan for 2014 The plan for 2014 is much less clear. It will be highly dependent on the post-2014 plan, which is still in the early stages of negotiations with the Karzai administration. However, assuming a deal is reached, a 2014 plan is likely to include the following elements. The US force level will drop to between 10,000 and 20,000 troops. They will consist of Special Forces, counterterrorism forces, and military training personnel. They will be deployed to a small number of bases around the country. US/ISAF troops will continue their training of ANSF soldiers. Counterterrorism forces will concentrate mostly on high-value targets. The ANSF will be responsible for security operations for all of Afghanistan, including army and police functions. The ANSF will be maintained at 352,000 troops. It is possible, however, that plans will be put in place to begin cutting the number to 230,000 troops starting after 2014.

### Israel

#### Obama will protect Israel

Katie Anderson Browser is a reporter for Bloomberg News “Obama Vows Strong Support for Israel in Aftermath of Attack” July 19, 2012 <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-07-19/obama-vows-strong-support-for-israel-in-aftermath-of-attack>

President Barack Obama vowed the U.S. will do everything possible to ensure Israel’s security in the aftermath of a terrorist attack in Bulgaria and instability in the region caused by upheaval in Syria.

He condemned the “barbaric terrorist attack” in Bulgaria that killed five Israeli tourists and said this is a moment of “great uncertainty” in the Mideast “given what’s happening in Syria.” “Now’s the time to make sure that we are doing everything we can to protect Israel’s security, and I want you to know that that’s something that should transcend party,” Obama said today at a campaign appearance at a West Palm Beach, Florida, retirement community. “That’s not a Republican or Democratic issue.” “We haven’t just preserved the unbreakable bond with Israel,” he said. “We have strengthened it.” Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Lebanon’s Iranian-backed Hezbollah organization was behind the bombing in Bulgaria and vowed to track down the perpetrators.

#### Obama is a staunch supporter of Israel

Aamer Madhani

White House Correspondent (USA TODAY) - is a journalist for USA TODAY living in Washington, DC “At U.N., Obama affirms 'unshakeable' support for Israel” 9/22/2011 <http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/story/2011-09-21/Obama-Israel-United-Nations-Palestinian-Authority/50502546/1>

U.S. support for Israel remains "unshakeable," President Obama told the United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday, and Palestinian leaders should ditch their plan to petition the international body for statehood. "Peace will not come through statements and resolutions at the United Nations. If it were that easy, it would have been accomplished by now," Obama said. "Ultimately, it is the Israelis and the Palestinians - not us - who must reach agreement on the issues that divide them: on borders and on security, on refugees and Jerusalem." Obama's speech followed an onslaught of criticism from Republicans and Israeli advocates, who said the president was endangering Israel. Unlike previous high-profile comments on the Middle East, Obama avoided any mention of borders of a future Palestinian state. He also pointedly noted that Israel is "surrounded by neighbors that have waged repeated wars against it" and reflected on the plight of Israeli citizens in the decades-old conflict.

The president made the Israeli-Palestinian dispute the centerpiece of his annual address to the United Nations General Assembly, devoted to what the president called "the pursuit of peace in an imperfect world." This past year has seen an "extraordinary transformation," Obama said, citing government changes in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya. The president's supporters in the American Jewish community heralded his remarks as demonstrating that he remains committed to safeguarding Israel, while some GOP lawmakers blasted Obama's call for the Palestinians to drop their statehood petition as toothless. "Once again, the president did not mention any consequences for U.S. funding for the Palestinians or for the U.N. if they proceeded down this anti-Israel, anti-peace course," said Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., the chairwoman of House Foreign Affairs Committee. In the leadup to this week's meetings, Republicans blasted Obama's Israeli-Palestinian policy, charging that Obama was hostile to Israel's concerns. Obama's Middle East policy became a central issue in this month's special congressional election in New York, where a Republican swept to victory in a heavily Democratic and Jewish area. On Tuesday, Republican presidential candidate and Texas Gov. Rick Perry traveled to New York City to criticize Obama's Middle East policy, while fellow Republican presidential hopeful Mitt Romney accused the administration of "repeated efforts over three years to throw Israel under the bus. "With his speech, Obama made clear that he is taken a "common sense" approach in his Middle East policy that is ultimately "pro-Israel," countered Robert Wexler, a former Democratic congressman from Florida who is aiding the Obama re-election campaign's Jewish outreach efforts. Wexler also criticized Perry for supporting the building of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and calling for the United States to reconsider funding of the Palestinian Authority if it moves ahead with application toward statehood. If the U.N. pulled funding, the move would potentially endanger Israeli security and embolden Hamas, Wexler said. "Gov. Perry is advocating a set of policies that would undermine the state of Israel and harm the United States," Wexler said. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has clashed with Obama in the past, commended the U.S. president for "standing with Israel" before their meeting on the sidelines of the U.N. session. Obama also met with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Wednesday. Obama's speech was contradictory because he heralded a year in which the Arab Spring led to the end of dictatorships in the Middle East and North Africa, but he did not back the Palestinians, said Marwan Muasher, a former Jordanian deputy prime minister. "Every day the Israeli occupation continues, it's going to be harder for the United States to argue … that if you're yearning for freedom that the U.S. is with you," said Muasher, a Middle East analyst at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

### Education

#### Obama supports grants for teachers

Jeffery Mervis he speaks about the politics of U.S. science to both scientific and lay audiences “Obama Seeks More Money for Master Science Teachers” July 18 2012. http://news.sciencemag.org/scienceinsider/2012/07/obama-seeks-more-money-for-maste.html

The Obama Administration wants to give a $20,000 salary bonus to thousands of the best elementary and secondary school science and math teachers in the country. But the idea of creating a Master Teacher Corps program, unveiled today by the White House, stands little chance of winning the necessary funding this year from Congress. Master teachers—an elite group of teachers in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields—would mentor other teachers, serve as role models to draw talented students into the profession, and work with community leaders to improve science and math education. The corps was a key recommendation in a September 2010 report from the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, which called it "a sufficient carrot to attract and retain the best [STEM] teachers. "The president's plan would be to start with 2500 teachers—50 at 50 sites across the country—and add locations over the next 4 years until there were 10,000 teachers in the corps. The teachers, who would serve for 5 years, would be selected by the local districts and deployed as needed. A Weekly Chat on the Hottest Topics in Science Thursdays 3 p.m. EDT The program is intended "to elevate the prestige" of the profession and highlight the importance of science and math in the schools, says Education Secretary Arne Duncan. "There have been pockets of creativity, but until now there has been a lack of resources. I think that school districts are more than ready for this idea." In a press briefing yesterday, Cecilia Muñoz, head of the White House Domestic Policy Council, emphasized the role that STEM teachers play "in equipping our students with the knowledge they will need to get jobs in the high-growth fields that fund innovation. "Gerry Wheeler, interim executive director of the National Science Teachers Association, praised the Administration's plan. "We have to give greater attention to STEM education, and the teacher corps is one good way to do that." Wheeler would like to see the majority of the teachers working at the elementary and middle schools, so that "they can catch students when they are young and give them a sense of the careers that are possible in the STEM fields. "Funding for the master teacher program is contingent on the Department of Education receiving its full request for a broader, $5 billion initiative in its 2013 budget called the RESPECT (Recognizing Educational Success, Professional Excellence, and Collaborative Teaching) project. But that's not likely to happen. Although the status of the overall federal budget for next year remains in limbo, the House of Representatives spending panel that funds the department coincidentally marked up its 2013 appropriations bill today. The bill contains no money for the RESPECT project, a collection of several initiatives that include attracting and retaining better STEM teachers. The panel also zeroed out a request for $150 million for a new program that the Administration had proposed as a successor to the department's Math and Science Partnerships, which gave grants to school districts to improve science and math instruction. The chair of a different House committee, one that oversees education and authorizes new programs, is a fierce opponent of the Administration's attempt to spend more money on targeted new programs. Instead, Representative John Kline (R-MN), has proposed legislation that would give money to local school authorities to use as they see fit. Asked to comment on the idea of a STEM master teacher corps, his spokesperson cited Kline's reaction to a report earlier this year that tallied the hundreds of existing federal programs aimed at improving STEM education. "Investing in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics is a worthwhile endeavor—but pumping billions of dollars into programs that may be duplicative or unproductive is just plain foolish," Kline said then.

### Immigration

#### Obama immigration policy is the best

Trib.com “Obama is just doing what is good for the country” June 20, 2012 http://trib.com/opinion/columns/obama-is-just-doing-what-is-good-for-the country/article\_922c6095-2eec-5a93-a310-415402c17453.html

In helping young illegal immigrants stay in the country, President Obama did the right thing for the wrong reason and in a strange context. Obama decreed that illegal immigrants who came here as children could stay without fear of deportation, if the following conditions are met: They’ve been in the country for at least five years. They’re in school or high-school graduates, or have served in the military. They are under 30 and have committed no crimes. More than 1 million people may qualify. This was the beating heart of the Dream Act, stopped in 2010 by Senate Republicans. The major difference is that Obama is not creating an amnesty. He’s letting these young people stay, study and work in the United States without harassment for periods of two years, which can be renewed. The beneficiaries are quite blameless. Their parents brought them to America as children. Having grown up here, these kids are for all practical purposes American. When it comes time for a real amnesty, these are the sort of young people we would put first in line. And if America had a normal immigration program, many in this group would have been welcomed through the front door. Meanwhile, Obama’s executive action covers only those who have obtained or are getting a basic education and have been law-abiding. Thus, it excludes illegal immigrants who could pose a burden on our society (even if they arrived at age 2). Obama clearly chose the timing for political reasons. The obvious objective is to woo Latino voters, who will play key roles in several swing states this November. Actually, polls show most Hispanics are not overly supportive of open-border policies that lead to depressed wages. But they are understandably aggravated at seeing the occasional young person pulled out of the neighborhood and sent to a country that he or she would consider foreign. The context for Obama’s move is quite interesting. Obama is the first president in a long time to have taken the immigration laws seriously. He’s been going after employers who hire undocumented workers. Deportations during his administration have exceeded 1 million, the most since 1950. His active enforcement of the immigration laws has made him suspect among some Hispanic activists while winning scant praise from right-wingers. So this modest move toward immigration reform makes political sense. But do we want an immigration program that changes as a function of the next election? No. We should want a panel of experts determining our labor needs on an annual basis. How many people and what skills does our economy require? And we should want these experts to recognize that unskilled workers belong to the same labor market that assures good pay for scarce biochemists. No iron law of the universe forbids letting their wages rise along with demand for their services. During the recent Republican candidates’ debates, some of the talk on immigration approached ugly. All the contenders, Mitt Romney included, vowed to oppose even the modestly conceived Dream Act. Now the assumed nominee, Romney is modulating his views a bit, calling Obama’s move a block to a bipartisan solution rather than a reward for lawbreaking. A reasonable bipartisan solution would create a tight system for enforcing the laws against hiring illegal workers — one that would include biometric identification (such as scans of the eye’s iris), which can’t be counterfeited. It would sponsor a last amnesty to put most illegal immigrants “on the path to citizenship.” And it would include the aforementioned panel to monitor the program with an eye toward what’s good for the country. Say that again: What’s good for the country

### Best Option

#### **Obama is a superior option than any alternative**

The Baltimore sun “Obama better than qualified” July 19 2012. http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2012-07-19/news/bs-ed-qualifications-letter-20120719\_1\_president-barack-obama-operation-neptune-spear-policy

In response to the letter from Gail Householder ("Obama fails VP test," July 18), it is surprising that anyone is still questioning President Barack Obama's experience and qualifications as the chief executive of the United States. Enough! It is an antiquated argument and it is insulting to recite his resume prior to becoming president and pretend that it is not impressive. Since coming to office, he has enhanced his qualifications even further. He passed necessary health care reform which makes it impossible for pre-existing conditions to bankrupt people who should be able to concentrate on healing rather than hoping their insurance company will cover their condition and not impose unfair lifetime limits on benefits. With his authorization of Operation Neptune Spear, a terrorist who evaded prosecution for more than 15 years was killed. He pushed for the military to repeal a policy which discharged honorable service members for disclosing their sexual orientation. He began tackling a failing war on drugs by asking Congress to reexamine and change the disparity in sentencing crack and cocaine offenses, a policy that has overwhelming affected lower class citizens. He signed the Credit Card Accountability, Responsibility and Disclosure Act which eliminated mystery fee and rate increases, in turn, strengthening consumer protection. According to BBC World Service polling, since President Obama took office, global views of the United States has become more positive. Ending a 7-year war, the commander-in-chief pulled forces out of Iraq. He also announced a drawdown strategy for Afghanistan which will end the combat mission by 2014. Those achievements can be added to the myriad of other successes Mr. Obama has pushed through despite the country's divisive attitude bordering on Civil War proportions. Who else has accomplished what our current president has achieved? Who else has President Obama's experience? His opponents can argue other points, perhaps even policy issues for a change, but to protest that he lacks experience and qualifications deserves ridicule at best. Syreeta Gross, Aberdeen

## Obama Bad

### Tax Plan

#### Obama Tax Plan Horrible for Jobs and Other Longterm Impacts

Town Hall 7-19-2012 “Obama Tax Hikes Would Kill 710,000 Jobs” <http://townhall.com/tipsheet/townhallcomstaff/2012/07/19/obama_tax_hikes_would_kill_710000_jobs>. F-JRR

A new report prepared by Ernst & Young further discredits Obama’s proposed tax hikes. The findings in this report show just how terrible Obama’s ‘soak-the-rich’ policy would be for the economy. Through lower after-tax rewards to work, the higher tax rates on wages reduce work effort and labor force participation. The higher tax rates on capital gains and dividend increase the cost of equity capital, which discourages savings and reduces investment. Capital investment falls, which reduces labor productivity and means lower output and living standards in the long-run. Output in the long-run would fall by 1.3%, or $200 billion, in today’s economy. Employment in the long-run would fall by 0.5% or, roughly 710,000 fewer jobs, in today's economy. Capital stock and investment in the long-run would fall by 1.4% and 2.4%, respectively. Real after-tax wages would fall by 1.8%, reflecting a decline in workers? living standards relative to what would have occurred otherwise. These results suggest real long-run economic consequences for allowing the top two ordinary tax rates and investment tax rates to rise in 2013. This policy path can be expected to reduce long-run output, investment and net worth. Clearly, raising the top tax rates is bad for the economy. Obama may try, but he can’t credibly sell the argument that the rich are holding back our economy by not ‘paying their fair share.’ The next argument pushed by the Obama camp will be debt reduction. In their narrative, we can’t bring down our debt if the rich don’t pay higher taxes. This argument also fails to hold up to scrutiny. Obama’s massive tax increase would only pay for one week of government spending. This assumes that the President would actually use this money to pay down the debt. Call me skeptical, but I have a feeling this revenue would more likely to go another ‘green initiative’ than it would debt reduction. Obama’s tax hikes might make for a good class warfare campaign strategy, but it is clearly a terrible policy idea.

#### Obama Tax Plans Disadvantageous for Small Businesses

David, Park, chairman and cofounder of Job Creators Alliance 7-13-2012 Obama's Tax Hike Plan Punishes Small Businesses <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/economic-intelligence/2012/07/13/obamas-tax-hike-plan-punishes-small-businesses> F-JRR

This week, President Barack Obama announced a new push to extend tax cuts for individuals who make $250,000 or less a year. These tax cuts were enacted during the Bush administration, and are set to expire at the end of the year. While the White House would like you to believe this is an effort with good intentions to help protect the middle class, it is merely an attempt to distract tax payers from recent bad economic news, this plan will ultimately harm—not help—the middle class. President Obama claims that his tax policy targets the rich while offering relief for the middle class by placing a $250,000 ceiling on tax cuts. What he doesn't mention is that many of these so-called "rich" are actually small business owners. In effect, he is proposing to increase taxes on the very people who have been driving U.S. job creation while struggling to survive in a weakened economy. Small business owners are often unfairly grouped with the extremely affluent because of the way they file their taxes. Due to their size, most small businesses file as sole proprietors or partnerships—in fact, approximately 85 percent of small businesses file income taxes as individuals. This means that, while a small business owner's personal income may seem large, the majority of the money is actually funneled directly back into the business. By targeting these individuals, President Obama is not only increasing taxes for nearly half of America's small businesses, he is also making it harder for the middle class to be able to find the jobs they so desperately need. This is simply bad policy. Small businesses create 64 percent of new jobs in this country and employ almost half of all American workers. Raising taxes on them won't create a single job. The president insists that the $250,000 ceiling will only affect the rich, but the Joint Tax Committee estimates that the tax hike will affect over half of all net business income in 2013. And the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center sees an overwhelming 96 percent of middle class taxpayers paying an average of $1,800 a year as a result. Why would such demonstrably bad policy be pursued at a time when our economy can least afford it? It appears to be nothing more than a political stunt—which, while understandable in an election year, is bad news for working families and small businesses that are looking for a permanent relief. For some perspective, it's worth noting that in January of 2010, a prominent politician stated that raising taxes "when the economy remains somewhat fragile" would be "a mistake when the economy has not fully taken off" and that "potentially you'd see a lot of folks losing business, more folks potentially losing jobs." That politician was President Obama. He was right then. As the most recent employment report confirms, our economy is still fragile. Raising taxes never bodes well for job creation, but particularly when we are still recovering from the 2008 financial crisis. This is not a partisan issue. Elected leaders on both sides of the aisle have voiced concerns with raising taxes at this critical time. Small businesses are proven engines of job creation in the U.S. economy. And, under the weight of continuing unemployment and already falling business confidence measures, we cannot afford to burden such a vital source of economic growth. Job Creators Alliance recognizes that America needs tax reform; the current system is too complex and bloated. We need to streamline regulations to create a favorable business and investment climate where enterprise can flourish and small business owners can regain confidence in their returns. But President Obama's proposal addresses none of these needs. I just hope he'll listen to his party—and countless employers and employees—before it's too late.

#### Obama Tax Plan Bad for Economy

Ed Morrissey 7-19-2012 Study shows Obama tax plan bad news for the economy — especially in blue stateshttp://hotair.com/archives/2012/07/19/study-shows-obama-tax-plan-bad-news-for-the-economy-especially-in-blue-states/

Two months ago, the Congressional Budget Office issued a stark warning to Congress over the fiscal impact of “Taxmageddon,” the upcoming expiration of the Bush-era tax rates at the end of this year. Allowing all of the tax rates to rise would push the US into recession: Tax hikes and spending cuts set to take effect in January would suck $607 billion out of the economy next year, plunging the nation at least briefly back into recession, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said Tuesday. Unless lawmakers act, the economy is likely to contract in the first half of 2013 at an annualized rate of 1.3 percent, the CBO said, before returning to 2.3 percent growth later in the year. Canceling those tax and spending policies would protect the recovery in the short run and encourage more vibrant growth, around 4.4 percent, in 2013, the CBO said. However, unless lawmakers adopt policies that would reduce budget deficits by a comparable amount down the road, the CBO said, the national debt would continue to climb, imperiling future economic growth. Republicans want to follow the CBO’s advice and cancel the tax hikes, while looking for other ways to reduce spending rather than the sequestration policies set to take effect in January. Democrats want to hold both hostage to force the GOP to agree to Obama’s proposal to raise taxes on earners over $250,000 — or $1 million, depending on which Democrats one asks, and when. Will the economic impact of those tax hikes be much different than that of the full fiscal cliff? According to a new study by Ernst and Young … no: With the combination of these tax changes at the beginning of 2013 the top tax rate on ordinary income will rise from 35% in 2012 to 40.9%, the top tax rate on dividends will rise from 15% to 44.7% and the top tax rate on capital gains will rise from 15% to 24.7%. These higher tax rates result in a significant increase in the average marginal tax rates (AMTR) on business, wage, and investment income, as well as the marginal effective tax rate (METR) on new business investment. This report finds that the AMTR increases significantly for wages (5.0%), flow-through business income (6.4%), interest (16.5%), dividends (157.1%) and capital gains (39.3%). The METR on new business investment increases by 15.8% for the corporate sector and 15.6% for flow-through businesses. This report finds that these higher marginal tax rates result in a smaller economy, fewer jobs, less investment, and lower wages. Specifically, this report finds that the higher tax rates will have significant adverse economic effects in the long-run: lowering output, employment, investment, the capital stock, and real after-tax wages when the resulting revenue is used to finance additional government spending. Through lower after-tax rewards to work, the higher tax rates on wages reduce work effort and labor force participation. The higher tax rates on capital gains and dividend increase the cost of equity capital, which discourages savings and reduces investment. Capital investment falls, which reduces labor productivity and means lower output and living standards in the long-run. Output in the long-run would fall by 1.3%, or $200 billion, in today‟s economy. Employment in the long-run would fall by 0.5% or, roughly 710,000 fewer jobs, in today‟s economy. Capital stock and investment in the long-run would fall by 1.4% and 2.4%, respectively. Real after-tax wages would fall by 1.8%, reflecting a decline in workers‟ living standards relative to what would have occurred otherwise. John Merline at Investors Business Daily also points out that the effects will be felt more in the very states that support Obama the most: Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts and California — all blue states — would suffer the most, according to a Tax Foundation report. The reason, the study notes, is that these states have higher shares of wealthy taxpayers than the rest of the country. In each of them, those making more than $200,000 — the taxpayers targeted by Obama’s hikes — account for more than 56% of all federal income taxes paid in those states. The U.S. average, the report notes, is 50%. “As a result, a higher proportion of new tax dollars will come from these states,” noted the Tax Foundation’s Ed Gerrish, “likely impacting local economies.” IBD also notes in a separate editorial that the Obama proposal fails Fed chair Ben Bernanke’s test on policy: Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke warned Congress Tuesday to “do no harm” to our fragile economy. … “Economic activity appears to have decelerated” from the tepid first quarter, he said, and “available indicators point to a still smaller gain in the second quarter.” Bernanke talked about a “loss of momentum in job creation” and slower household spending growth for Q2. Manufacturing, he said, “has slowed in recent months.” The rise in spending on equipment and software “appears to have decelerated.” Indicators of future investment “suggest further weakness ahead.” In this context, Bernanke encouraged lawmakers to adopt the Hippocratic Oath and “do no harm.” “Fiscal decisions,” he said, “should take into account the fragility of the economy.” Clearly, Obama has prioritized re-election over the fragile economy. Why else would he talk about raising taxes as the economy slides toward recession, and the fiscal cliff guarantees one? In my column for The Fiscal Times, I write that the “you didn’t build it” comment relates directly to Obama’s view of the role of government in dictating economic outcomes, but mostly he just needs to fight Mitt Romney with good, old-fashioned class warfare more than he needs to position the US for recovery in 2013: Once again, Obama wants to make this an issue of “fairness.” By arguing that it takes a village for anyone to succeed in a market, the President can argue for greater confiscation in tax policy, claiming that it will fuel a new level of success. …How bad will it be? In the long run, Ernst & Young concludes, the tax hikes will cost more than 700,000 jobs and reduce economic output by 1.3 percent if the cuts go to fuel more government spending, using today’s economy as a measure. Wages would fall by 1.8 percent, and investment would decline by 2.4 percent. If the proceeds of the confiscatory policies get used to fund a broader reduction in tax rates below current levels – which is not part of Obama’s proposal – output still falls by 0.4 percent. This demonstrates the problem with excessive government interventions in markets, which always suppress growth to some degree. That is a rational trade-off, however, for a smoothly operating economy. However, we do not have a smoothly operating economy nor have we had one for the last several years, thanks to a crash created by government manipulation of the lending and securities markets to achieve favored social-policy outcomes, and an economic plan afterward that consisted of short-term gimmicks and escalating ambiguity in tax, regulatory, and monetary policy. We need to find ways to stimulate growth, not suppress it. Obama’s argument that the village needs to confiscate more from those who invest and take risks to provide that growth is exactly the worst prescription possible for our ailing economy – and yet another demonstration that the President has learned nothing about small business or the economy after four years in office. I wrote this earlier today, but it’s worth repeating: Small businesses and markets fund the government, not the other way around. The reason why we have the capital to seize for building roads, bridges, and other infrastructure is because of the wealth created by free markets. Without that wealth, the government could not sustain that infrastructure, and without the economic expansion and employment provided by risk-taking entrepreneurs, we wouldn’t need them at all. Obamanomics is completely backwards, which is why it’s not terribly surprising to see the economy heading in that direction, too.

#### Obama tax plans destroying the rich

USNews September 22, 2011 Obama's 'Tax the Rich' Class Warfare Is Bad Economicshttp://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/peter-roff/2011/09/22/obamas-tax-the-rich-class-warfare-is-bad-economics

The president has a new tax plan, a program designed to raise revenues for the beleaguered U.S. Treasury by raising taxes on what he says are the wealthiest Americans—who, he and his ideological allies contend, need to pay their fair share. At its core the plan—and the rhetoric that surrounds it—flows from the idea that tax revenues should be generated "from each according to his abilities to each according to his needs" as a long dead philosopher once put it. Therefore it is curious that Obama continues to bristle at the idea that, by proposing $1.5 trillion in tax increases over the next ten years on those earning more than $200,000 per year, he is engaged in class warfare. "This is not class warfare; it's math," Obama said Monday from the security of the White House Rose Garden. "The money's going to have to come from someplace. And if we're not willing to ask those who've done extraordinarily well to help America close the deficit," he continued, "the math says everybody else has to do a whole lot more." It goes without saying that the one place Obama is not looking for new revenue is within the government itself, where billions if not trillions of savings can be realized through a serious assault on wasteful spending, by closing unnecessary, unneeded and duplicative federal agencies, and by scaling back his own ambitions for new spending, a few of which were announced just the other week in his now infamous joint address to Congress on the subject of job creation. Under Obama, indeed under most any Democrat who occupies the nation's highest office, federal spending is subject to a sort of Brezhnev Doctrine: once the federal government starts to spend money on something it should never, must never stop. To do otherwise would be an injustice. Sure you can scale back the rate of increase if you have to—as long as the money continues to flow, even if it's less than you wanted in any given year. Obama's plan to close the federal spending gap can be summed up in three words: Tax the rich. Its bad economics even if, in the finest tradition of Saul Alinsky, it might work politically. By focusing on "the rich"—which he defines as millionaires and billionaires in his speeches even while his tax proposals count them as anyone who makes more than $200,000 per year—he is trying to pit one group of Americans against another, saying it is right and just and moral to push the spending burden off on other people. If this isn't class warfare then what is? There are ways to bring America together, to make the tax code better by making it flatter and simpler, to get the economy going again, and to address Washington's addiction to over-spending. Obama just hasn't figured out yet what they are. Perhaps he should spend more time listening and less time making speeches.

### Affordable Care Act

#### Obama Care Publically bad

W. James Antle, 7.19.12 Swing Voters Say Obamacare Bad for Economy,http://spectator.org/blog/2012/07/19/swing-voters-say-obamacare-bad

While the latest NPR/Resurgent Republic poll shows Barack Obama with a narrow lead over Mitt Romney, it contains bad news for the president on health care reform. By a margin of almost two-to-one, voters say the health care reform law will hurt rather than help the economy. Both Independents and battleground-state voters believe it will hurt more than help -- 47 to 20 percent among Independents, and 47 to 26 percent in battleground states. Far more voters say their health care costs have gone up than gone down since the law was passed. Voters say controlling costs is the top priority for health care in America today, and among the voters most concerned about reducing costs, two-thirds think the health care reform law does not address that priority. Republicans, independents, and battleground state voters all also agree they would rather get their health insurance from a private company than the federal government. Romney also enjoys a 5-point lead among independents, though Obama leads 47 percent to 45 percent overall. That is within the margin of error.

#### Obamacare is bad for the economic growth

Larry Kudlow 28 Jun 2012 Obamacare's Taxes Bad for Economic Growthhttp://www.cnbc.com/id/47997584/Obamacare\_s\_Taxes\_Bad\_for\_Economic\_Growth

Of course the stock market dropped about 130 points after the Supreme Court decision on Obamacare. Twenty new or higher taxes across the board are bad for economic growth, bad for job hiring, bad for investors, and bad for families. A tax is a tax is a tax, according to Justice Roberts. But he forgot to say that if you tax something more, you get less of it. Presumably Mitt Romney will make this case in a major way. Hopefully he won’t forget that Obamacare is not just a huge tax hike. It’s also a major new spending entitlement that’s already pegged at $2.5 trillion and will increase the federal debt burden much faster than the GDP expands. In other words, tax, spend, regulate, borrow. The Obama mantra. Romney must go after it — time and time and time again. Bankrupting the economy is not exactly a job-creator.

#### ObamaCare leads to even higher tax rates

JASON NOBLE Jun 25, 2012 Branstad: Obamacare is 'bad law' needing repeal He says it will result in higher taxes and health care costs.

SIOUX CITY, Ia. — Asked about a Polk County judge ruling last week that Des Moines Public Schools emails involving former Superintendent Nancy Sebring should not be barred from public release, Gov. Terry Branstad on Monday reiterated his commitment to open government. But he also offered a message to media outlets: Use discretion. “Generally, I come down on the side of trying to have open, transparent records. and when you’re dealing with emails or dealing with other documents … whether it’s state, city, county or school district property, it seems to me that information should be open,” he said. But the media has a responsibility to be careful with how it disseminates personal information, even if it’s gleaned from a public record, he added. “There ought to be some discretion used about how much of these personal things you go into,” he said. “I think that’s something that I would just urge people in the press to be thoughtful in terms of that.” Sebring left her post at the Des Moines school district and also resigned from a job she was set to begin in Omaha after an open-records request revealed explicit email correspondence with a lover on her district account. She sued to bar the release of further emails, but that lawsuit was rejected last week. — Jason Noble SIOUX CITY, IA. — The U.S. Supreme Court didn’t issue a ruling on the Affordable Care Act on Monday, but Gov. Terry Branstad sure did. In his weekly news conference at the Siouxland Chamber of Commerce, Branstad riffed for about five minutes on his opposition to the act, the federal health care law passed in 2010 and known to many as “Obamacare.” “One thing is clear: Obamacare is bad law,” he said. “It’s bad for business, it’s bad for the economy, and it’s bad for our state and other states that are imposed all these additional folks under the Medicaid program.” His comments came on a morning in which many believed the high court would rule on the law’s constitutionality — a ruling that is almost certain to have far-reaching impacts on the now-under-way presidential campaign, President Barack Obama’s legacy, the national economy and, not least of all, the accessibility of health care for millions of Americans. The ruling is now likely to come later this week. The law includes a vast expansion of Medicaid, the state-run, federally funded insurance program for the poor and includes a mandate for most Americans to purchase private health insurance, among many, many other provisions. It’s that “individual mandate” that is drawing the most judicial scrutiny, and which has been criticized most by Republicans — even though it originated years ago as a Republican policy proposal. Branstad said he believed the law “violates the Constitution” and will result in higher taxes, rising health care costs and onerous regulations for medical providers and businesses. No matter what the court does, Branstad argued, the law or any remnants of it must be “repealed and replaced” by the new Congress that convenes next year. In response, the Iowa Alliance for Retired Americans issued a statement Monday defending the Affordable Care Act and disputing Branstad’s characterization of it. “Governor Branstad is either mistaken or intentionally misleading Iowans about the health care law,” Don Rowen, the group’s state president, said in the statement. “Thousands of Iowa seniors have saved millions on prescription drugs and benefited from free preventive services because of Obamacare.” Rowen pointed specifically to provisions in the law providing additional aid for seniors to purchase prescription drugs. That measure has saved Iowans $65 million since its enactment, he said, and an average of almost $600 per person so far this year. Branstad’s comments also seem to contradict comments made several years ago regarding a mandate for the purchase of health insurance. In a 2007 interview on the Iowa Public Television program “Iowa Journal,” Branstad, then president of Des Moines University, indicated support for a mandate by comparing it to requirements for the purchase of auto insurance. “That’s the same sort of thing I think we need to do on the health insurance side,” Branstad said, according to the IPTV transcript. Branstad went on to say that health care reforms, presumably including insurance mandates, should be undertaken at the state level, rather than by the federal government. But he did not call federal action to require the purchase of insurance unconstitutional. Rather, he suggested individual states could implement reform more quickly. If enough states advanced individual mandates of their own, he added, perhaps the federal government could be convinced to carry out the same policy nationwide.

#### Obamacare taxing government and American families

Texas Insider Report July 13, 2012 Obamacare a Massive Tax on Hard-Working Families House Votes to Repeal Obamacare http://www.texasinsider.org/?p=64969

WASHINGTON, D.C. – “Obamacare is bad for health care because it places Washington bureaucrats in charge of your health care by creating 159 boards, bureaucracies, and other government entities to make decisions that should be made by you and your doctor,” said Cong. Francisco “Quico” Canseco (TX-23), a former small business owner and strong advocate for repealing Obamacare, after the House of Representatives passed the Repeal of Obamacare Act (H.R. 6079). “While the recent U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling affirmed the constitutionality of the law, it’s important to remember that it did not affirm that it’s good for the health care of Americans or our economy. “Obamacare endangers your ability to access health care, as placing Washington in control could lead to a massive exodus of physicians who are unable to confront the overwhelming burdens of the law. In other words, under Obamacare, you might have proper health care coverage but be unable to see a physician,” said Canseco. “Obamacare is also a massive burden on our economy. The 2,700 pages of Obamacare are filled with new taxes, new mandates, and other burdens that are leaving businesses wondering how they’ll bear the burdens associated with this law. I’ve met with numerous small business owners across the 23rd District of Texas, and overwhelmingly I’ve heard how Obamacare has left them unable to hire new employees because they have no idea what their health care costs will be to comply with the law.” “Furthermore, Obamacare represents a massive tax burden on hard-working American families. Even before the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling, the American people knew that Obamacare contained over half a trillion in tax increases, saddling American families with more taxes – including the families making less than $250,000 that President Obama promised would not have their taxes raised. “Now that the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled the individual mandate is a tax – a claim rejected by President Obama while the law was being passed by Congress but advanced by his administration in defending the law in court – Obamacare’s already large tax burden upon American families will only get larger. Additionally, senior citizens who rely on Medicare will be negatively impacted by Obamacare due to the half a trillion in cuts in Medicare included within the law to pay for other provisions.” “Clearly, we need to reform health care in America, but Obamacare is not the solution. “Obamacare is bad for our health care, bad for our economy, and bad for American families. In fact, as long as Obamacare remains in place, it prevents us from truly addressing the concerns that the American people have with health care, which is its affordability and accessibility. “As I’ve traveled throughout my district the past year and a half, I’ve heard time and time again from families, seniors, and small business owners about the need to repeal Obamacare. “I’m proud one of my first votes in the House of Representatives was to repeal this law completely, and I’m proud to have supported the complete repeal of Obamacare again today,” concluded Congressman Canseco.

#### Obamacare destroys already stressed tax code

Howard Gleckman 6/28/2012 Obamacare Ruling May Be Bad News For Stressed Tax Code http://www.forbes.com/sites/beltway/2012/06/28/obamacare-ruling-may-be-bad-news-for-stressed-tax-code/

In its long-awaited decision on the Affordable Care Act, the Supreme Court has ruled that Congress can require people to either have health insurance or pay a tax if they don’t. Because the High Court found that the penalty for not having coverage is a tax and not a fee or a banana, it ruled Congress has the constitutional authority to impose such a levy. In effect, the 5-4 decision written by Chief Justice Roberts concluded that Congress can tax you for failing to acquire insurance. Thus, the mandate as created by the ACA is constitutional. But the Court rejected the White House’s main legal argument—that Congress has the authority under the Commerce Clause to require people to get insurance. It will be interesting to see how legal scholars read this in the coming weeks: Is the Court saying that tax policy is the only tool Congress has to enact certain social welfare programs? If so, it would put an already-stressed tax code under even greater pressure. The 5-4 decision is very complex. With dissents and concurring opinions, it runs 193 pages. Chief Justice Roberts joined Justices Ginsburg, Breyer, Sotomayor, and Kagan to uphold the ACA. Four justices—Thomas, Scalia, Alito, and Kennedy—concluded that the entire ACA is unconstitutional. Oddly, while the Court ruled the no-insurance penalty is a tax for the purpose of determining its constitutionality, it also said that it not a tax for other purposes. A law called the Anti-Injunction Act says that no one can sue to stop the collection of a tax until after they have paid it. And some argued that the ACA was not ripe for legal review since no one has yet paid the fee. But the Court concluded that, since Congress never called the penalty a tax, the law it not subject to the anti-injunction law. The ACA includes a number of tax provisions—only a few of which are related to insurance reform. Among them: The tax on those who don’t have health insurance. The key to the individual mandate, this provision would penalize those who do not have insurance starting in 2014. The penalty begins at $95 and phases up to a maximum of $695 or 2.5 percent of income by 2016. Subsidies for buyers. These subsidies are aimed at helping low-income households purchase individual insurance through the health exchanges created by the law. The subsidies are effectively refundable tax credits managed by the Internal Revenue Service. Small business tax credits. These subsidies, initially up to 35 percent of an employer’s premium contribution, are already in effect. The subsidy gradually phases out as the firm’s average wage and the number of its employees increase. Medicare payroll tax. Starting in 2013, the ACA raises the Medicare Part A payroll tax by 0.9 percent for those making $200,000 or more (couples making $250,000). Taxes on unearned income. The law also imposes a new 3.8 percent tax on investment income and other unearned income for wealthy households, also starting in 2013. Increasing the threshold for itemized medical expenses. Today, taxpayers can deduct medical expenses that exceed 7.5 percent of adjusted gross income. The ACA raises that threshold to 10 percent beginning next year. Taxing high-value employer-sponsored health plans. Technically imposed on insurers, the law sets an excise tax on individual coverage that exceeds $10,200 or family coverage of more than $27,500. The levy, effective beginning in 2018, is equal to 40 percent of the premiums that exceed these thresholds. Because it is indexed by the rate of the consumer price index (which rises more slowly than medical costs), the tax will gradually apply to less generous policies. Other revenue raisers. The law includes a number of other minor taxes intended to help pay for the health coverage expansion. These include new penalties on Health Savings Accounts, limits on Flexible Savings Accounts, and an excise tax on indoor tanning salons. The Court upheld all of these taxes with the rest of the law (except for a requirement that states expand their Medicaid coverage for the working poor). The political fate of the ACA remains to be seen, of course. But the Supreme Court has at least settled the dispute over whether it is constitutional.

### Economy

#### Obama’s reelection guarantees regulators go wild- crushes US economic competitiveness

Hutchinson 5/8 (Martin, Global Investor Strategist, “Obamanomics: What to Expect if President Obama Wins the Election”, Money Morning, online, 2012)

From the U.S. economy's point of view, the most worrying feature of President Obama's re-election is the free rein it will give to the regulators. With a full set of regulators in place, and President Obama not facing re-election, the more damaging regulatory schemes will have a full four years to be implemented. Possible hazards include a shut-down of fracking, tight regulation of carbon emissions that will force increased use of uneconomic green technologies, further detailed restrictions on non-discriminatory hiring that would prevent employers from taking criminal records and past employment history into account, and tightly-directed bank lending rules restricting availability of capital for small business. The precise nature of regulatory restrictions in 2013-17 is unknown, but their general direction and seriousness is certain. There is some evidence that the entire decline in U.S. productivity growth after 1973 is due to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other regulators around 1970. Enthusiastic regulators given full rein could well cripple U.S. competitiveness for decades to come.

### Middle East War

#### Obama reelection causes Israel to attack Iran

Roy Tov 7/19 (Israeli Politics Expert and Blogger of The Cross of Bethlehem, “If Obama Wins, Will Israel Attack Iran?”, online, 2012)

Following the American presidential election in November, Israel will face a tough period. In December, the NPT Conference on the Middle East will take place; Israel’s aggressive nuclear program will be its main topic. This may force Israel to risk an attack on Iran, especially if Obama—who is openly considered an unfriendly president in Israel—wins (see West and Iran Step Closer to Agreement; Israel Worried). The only chance Israel has to win such a war is by utterly destroying the decision making bodies of the Iranian regime. The Islamic Consultative Assembly, the Guardian Council, the Presidency, the Supreme Leader institution, the military headquarters; all must be gone so that no one would be able to block Hormuz or order the bombing of Tel Aviv. These institutions are in Tehran. These relatively few and concentrated targets would become the target not of Israeli Air Force planes, but of Jericho-style missiles. It must be missiles, because the long fly time of planes would give the Iranian regime a much better chance of making defensive steps.

More evidence- Israel is past due for attacking Iran

Fox Nation 7/6 (“Krauthammer: Israel Will Attack Iran Before Election if They Think Obama Will Win”, online, 2012)

On Friday’s 'Special Report,' Charles Krauthammer warned that Americans should expect Israel to attack Iran if President Barack Obama’s re-election appears likely.¶ Krauthammer explained that there could be a punitive response from the Obama administration, which would be less likely before he is re-elected.¶ “If they think Obama will win reelection I think it’s likely they will attack before, because afterwards there is no way to tell how Obama would punish Israel and they would be vulnerable to sanctions and other measure of the United States,” he said.¶ Krauthammer reminded viewers of the time frame advanced by Defense Secretary Leon Panetta earlier this year, and explained how that is a sign that “the clock is running.”¶ “The window is between now — remember, the Secretary of Defense said earlier in year that Israel would have attacked by now, attack in April, May, June,” he continued.¶ “The clock is running. They are simply waiting to make sure that the sham negotiations are declared over, rather than put on life support — to say all options have been tried and now we have to defend ourselves.”¶

## Romney Good

### Porn

#### **Romney is the only presidential candidate who will crackdown on porn**

[http://www.**huffingtonpost**.com/2012/07/19/mitt-romney-aide promises\_n\_1687210.html?utm\_hp\_ref=elections-](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/19/mitt-romney-aide%20promises_n_1687210.html?utm_hp_ref=elections-),07/19/20**12 ^\_^**

 Mitt Romney Aide Promises Crackdown On Porn, JJM¶ Republican Mitt **Romney** insists his No. 1 job is fixing the economy but a former Reagan administration anti-porn prosecutor says the candidate's campaign has assured him that he **also will "vigorously" crack down on pornographers if he is elected president**.¶ Patrick Trueman, a former head of the Justice Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section and now the head of Morality in Media, told the conservative Daily Caller that he was quietly promised **that fighting porn will be a top priority in a Romney White House**.¶ Trueman said he and another anti-porn prosecutor from the 1980s Justice Department, Bob Flores, met earlier this year with Alex Wong, Romney's foreign and legal policy director..¶ “Wong assured us that Romney is very concerned with this, and that if he’s elected these laws will be enforced,” Trueman told the website. ”They promised to vigorously enforce federal adult obscenity laws.”¶ Around the time Trueman says he received those assurances, Romney signed Morality in Media's anti-porn pledge along with Newt Gingrich and Rick Santorum, whom he was still battling for the GOP nomination. Since then, he hasn't mentioned the issue very often**.¶ Romney** **seemed to say the right words** for Trueman in 2007, when he was campaigning for president in Iowa the last time**. "We got to clean up the water that our kids are swimming in**," he said in a TV ad. **"And by that I mean the pornography, the drug culture, the violence, the sex, the perversion that bombards them day in and day out. So I want to make sure we enforce our obscenity laws."¶ Romney has promised that if elected president he would require every new computer be sold with a porn filter.**

### Abortion

#### Romney supports Pro-Life

 SHERYL GAY **STOLBERG**, Journalist for the new York times, February 11, 20**12**, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/12/us/politics/romneys-path-to-pro-life-position-on-abortion.html?pagewanted=all>, JJM ^\_^

 In 2005, Governor **Romney** shocked constituents by writing an opinion article in The Boston Globe that **declared: “I am pro-life**.” Running for president two years later, he struggled to explain that turnabout. “I never said I was pro-choice, but my position was effectively pro-choice,” Mr. Romney told George Stephanopoulos of ABC during a Republican debate. “I changed my position.”¶ Now, with the nation’s culture wars erupting anew, Mr. Romney has plunged headlong into abortion politics.¶ He tangled with President Obama last week over whether religiously affiliated hospitals should be required to provide free contraceptives — “abortive pills,” Mr. Romney called them. And when a breast cancer group pulled its financing from Planned Parenthood, **Mr. Romney called on the federal government to follow suit, saying, “The idea that we’re subsidizing an institution that provides abortion, in my view, is wrong**.”¶ The comments reflect Mr. Romney’s evolution from abortion rights advocate to abortion foe; gone was any trace of the candidate for governor who, 10 years ago, answered a Planned Parenthood questionnaire by saying he backed “state funding of abortion services” under Medicaid.¶ Today Mr**. Romney is** working hard to convince his party’s skeptical right wing that he is “**adamantly pro-life,**” especially in the wake of his embarrassing loss in three states last week to Rick Santorum, a former senator from Pennsylvania and a stalwart of the anti-abortion movement. Yet the more Mr. Romney courts social conservatives, the more two of his Republican rivals, Mr. Santorum and Newt Gingrich, dredge up his past to attack him as a flip-flopper.

### Traditional Marriage

#### **Romney is the only presidential candidate defending traditional marriage.**

<http://www.mittromney.com/issues/values>, no date, Issues: Marriage, JJM ^\_^

The values that Mitt Romney learned in his home have enriched his life immeasurably. With his parents’ example before him, he married, had five sons, and now basks in the joy of eighteen grandchildren.¶ Marriage is more than a personally rewarding social custom. It is also critical for the well-being of a civilization. That is why it is so important to preserve traditional marriage – the joining together of one man and one woman. As president, Mitt will not only appoint an Attorney General who will defend the Defense of Marriage Act – a bipartisan law passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton – but he will also champion a Federal Marriage Amendment to the Constitution defining marriage as between one man and one woman.

### Affordable Care Act

#### **Romney the only way to repeal Obamacare**

By [**http://www.newsmax.com**/Politics/obamacare-health-romneyobama-hatch/2012/07/10/id/444863](http://www.newsmax.com/Politics/obamacare-health-romneyobama-hatch/2012/07/10/id/444863), Tuesday, 10 Jul 20**12**, JJM ^\_^

Sen. Orrin Hatch said Monday **there’s no chance of Republicans succeeding in repealing Obamacare,** despite a vote Wednesday in the House that will likely win approval but go nowhere in the Democratic-controlled Senate**. The only way to get rid of** what he called “**this awful healthcare bill” is for the country to elect Mitt Romney** in November.¶ “I believe the way that has to happen is for Mitt Romney to get elected president, and I think bringing in enough Republicans to take over control of the Senate,” the Utah Republican told Fox News’ Greta Van Susteren Monday. “At that point I would be chairman of the Finance Committee. And, of course, one of my biggest goals would be to straighten this whole mess out.”¶ Hatch, who in the past has been talked about as a possible Supreme Court nominee, said he agreed with the court’s decision **that the federal government cannot force the states to expand their Medicaid programs.¶ The ruling allows states to “opt out” of that provision of Obamacare without fear of losing current funding levels**. So far, at least six Republican governors have said they have no plans to expand the program.¶ “If I had my way, I would have held the individual mandate unconstitutional, but I would have certainly said you can’t force the states to take more and more Medicaid recipients . . . when they know that the monies aren’t going to be there in the future,” Hatch said, referring to the fact that Congress has yet to sign off on funding for the expansion.¶ Hatch also disputed President Barack Obama’s claim on Monday that he has presided over a number of tax cuts since he became president.¶ “Anybody who believes that hasn’t looked at the record,” Hatch said, noting that **Obamacare increases taxes by $500 billion alone**.¶ “**Their whole goal is to get more money so they can spend more money and claim they're doing a lot of good for the American people as they run us into bankruptcy**,” he said.

### Africa

#### **Mitt Romney is the only candidate to solve Africa’s economic and security Problems.**

http://www.**mittromney.com**/issues/africa**, no date**, Mitt’s Plan, JJM^\_^

**The United States must regard Africa not as a problem to be contained, but as an opportunity to be embraced by us and our partners on the continent.** Recognizing that Africa’s road to stability and prosperity lies through a robust private sector economy, increased trade, and good governance, a **Romney administration will encourage and assist African nations to adopt policies that create business-friendly environments and combat governmental corruption. Such policies will lift those nations and their people, boost economic ties to the United States**, and provide greater certainty to U.S. and international investors. Greater market access across the continent for U.S. businesses will bolster job creation in Africa as well as in the United States. **Mitt Romney will also provide the leadership required to help resolve Africa’s long-running conflicts, pressure the remaining despots who abuse their own people, and weaken terrorist groups that threaten U.S. interests** and those of our partners. He will pursue strong cooperative military and diplomatic relationships to ensure security interests on the continent and in the seafaring trade routes off its shores. These relationships will help strengthen the capacity of African nations and regional organizations to foster stability, engage in peacekeeping, and confront terror**.¶ Mitt Romney will lead on the issue of Sudan’s ongoing atrocities. He recognizes that far too many Sudanese for far too long far have been the victims of war crimes and other atrocities committed by the government in Khartoum and its proxies**. Continuing a history of violence and genocide, Khartoum has committed a range of atrocities in border regions since the independence of the Republic of South Sudan. It has incited and armed rebel groups with the apparent objective of undermining the new country. It has stolen hundreds of millions of dollars in oil, which is Sudan’s chief source of income. In both Darfur and in the border areas, Khartoum has too often been an impediment to the flow of humanitarian assistance. **Governor Romney is committed to protecting innocents from war crimes and other atrocities, ensuring that humanitarian aid reaches those desperately in need, holding accountable those leaders who perpetrate atrocities, and achieving a sustainable peace for all who live in Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan**¶

### Education

#### **Only Mitt Romney can solve education.**

[http://www.mitt**romney**.com/issues/education](http://www.mittromney.com/issues/education), **no date**, issues education, JJM ^\_^

Mitt Romney believes that the long-term strategy for getting America’s economy back on track is ensuring a world class education for American students. Global competitiveness begins in the classroom. In order to achieve this goal, students must have the skills to succeed in the workforce, ensuring that the promise of opportunity in this country remains strong.¶ As governor of Massachusetts, Mitt saw what states can do with a culture of high expectations, accountability for results, and increased parental choice. Massachusetts was the first state to achieve this goal and has remained the nation’s educational lead. During the third year of his term, the state’s fourth and eighth grade students ranked first in the nation in both reading and math er to this day. Mitt’s experience in Massachusetts reinforced the importance of innovating and duplicating, taking the best ideas from states that are succeeding and replicating them across the country.¶ Mitt also expanded access to high-quality public charter schools. When the 85% Democratic legislature passed a bill putting a moratorium on any new charter, Mitt vetoed the bill. He believes that no parent should be forced to send their child to a failing school and that increased choice translates into better outcomes for all students. He also realizes that teacher quality is integral to student success. States should recruit the best and brightest into the classroom and reward them for a job well done.¶ During his time in Massachusetts, Mitt promoted access to higher education for students. He proposed the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship, providing a four-year tuition-free scholarship to any state institution for any Massachusetts students that scored among the top 25 percent in their school. Mitt also defended the requirement that high school students pass a rigorous test to graduate and saw students and educators respond to heightened accountability with dramatically improved performance.¶ Part of an opportunity society is rewarding hard work and success. Mitt believes education is a key to the American dream, and students must be encouraged to pursue that dream and work hard to achieve it. Post-secondary education cannot become a luxury for the few; instead, all students should have the opportunity to attend a college that best suits their needs. Whether it is public or private, traditional or online, college must be available and affordable.¶ Improving education in America is a priority for Mitt. He knows what can be accomplished when governors are empowered to reform their education systems, when education entrepreneurs are given the freedom to innovate, when teachers are rewarded for boosting student achievement, and when students are empowered to select a school or education program that meets their needs. Americans have long been known for their creativity, ingenuity, and bold vision for our country, and this attitude must apply to our education system.

### US-Russia Relations

#### **Only Mitt Romney can solve US – Russia relations**

[http://www**.mittromney.com**/issues/russia](http://www.mittromney.com/issues/russia)**, No Date**, Russia: An American Century, JJM ^\_^

President Obama famously sought to “reset” U.S. relations with Russia. The ambiguity of that term cannot mask that the Obama administration has failed to move Russia toward a more beneficial working relationship with the United States and our allies. President Obama began his reset policy by withdrawing, without reciprocal concessions, from President Bush’s plan to place a missile-defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic, a move Russia strongly desired. He continued the same “we give, Russia gets” policy by signing the New START treaty in 2010. While the agreement compels the U.S. to reduce our nuclear launcher and warhead limits, the levels it sets for Russia are above what the Russians possessed at the time the agreement was reached. In other words, New START gave Russia room to expand its arsenal while requiring the United States to reduce our own. In any event, even if we put aside the demerits of the treaty, it was a squandered opportunity to extract concessions from the Russians that would have advanced our interests. Thus, President Obama failed to press for meaningful reductions not only in Russia’s strategic nuclear arsenal, but also in its extensive tactical nuclear force. And he failed to elicit Russian help in dealing with North Korean and Iranian nuclear ambitions. Mitt Romney will review the implementation of the New START treaty and other decisions by the Obama administration regarding America's nuclear posture and arms-control policies to determine whether they serve the best interests and national security of the United States.¶ Mitt Romney will pursue policies that work to decrease the reliance of European nations on Russian sources of energy. He will explore increasing technical assistance to the Eastern European nations currently developing the Turkey-to-Austria Nabucco natural gas pipeline, which will supply Europe with a cheaper source of energy and options apart from Russian oil and gas. A Romney administration will also work with the private sector to spur access to untapped shale energy resources in Western Europe.¶ A Romney administration will build stronger relationships with the states of Central Asia by enhancing diplomatic ties, increasing military training and assistance, and negotiating trade pacts and educational exchanges.¶ A Russian government that respects the civil and political rights of its people and that is truly representative of their wishes will be a more productive participant in an international system based on liberal trade and political values. Deepening authoritarianism and centralized control of the economy serves only to impede Russia’s economic development and turn the country into a more menacing presence on the world stage. A Romney administration will be forthright in confronting the Russian government over its authoritarian practices. Mitt Romney will support measures to increase the flow of information into Russia that highlights the virtues of free elections, free speech, economic opportunity, and a government free of corruption. A useful additional step would be to bring more leaders of Russian civil society organizations to the United States on exchanges programs, which would raise their profile and empower them with ideas that can be shared with their fellow Russians upon their return.

### Energy Independence

#### **Mitt Romney solves energy independence and climate change if elected**

[http:/**/aboutmittromney.com**/environment.htm](http://aboutmittromney.com/environment.htm), Mitt Romney, Feb 23, 20**07,** Main Platform, JJM ^\_^

“I adopt what I call no regrets policies. Policies that will allow us to become energy independent and will have as one of their by-products, reduction of the CO2 that we emit, the greenhouse gases that we emit. So let me tell you the kinds of things that I'd like to do.¶ “With regards to our developing more energy, I want to see us use more of our renewable resources: bio-diesel, bio-fuel, ethanol, cellulosic ethanol. I want to see us developing liquefied coal if we can sequester the CO2 properly. I want to see nuclear power. I want to see us develop our own oil off-shore, and in Anwar. Let's develop all the sources we can to provide for our own energy needs and free ourselves of independence on Ahmadinejad, and Chavez and Putin and others that have that oil today.¶ “Just put that in context. We spent about $430 billion last year in our defense budget. That doesn't account for the Iraq war... Russia last year sold about $500 billion worth of oil. It's a huge strategic imperative for us to become energy independent, and not to be putting money in the hands of people who don't like us that much.¶ “On the other side of the equation, in addition to developing our energy, we have to be more efficient in our use of it. And that means more fuel efficient vehicles. It means more energy efficient homes. The combination of more efficiency and the generation of more domestic-sourced energy will allow us to become energy independent. And we do need an Apollo type project. A Manhattan style project where we put in place the funding necessary to seriously get on track to becoming truly energy independent. And that has as the benefit, of reducing our emissions of CO2.”

### Hegemony

#### **If elected, Romney will solve heg.**

STEVE **PEOPLES**, Writer Associated Press, Mon, May 28, 20**12**, <http://news.yahoo.com/romney-promises-worlds-strongest-military-190812834.html>, JJM ^\_^

Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney is promising to maintain an American military "with no comparable power anywhere in the world."¶ The presumptive Republican presidential nominee faced a San Diego crowd estimated at 5,000 on Monday in what was billed as a Memorial Day service, not a campaign rally. But he drew clear contrasts with President Barack Obama.¶ Romney is warning against shrinking America's military in Europe's image. He says America must have the world's strongest military to win wars and to prevent them.¶ Romney was joined by Arizona Sen. John McCain, a Vietnam veteran who says Romney is "fully qualified" to be the nation's commander in chief.¶ Obama paid tribute to veterans in the Washington area Monday.¶ A new Gallup poll shows veterans prefer Romney over the president.

### Iran Proliferation

#### **Obama scraped Iranian missile defense system. Only electing Romney solves Iranian Prolif.**

[http://www.**mittromney.com**/issues/iran](http://www.mittromney.com/issues/iran)**, no date,** Issues: Iran, JJM ^\_^

The United States and our European and Middle Eastern allies have a vital interest in establishing a fully operational and effective missile defense system in Eastern Europe to create a protective umbrella against Iranian nuclear weapons. Under pressure from Russia, President Obama early in his term scrapped President Bush’s plan to deploy ground-based interceptors in Poland and a radar system in the Czech Republic. He instead favored a plan that featured a longer development timeline based upon technologies that have not yet been developed. He has since partially reversed course to reassure our allies who were alarmed by his abrupt about-face and subsequently clarified that his new program will also feature interceptors in Poland along with interceptors in Romania and a radar system in Turkey, all to be built in stages through 2020. As president, Mitt Romney is willing to commit to deploying missile defenses in Europe along that timeline, but he will do so with the following two qualifications.¶ First, Mitt would reserve the option of reverting to President Bush's original plan of deploying proven interceptor technology in Poland if it becomes clear that Iran is making faster progress on developing long range missiles than the Obama plan assumes or if the new technologies on which the plan relies fail to materialize in a timely fashion. If Iran is going to deploy intercontinental missiles sooner than 2020, the United States should retain the option of defending against them.¶ Second, Mitt would make clear that while he is willing to cooperate with Russia on missile defense in ways that will enhance the overall effectiveness of the missile-defense system, he will not compromise the capability of the system or yield operational control of it. Russia must abandon any backdoor scheme to constrain our missile defenses. The United States should never give Russia a veto over our security and that of our allies.

## Romney Bad

### Military Budget

#### Pentagon wants to save money, Romney says no

Max, **Rosenthal**. Huffington Post staff writer, **7/19/2012**, “Mitt Romney: 'I Will Not Cut The Military Budget’”. The Huffington Post. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/19/mitt-romney-military-budget_n_1687601.html> (added by JA)

In a week when defense industry leaders gathered in Washington to sound the alarm about potential cuts to defense spending, **Mitt Romney pledged his support for a "military that's second to none" and vowed not to slash the Pentagon's funds."I will not cut the military budget," he told the American Legion**, which published excerpts on Thursday from an interview with **the presumptive Republican nominee**. "I **will** instead **expand** our essential **weapons programs** **and** our **[number of]** active-duty **personnel**. I do these things not so that we have to fight wars, but so that we can prevent wars." Romney is a longtime critic of cutting the defense budget, arguing that shrinking the numbers of ground troops, planes and ships will damage national security. While **the Pentagon has proposed $487 billion in budget cuts over the next decade, Romney has suggested increasing the military's budget by as much as $2 trillion during the same period**, according to some estimates. Last week, Romney surrogates also made the case that defense cuts will eliminate many jobs, with Rep. Randy Forbes (R-Va.) saying that President Obama will be responsible for "a huge box of pink slips" if the Pentagon budget keeps being reduced. According to the American Legion, the full interview with Romney will appear in the group's magazine in October.

### Economy

#### Romney victory crushes the economy

Hutchinson 5/9 (Martin, Global Investing Strategist, “Romneyomics: What Can You Expect if Romney Wins the Election”, Money Morning, online, 2012)

On monetary policy, it's not clear where Romney will come out. He will not re-appoint Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke in January 2014; the man is too unpopular with the Republican base.¶ However, he is likely to appoint some compromise figure such as John Taylor (inventor of the Taylor Rule for setting interest rates) or former Fed governor Kevin Warsh. They will tighten monetary policy, but very slowly and cautiously, much as Alan Greenspan did in 2004-06.¶ That will bring modestly higher interest rates, but will not do much to quell the accelerating inflation that is already "baked into the cake."¶ However, even gradually rising interest rates will almost certainly cause turmoil on Wall Street, where many of the banks and the whole $300 billion agency mortgage REIT industry -- think Annaly Capital Management (NYSE: NLY) and American Capital Agency (Nasdaq: AGNC) -- will find the rising interest rates destroy their business models and will thus collapse.¶ For us as investors, a Romney presidency should probably make us look at oil companies exploring in and offshore the U.S., and at pharmaceutical companies. However, the financial sector and the stock market in general are likely to suffer as higher interest rates kick in.¶ Overall, in 2017 the government will still be bigger than it was in 2009, though not as big as it would be under four more years of President Obama. Taxes will also be higher than today.¶ In short, it won't be smooth sailing. In fact, the financial crash of 2014 or 2015 will be extremely painful, as will the subsequent recession.

### Affordable Care Act

#### Romney pledges to repeal Affordable Care Act

Mitt, **Romney**. Former governor of Massachusetts, Republican presidential candidate, **July 10, 2012**, “Mitt Romney: Repeal Obamacare to Make Way for Real Healthcare Reform”. US News. <http://www.usnews.com/debate-club/should-congress-repeal-the-affordable-care-act/mitt-romney-repeal-obamacare-to-make-way-for-real-healthcare-reform> (added by JA)

Summarizing the failures of President Barack **Obama's** 2,700-page **healthcare bill** in 400 words is no simple task. But here are some of the reasons why it is fatally flawed—and why it **must be repealed**. For starters, the law is driving up costs. President Obama promised to reduce annual premiums by $2,500 per family, but those premiums have actually risen by $2,393, and Obamacare is expected to force them even higher. Those costs don't even tell the whole story. There is a much bigger price tag—and that's what Obamacare is doing to our economy. The law is fiscally reckless and will only add to our nearly $16 trillion in debt. Worse still, it fails to address the long-term drivers of our debt crisis: the rapidly spiraling costs generated by entitlement programs like Medicare and Medicaid. The law is also undermining our economic recovery. Its complexity is causing tremendous uncertainty, and in the coming years, it will raise more than $500 billion in taxes. That's a toxic combination that harms investment and job creation. In fact, in one recent survey, 75 percent of small businesses said Obamacare is making it harder for them to hire. As if Obamacare's fiscal flaws aren't enough, the president has also broken his promise that "if you have insurance that you like, then you will be able to keep that insurance." Instead, his law will force millions of Americans, including seniors, to lose the insurance coverage they have. And Obamacare puts the federal government between patients and their physicians—and empowers bureaucrats to make our healthcare decisions. Take the "Independent Payment Advisory Board" as an example. Through it, 15 unelected bureaucrats will effectively be placed in charge of Medicare—able to make cuts without consent from Congress or those who have paid into the system and rely upon it for their medical care. Everyone agrees that our healthcare system faces significant challenges. The cost of coverage is too high and access to care is too low. But **Obamacare** **does not solve** those **problems**; it will only make them worse. **The law must be repealed so that real reform**—carried out in a transparent manner, consistent with the priorities of the American people, and capable of solving our healthcare challenges—**can finally begin**.

#### Romney will repeal Obamacare

Klein 6/20 (Ezra, Blogger for the Washington Post, “If Romney Wins, He Can Repeal Health Reform, and Should”, The Washington Post Wonkblog, online, 2012)

You catch that? I will “act to repeal Obamacare” is not the same as “I will repeal Obamacare.” Nevertheless, if Romney has a Congress willing to act with him, he can do quite a lot, quite quickly.¶ Romney won’t have 60 votes in the Senate. But if he has 51, he can use the budget reconciliation process, which is filibuster-proof, to get rid of the law’s spending. One objection to that is that budget reconciliation is supposed to be used for laws that reduce the deficit, and the Congressional Budget Office would score repeal of the Affordable Care Act as increasing the deficit by about $300 billion.¶ But so what? This is a rule Republicans have already shown themselves perfectly willing to break. The Bush administration passed both rounds of its deficit-busting tax cuts through reconciliation, using the novel interpretation that the reconciliation process simply prohibited laws from increasing the deficit after the first 10 years — that’s why Bush’s tax cuts had a sunset date of 2010.¶ When Democrats returned to power in 2006, they reasserted that reconciliation had to be used for real deficit reduction — a move, by the way, that they got no credit for, and that served to make their life harder over the next few years — but nothing about their decision is permanent. Republicans can, and likely will, reverse it in order to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

#### Romney uses his first 100 days to end Obamacare

O’Brien 6/29 (Michael, Political Analyst for MSNBC.com, “Mission Impossible: Romney’s Ambitious First Term Agenda”, online, 2012)

Presidents often enjoy a “honeymoon” in which they’re able to advance a major element of their platform. Bush got education reform and his signature tax cuts; Obama got his stimulus bill.¶ And that’s to assume, the Republicans maintain control of the House and take over the Senate – in which case, prospective Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) would be tasked with convincing a non-trivial number of Democrats to join the GOP in advancing Romney’s agenda.¶ Romney could seek the repeal of health care as his first priority, something he might accomplish by using the process of budget reconciliation. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) suggested Friday on “Morning Joe” that Republicans could use this tactic, which allows the Senate to approve legislation with a simple majority of votes, to gut the heart of Obama’s law.

### Indefinite Detention Bill

#### Romney ‘would have signed’ indefinite detention bill

Kurt, **Nimmo**. Staff writer for Infowars, January 17 2012, “Romney Would Sign NDAA”. Infowars.

<http://www.infowars.com/romney-would-sign-ndaa/> (JA)

During the latest “debate” in South Carolina, **Mitt Romney said that if he were president he would sign the National Defense Authorization Act**. Prior to his recent assertion that it is perfectly normal to dispense with the Fourth Amendment and suspend habeas corpus, Romney said he wasn’t up to speed on the law and promised to post an analysis on his website, which he never did. **Romney said you don’t have the “right to join a group that has challenged America”** and then mentioned al-Qaeda, the terror group that the FBI admits poses little threat to the nation. The NDAA, however, is not about indefinitely detaining Muslim cave dwellers. It’s about disappearing American citizens who oppose the bankster cartel now in control of the government.

**The law is a “violent and sudden usurpation” of the Constitution** of the sort James Madison warned about. The founders considered habeas corpus the most fundamental of rights because it insured that the executive branch could not hold people without cause. It was so important the founders included it in Article 1, Section 9, Clause 2 of the Constitution. In the years after Truman’s warning**, the government slowly chipped away at the Fourth Amendment and habeas corpus as it passed the McCartney-Walter Act, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, the Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act** (following the Oklahoma false flag)**, the Patriot Act** (following the 9/11 false flag), **and has finally repealed the cornerstone of the Bill of Rights with the passage of the NDAA.**

As Sherwood Ross notes, **with the passage of the NDAA, we have returned “to the disgraceful** Korematsu **Era, when President Roosevelt ordered the military to round up law-abiding Japanese-American citizens and stick them in concentration camps** for the duration of World War II.”

World War II, however, had an end, whereas the bogus war on terrorism is designed to last forever, as our leaders have stated on a number of occasions. **Romney has no opinion on the Constitution, Magna Carta, and centuries of common law**. He is an empty vessel filled up with nonsense produced by the global elite who run the disgusting dog and pony shows that now pass as elections in the United States.

The ruling elite behind the curtain have worked slowly and methodically to dismantle the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. It stands in the way of their plan to implement world government and a global banking and economic system. **Habeas corpus is a thorn in the side that prevents** them from sending out **the military to disappear those of us opposed to** their plan for **a global totalitarian future now under construction. They now have that power.**

### Deportation

#### Romney victory guarantees the forced deportation of thousands

Cuentame news 12 (“Romney’s Praise for SB 1070 Isn’t a Surprise. Both the Praise and the Law Come From the Same Person”, online, 2012)

If Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach has his way, Mitt Romney’s first term as president will see the largest forced exodus of people from the United States since the mid-1950s. Kobach, an adviser to the Romney campaign on immigration policy, is also the chief legal architect of a long-standing conservative campaign to stop the influx of undocumented immigrants, primarily from Mexico and Central America, who come to America to work .¶ “If we had a true nationwide policy of self-deportation, I believe we would see our illegal alien population cut in half at a minimum very quickly,” Kobach told Salon in a recent intervew. With an estimated 11 million undocumented residents in the country, Kobach is hoping to force 5.5 million people to leave the country by 2016

### Iran

#### Nuclear war with Iran guaranteed if Romney is president

Scott, **Baldauf**. Staff writer, **January 4 2012**, “Bomb Iran? Where Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum stand.” Christian Science Monitor. <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2012/0104/Bomb-Iran-Where-Mitt-Romney-and-Rick-Santorum-stand> (JA)

Republican candidates Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum emerged as the twin frontrunners after the Iowa caucuses on Tuesday, and this is likely to have interesting reverberations for Iran. Why Iran? Because both former Gov. **Romney and** former Sen. **Santorum are hard critics of the Obama administration’s handling of the country** that Romney sees as America’s largest threat. **Both men have said they would bomb Iran if that country developed nuclear weapons. Both believe that Obama’s efforts to negotiate with Iran sends a signal of weakness**. And if one of these men emerges as the Republican candidate to go up against Obama, the Republican party will attempt to play to what it regards as its strength – security and foreign policy – and **the rhetoric against Iran is only likely to grow sharper**. (Editor's note: An earlier version of this story misstated that Iran had a declared nuclear weapons program.) Obama’s approach to Iran, of course, is shaped by his campaign promise to abandon the unilateralism of the Bush administration, and to work closely with America’s allies to deal with mutual threats, using methods short of war. While the US took the lead in dealing with supposed threats in Iraq – launching the war promising to go after Saddam Hussein’s alleged “weapons of mass destruction” – **Europe has taken the lead in dealing with Iran through “critical dialogue” and reminding Iran of its promises to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.** Most of **the Republican candidates portray this** carrot-and-stick approach **as weakness, and call for military options.** To be sure, Texas Rep. Ron Paul's strong third place showing in Iowa showed there is some diversity of opinion among GOP voters.The Congressman argues for rolling back US military commitments around the globe and has warned about the costs of starting new conflicts, particularly with Iran. But Paul's views on Iran have prompted strong rebukes from other Republican candidates who hope to also use the issue against Obama. Romney, who officially won the Iowa caucuses with a mere eight votes (with 30,015 votes against Santorum’s 30,007), has long been critical of Obama’s policy toward Iran, but since launching his presidential campaign, he has become a veritable hawk. During the Iowa campaign, **Romney called Obama's efforts against Iran a failure.** "I want to make sure that the people of this nation understand that he failed us not only here at home, he's failed us in dealing with the greatest threat we face, which comes from Iran.” During his first run for the presidency, in 2007, Romney managed to make the bombing of Iran sound like a somewhat middle-of-the road option. “I don’t anticipate that the kind of strategy we would pursue would be a ground-intensive, change-the-regime, change-the-government type of effort. I think it’s more likely that other military actions would be in the nature of blockade or a bombardment or surgical strikes of one kind or another.” More recently, in debates, **he has called on Obama “to impose crippling economic sanctions on the Iranian regime, support the Iranian dissidents, and convey through actions** – not just words – **that the military option is very real and very credible**.” Santorum, by contrast, has been unequivocal: he would bomb Iran to stop the Islamic Republic’s nuclear weapons program. In a lengthy interview on Meet the Press over the weekend, Santorum criticized Obama’s attempt at negotiating with the Iranians, and called for increased covert sabotage, bombings, and even arresting foreign scientists traveling to Iran to assist the Iranian nuclear weapons program, and “treating them like Al Qaeda.” "I would be saying to the Iranians, you either open up those facilities, you begin to dismantle them and, and make them available to inspectors, or we will degrade those facilities through airstrikes and make it very public that we are doing that. **If the intention of all this muscle-flexing was to encourage Iran to step down from its nuclear program, it hasn’t worked**. On Jan. 2, **Tehran announced that it had produced the nation’s first nuclear fuel rod**, a sign that its indigenous **nuclear scientists had the technical capabilities to complete** all **the** steps in the **entire nuclear fuel cycle**. Nuclear fuel rods are composed of pellets of enriched uranium, and are used in nuclear reactors, but some nuclear scientists fret that Iran may be using its peaceful nuclear energy program as a cover for a nuclear weapons program. **Tehran also announced that it had launched a new medium range missile**, during a naval drill in the Persian Gulf. Iran says **the new missile is designed to evade radar.** And if the US hoped that its close relations with some of Iran's regional neighbors might give it the kind of leverage to encourage better behavior from Iran, that door seems to be closed as well. Sumit Ganguly, an expert on Indian foreign policy at the University of Indiana at Bloomington, and member of the Council on Foreign Relations, says that India would likely remain neutral rather than succumb to US pressure and oppose Iran's development of nuclear weapons. India will still avoid taking sides. The inherent caution that seems to characterise Indian foreign policy is most likely to prevail. The Indians will try to have it both ways. We will say **peaceful resolution of this impending crisis is in the interest of all parties**; we enjoin both the United States and Iran to avoid escalation which could contribute to violence. I can virtually write the press communiqué that will emanate from [India's foreign office in] South Block.

### Afghanistan

#### Mitt Romney lacks clear vision for Afghanistan

Ben, **Armbruster**. National Security Editor for ThinkProgress.org, **July 19 2012**, “Romney Adviser Stumped When Asked For Specifics Of Romney’s Afghanistan Policy.” ThinkProgress. <http://thinkprogress.org/security/2012/07/19/547931/romney-adviser-stumped-when-asked-for-specifics-of-romneys-afghanistan-policy/?mobile=nc> (JA)

Amid charges that **Mitt Romney’s Afghanistan policy is**, as Foreign Policy recently put it, “**unclear and confusing**,” Romney campaign adviser Tara Wall on MSNBC this morning could not provide any details on what presumptive GOP presidential nominee plans to do about the war there should he become president. Noting that Romney is about to embark on a short trip abroad later this month, host Luke Russert relayed a recent report that two **top Republican senators couldn’t explain Romney’s Afghanistan policy** and wondered if **he has to be more specific**. At first, Wall appeared confused, eventually saying — and in keeping with the Romney campaign’s reported policy — she didn’t want to “get into the details” and then tried to shift the conversation back to the economy:

RUSSERT: He was asked by the media what Mr. Romney’s Afghanistan policy [is] and he goes, “What is it?” a Romney supporter and senior member of the Armed Services Committee said. “I think [Romney's policy is] ‘listen to the commanders’ and if it’s that, that’s OK with me.” **Does Mitt Romney have** to have **a more specific policy in Afghanistan** prior to going on to this trip?

WALL: Well, you know, look, I think that overall — [pause] — overall, Gov. Romney has been clear about his plans and about this trip and about what his goals are and I think that when you look at protecting and securing the homeland, I think that that is, that’s something that he has articulated over and over again. I’m not going to get into the details of that, I’m here to talk about, again, once again, the job situation, the economy, growth that we need and what this governor is planning on doing in that regard. Perhaps Wall was confused about Romney’s Afghanistan policy because **it is indeed very confusing**. As **the Washington Post** reported late last year, **Romney “has not explained what he thinks the U.S. mission in Afghanistan is at this point and what would constitute success.”**

When Foreign Policy asked Sen. Jon Kyl (R-AZ) last week what he thought Romney’s Afghanistan policy is, the Arizona Republican was equally bemused. “You would have to tell me what exactly you mean by ‘his policy.’ That’s a long discussion that I don’t want to get into,” he said.

### Palestine

#### Romney will abandon Palestinian people

Mitt, **Romney**. Republican candidate for President, **2012**, “Israel.” Mitt Romney 2012. <http://www.mittromney.com/issues/israel> (JA)

**Israel is the United States’ closest ally in the Middle East** and a beacon of democracy and freedom in the region. The tumult in the Middle East has heightened Israel’s security problems. Indeed, this is an especially dangerous moment for the Jewish state. It has deteriorating relationships with Turkey and Egypt. It faces longstanding dangers from Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, a violent and highly unstable Syria, and a nuclear-aspiring Iran whose leadership is openly calling for Israel’s annihilation.

President Obama and his administration have badly misunderstood the dynamics of the region. Instead of fostering stability and security, they have diminished U.S. authority and painted both Israel and ourselves into a corner. President Obama for too long has been in the grip of several illusions. One is that the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is the central problem in the region. This has been disproved repeatedly by events, most recently and most dramatically by the eruption of the Arab Spring. But it nonetheless led the administration to believe that distancing the United States from Israel was a smart move that would earn us credits in the Arab world and somehow bring peace closer. The record proves otherwise. The key to negotiating a lasting peace is an Israel that knows it will be secure.The administration’s errors extend in other directions as well. President **Obama has repeatedly** and unilaterally **created new preconditions for restarting peace talks**. The result has been to encourage Palestinians simply to hold out and wait for Washington to deliver more Israeli concessions on a silver platter. Why, after all, should the Palestinians even negotiate with Israel if the White House is pressuring Israel without extracting any price from the Palestinians in return? To ensure Israel’s security, Mitt **Romney will work closely with Israel to maintain its strategic military edge**. The United States will work intensively with Turkey and Egypt to shore up the now fraying relationships with Israel that have underpinned peace in the Middle East for decades. The **United States must forcefully resist the emergence of anti-Israel policies** in Turkey and Egypt, and work to make clear that their interests are not served by isolating Israel. With regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Mitt’s policy will differ sharply from President Obama’s. As president, Mitt will reject any measure that would frustrate direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. He will make clear to the Palestinians that the unilateral attempt to decide issues that are designated for final negotiations by the Oslo Accords is unacceptable. **The United States will reduce assistance to the Palestinians** if they continue to pursue United Nations recognition or form a unity government that includes Hamas, a terrorist group dedicated to Israel’s destruction. The United States needs a president who will not be a fair-weather friend of Israel. The United States must work as a country to resist the worldwide campaign to delegitimize Israel. We must fight against that campaign in every forum and label it the anti-Semitic poison that it is. Israel’s existence as a Jewish state is not up for debate.

### China

#### Romney will increase US-China tensions

Mitt, **Romney**. Republican candidate for President, **2012**, “China.” Mitt Romney 2012. http://www.mittromney.com/issues/china-east-asia (JA)

In 2010, after 30 years of dramatic growth, China surpassed Japan to become the world’s second largest economy after ours. China’s size in land and in population, its rapid economic growth, and its sharply increasing military expenditures are dramatically changing the strategic map of the world. While **the potential for conflict with an authoritarian China could rise as its power grows**, the United States must pursue policies designed to encourage Beijing to embark on a course that makes conflict less likely. **China must be discouraged from attempting to intimidate or dominate neighboring states**. If the present Chinese regime is permitted to establish itself as the preponderant power in the Western Pacific it could close off large parts of the region to cooperative relations with the United States and the West and dim hope that economic opportunity and democratic freedom will continue to flourish across East Asia. Mitt **Romney will implement a strategy that makes** the path of **regional hegemony for China far more costly** than the alternative path of **becoming a responsible partner in the international system.**

**In the face of China’s accelerated military build-up, the** **United States and our allies must maintain appropriate military capabilities** to discourage any aggressive or coercive behavior by China against its neighbors. Maintaining a strong military presence in the Pacific is not an invitation to conflict. Quite the contrary; it is a guarantor of a region where trade routes are open and East Asia’s community of nations remains secure and prosperous.

Toward that end, **the United States should maintain and expand its naval presence in the Western Pacific**. We should be assisting partners that require help to enhance their defensive capabilities. **The Department of Defense should reconsider recent decisions not to sell top-of-the-line equipment to our closest Asian allies**. **We should be coordinating with Taiwan to determine its military needs and supplying them with** adequate **aircraft and other military platforms**. **We should be assisting Pacific nations to** enhance maritime domain awareness, i.e., the ability to **employ radar and other detection networks to monitor** aggressive behavior in **disputed waters**. This would minimize the chance of surprise confrontations and prevent military miscalculations that can escalate into larger conflicts.

We need to continue to strengthen alliances and relations with strategic partners like India and build stronger ties to influential countries like Indonesia. Our aim should be to work with all these countries bilaterally but also to encourage them to work with one another as they have begun to do. **Our objective is** not to build an anti-China coalition. Rather it is **to strengthen cooperation among countries with which we share a concern about China’s growing power and increasing assertiveness** and with whom we also share an interest in maintaining freedom of navigation and ensuring that disputes over resources are resolved by peaceful means. **It is yet another way of closing off China’s** option of **expanding its influence** through coercion. As detailed in his book, Believe in America, Mitt Romney will also pursue deeper economic cooperation among like-minded nations around the world that are genuinely committed to the principles of open markets through the formation of a “Reagan Economic Zone.” The benefits of this zone — which will codify principles of free trade — will be a powerful magnet that draws in an expanding circle of nations seeking greater access to other markets. Although China is unlikely to accede to the Reagan Economic Zone given its current approach to trade, offering Beijing the possibility of participation will give China significant incentives to end its abusive commercial practices. But with or without China as a member, the Reagan Economic Zone will establish a system of trade that could knit together the entire region, discouraging imbalanced bilateral trade relations between China and its neighbors, limiting China’s ability to coerce other countries, and ultimately encouraging China to participate in free trade on fair terms.

Any serious **U.S. policy toward China must confront the fact that China’s regime continues to deny its people basic political freedoms and human rights**. **A nation that represses its own people** **cannot be a trusted partner in an international system based on economic and political freedom**. While it is obvious that any lasting democratic reform in China cannot be imposed from the outside, it is equally obvious that the Chinese people currently do not yet enjoy the requisite civil and political rights to turn internal dissent into effective reform. **The** **United States has an important role to play in encouraging the evolution of China** toward a more politically open and democratic order.

If the United States fails to support dissidents out of fear of offending the Chinese government, we will merely embolden China’s leaders. We certainly should not have relegated the future of freedom to second or third place, as Secretary of State Clinton did in 2009 when she publicly declared that the Obama administration would not let U.S. concerns about China’s human rights record interfere with cooperation “on the global economic crisis [and] the global climate change crisis.” A Romney administration will vigorously support and engage civil society groups within China that are promoting democratic reform, anti-corruption efforts, religious freedom, and women’s and minority rights. It will look to provide these groups and the Chinese people with greater access to information and communication through a stronger Internet freedom initiative. Mitt **Romney will seek to engage China**, but will always stand up for those fighting for the freedoms we enjoy.

### LGBTQ

#### Romney fought against counseling for at-risk LGBT teens

Amanda, **Terkel**. Senior Political Reporter, **5/10/2012**, “Mitt Romney Bullied LGBT Youth Commission As Governor.” Huffington Post. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/10/mitt-romney-bullied-lgbt-youth-commission_n_1506231.html> (JA)

 WASHINGTON -- Just hours after the Washington Post published a piece on Mitt Romney's prep school pranks -- which included forcibly cutting the hair of a student who stood out for his nonconformity and his perceived homosexuality -- the presumptive Republican presidential nominee had already apologized in a radio interview, saying he was sorry for any "dumb things" he might have done "a long time ago." Presumably, **by the time Romney was elected governor of Massachusetts** in 2002, **he had moved on from verbal taunts and physical take-downs**. But **gay-rights advocates argue that his policies toward the LGBT community as governor were just as troubling**.

**"It's very clear that Mr. Romney doesn't get it," said Eliza Byard, executive director of the** Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (**GLSEN**), **which focuses on supporting LGBT youth**. "Bullying, harassment and assault in schools are serious issues. His own behavior was deeply troubling when he was a student, and **his actions as governor of Massachusetts were also an assault on** the **LGBT students** that the state had set out to protect." "Just looking at his current behavior, he's so politically opportunistic in his willingness to score political points on the backs of LGBT people -- if that's not the definition of a bully, I don't know what is," said Kara Suffredini, executive director of the pro-gay rights group MassEquality. The Romney campaign did not return a request for comment. Most memorable for Suffredini and Byard were Romney's battles with a commission meant to help LGBT youth, as it became clearer that these students were targets of harassment and discrimination in schools. The Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth was first set up in 1992 by then-governor William Weld, a Republican. On May 12, 2006, the Boston Globe described what happened: “Angered that his name appeared on a press release touting a gay pride parade, **Governor Mitt Romney moved** yesterday **to curtail the activities of a** 14-year-old **advisory commission on gay and lesbian youth**. The commission chairwoman, Kathleen M. Henry, said she was called yesterday by Beth Myers, the governor's chief of staff, who told her that the governor planned to issue an executive order ''revoking our existence" and creating another youth commission whose purview would be all of the state's youth, not just gays and lesbians. The commission would have all new members, she said.” A few hours later, however, Romney had changed his mind. His spokesman, Eric Fehrnstrom, said at the time that the governor had decided the original proposal was "too harsh." Instead, **he** opted to **put restrictions on the way the commission could use the** approximately **$1.2 million it received in state funds.** State Rep. Liz Malia (D-Brighton), a defender of the commission, told the Globe at the time that she had met with Fehrnstrom about the issue. He had told her that **he wanted to take it in a direction that focused on "all youth, and not gay and lesbian youth,"** she said. **The** governor's **restrictions alarmed LGBT activists and allies**, who sought to make the commission independent. The legislature passed a bill establishing a separate, independent commission comprised of the same members a couple of months later. Romney vetoed that bill, but the legislature overrode him. As a response, he disbanded the governor's commission in an executive order, since it had essentially become a duplicate. The commission continues today, distinct from the governor's office. Byard told The Huffington Post that **GLSEN**'s Massachusetts chapter **was consistently frustrated with Romney's cuts to funding for programs that assisted LGBT youth.** As research by the Democratic group American Bridge 21st Century shows, many of these areas did see their funding cut under Romney. On Nov. 15, 2006, for example, the Boston Herald noted that **Romney had cut funds for "HIV/AIDS prevention**, matching grants for groups like the YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs and domestic violence prevention in the gay community." It was part of the governor's $425 million emergency state spending freeze. Earlier in the year, **Romney** had **vetoed** $158,000 in **funding for "intervention services and crisis housing for sexual violence in the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community."** As the Patriot Ledger reported on July 22, 2006, the Democratic-controlled state legislature overrode his veto. In both 2003 and 2004, **he vetoed funding for** a "statewide and community based suicide prevention, intervention, postvention and surveillance activities and **the implementation of a statewide suicide prevention plan,"** according to government documents. Romney said the funding was not consistent with his recommendation to the legislature. The state House and Senate eventually overrode that veto as well. Byard said she found Romney's apology on Wednesday insufficient. In a radio interview with Fox News host Brian Kilmeade, Romney stated that he didn't realize one of the classmates he picked on was gay. According to the Washington Post article, Romney would say "Atta girl!" when the student would try to speak in English class. "Whether or not Mr. Romney knew or thought he knew this other person was actually gay -- which it turned out he was -- is pretty beside the point," said Byard. "It was troubling behavior then. His actions as governor, and his actions as a candidate today in apologizing, all seem pretty clearly part of a troubling pattern of disregard for the seriousness of this issue and the kinds of behaviors that he himself is accused of carrying out." In the past few years, **there have been a rash of suicides by teenagers who have been bullied for being gay** or perceived as gay. In 2009, GLSEN surveyed 7,261 middle and high school students and "found that at school nearly **9 out of 10 LGBT students experienced harassment at school** in the past year and nearly **two-thirds felt unsafe** because of their sexual orientation. Nearly **a third of LGBT students skipped at least one day of school in the past month because of safety concerns."**

### Tax Returns

#### Speculation rises over Romney’s hidden tax returns

Joseph, **Thorndike**. Director of Tax History Project, July 18th 2012, “Romney Should Release His Tax Returns”. Wall Street Journal Online. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303933704577533250815441464.html> (added by JA)

**Democrats have stepped up their calls for Mitt Romney to release more of his tax returns**, clearly hoping for more embarrassing revelations about his overseas tax shelters or his long relationship with Bain Capital. Thus far, Gov. **Romney has released his 2010 returns** and estimated returns for 2011. But he **has declined to release older ones**.Critics point out that Mr. Romney's father, George, set the standard for candidate tax disclosure when, during the Republican presidential primary campaign in 1967, he released 12 years of tax returns. **President Obama**, for his part, **has released all of his returns since 2000**.Candidates are not required to release their returns; the law protects their tax privacy, just like it does for every other American. Candidates must, however, file a financial-disclosure form with the Federal Election Commission outlining assets and liabilities. Unlike tax returns, which shine a spotlight on income, FEC filings highlight net worth—potentially even more embarrassing for wealthy candidates like Mr. Romney. **Mr. Romney's public tax returns and FEC disclosure suggest that he has a net worth of at least $250 million and** a number of **offshore investments** in well-known **tax havens** like the Cayman Islands and Switzerland—all of which is music to the ears of Democrats hoping to change the focus of the presidential campaign from the latest dismal economic news.But there is no evidence that Mr. Romney violated any tax laws. He simply did what most wealthy Americans do: protecting his wealth by taking advantage of legal loopholes and smart accounting teams. Mr. **Romney would be well advised to simply cough up a decade's worth of returns**. In all likelihood, the only thing he's hiding is more of the sophisticated tax avoidance that he's already demonstrated and that rich people engage in every day. Laudable? No. But not illegal, either.

Of course, technical legality won't do much to shield Mr. Romney from his critics. For better or worse, **politicians are held to higher standards**. That might not be fair, strictly speaking, but in any number of spheres, we already expect more from our politicians than simple legality.

We have held them to account, for instance, when they have appeared to legally avoid the draft. Both Bill Clinton in 1992 and George W. Bush in 2000 faced tough questions over their draft status during the Vietnam War. Presumably, we would also hold politicians responsible if they routinely ducked jury duty. And we expect them to avoid technically legal but morally dubious activities like excessive gambling or (in certain parts of Nevada) prostitution. **Because something is legal doesn't mean we want our politicians doing it.** Depending on what is in Mr. Romney's unreleased returns, further tax disclosure might be uncomfortable for him or downright deadly. But it won't be nearly as deadly as the weeks of bashing that he can expect from critics if he continues to stonewall on full disclosure.

**Mr. Romney should take a lesson from Richard Nixon**, who made one of the earliest candidate disclosures while running for vice president in 1952. "I think you will agree with me," **Nixon** told a nationwide TV audience as he **outlined his personal finances in prime time**, "because, folks, remember, a man that's to be president of the United States, a man that's to be vice president of the United States, must have the confidence of all the people. And that's why I'm doing what I'm doing." So legally, candidates are entitled to their tax privacy. But **politically, privacy is a relic of the past.** We can bemoan that fact and prattle on endlessly about all the great politicians of yore who would never pass the purity test of modern politics. But the fact remains: **21st-century politics make no room for candidate privacy.** And there may be a silver lining to disclosure for Mr. Romney. If he can survive the firestorm of ginned-up outrage that's sure to follow a major release, then a newly inaugurated President Romney might be well positioned to lead the charge for real tax reform. If only an ardent anticommunist like Nixon could go to China, then maybe only a pro-business Republican with lots of experience in legally avoiding taxes can get American taxpayers out of the Caymans.

### Animal Cruelty

#### Animal cruelty questions continue to dog Romney

Aliyah, **Shalid**. NY Daily News writer, April 17 2012, “Ann Romney defends Mitt strapping dog to roof of car: Pooch ‘loved’ it”. NY Daily News. <http://articles.nydailynews.com/2012-04-17/news/31357093_1_ann-romney-family-dog-mitt-romney> (JA)

Seamus Romney absolutely “loved” his wild rooftop rides, at least according to his mom. Ann **Romney** opened up about their **family dog**, who **was strapped to the roof of their car in a crate during vacations** in the 1980s — insisting the pet pooch looked forward to the trips **despite** once **getting sick.** Her husband, likely Republican presidential nominee **Mitt Romney, has come under fire from animal activist groups** after he revealed how the long-deceased Irish setter traveled with the family. The left has used the trips to paint the White House hopeful as uncaring. "The dog loved it," Ann Romney told ABC's Diane Sawyer on Monday. "He would see that crate and, you know, he would, like, go crazy because he was going with us on vacation. It was to me a kinder thing to bring him along than to leave him in the kennel for two weeks." Ann **Romney confirmed the details** of one of Seamus' trips that has come **under particular scrutiny — a 12-hour drive from Boston to Canada in 1983.** **During the ride, the dog got sick and defecated all over himself and the windshield of the car**. That promoted the former Massachusetts governor to get out of the vehicle and hose it down before putting the canine back on the roof for the rest of the trip. She said the dog got sick only "once" and it was because he ate turkey off the counter. Mitt Romney said during the interview that the attacks surrounding his dog were the most "wounding" so far on the campaign trial. **Asked if he'd do it again, he replied, "Certainly not with the attention it's received."**

## CTBT Bad

#### The CTBT Does not define the terms of the ban

Spring 11

Baker Spring is the F.M. Kirby Research Fellow in National Security Policy at The Heritage Foundation.

May 26, 2011 vU.S. Should Reject Ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty <http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/pdf/wm3272.pdf>

Substantive Problems with the CTBT Persist. According to Tauscher, Senate consent to the ratification of the CTBT may be justified on the basis that “times have changed.” In reality, the substantive problems with the CTBT that led to its rejection in 1999 are still present. In fact, the problems regarding the maintenance of a safe, reliable, and militarily effective nuclear arsenal have grown worse over the intervening years: The CTBT does not define what it purports to ban. The text of the treaty remains identical to that which the Senate rejected in 1999. Its central provision, as well as its object and purpose, is to ban explosive nuclear testing. The treaty does not, however, define the term. The U.S. interpretation is that it means a “zero-yield” ban, but other states may not share that interpretation.

#### The CTBT will permanently end nuclear testing

Spring 11

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Irreversible Nuclear Disarmament. Permanently forgoing explosive tests of nuclear weapons will lead to U.S. nuclear disarmament.[[3]](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2007/06/ratifying-the-comprehensive-test-ban-treaty-a-bad-idea-in-1999-a-worse-idea-today%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn3%22%20%5Co%20%22) While the disarmament process will take an undetermined amount time, it is inevitable for two reasons. First, testing prohibition will foreclose the modernization steps necessary to keep the deterrent effective under changing circumstances. Proliferation is already changing these circumstances significantly; the U.S. arsenal, meanwhile, is designed to deter the former Soviet Union. The United States will eventually retire the weapons that are no longer suited to current purposes, with nothing to replace them. The second reason that a permanent testing prohibition will lead to disarmament is that questions will emerge about the safety and reliability of the weapons in the arsenal and stockpile. These concerns will cause the United States to remove those weapons. In short, a permanent ban on explosive testing will result in disarmament brought about by atrophy.

#### CTBT will cause lesser powers to become Equal to America

Spring 11

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The nuclear threat is expanding. Established nuclear powers (Russia and China), new de facto nuclear powers (India, North Korea, and Pakistan), and aspiring nuclear powers (Iran) are moving forward in establishing or expanding their nuclear capabilities. Russian leaders continue to believe that a modernized nuclear arsenal plays a central role in their national strategy.[9] China is expanding the number of nuclear-capable missiles in its arsenal.[10] India and Pakistan conducted nuclear tests in 1998, and North Korea conducted one in 2006. Iran continues to defy multilateral demands that it freeze its program for enriching uranium. Without the option to conduct tests in the future, the United States will see lesser powers equal and eventually surpass its nuclear capabilities.

#### US isn’t key to the CTBT

Woolsey and Payne 11

National Institute Press, 2011 The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty:¶ An Assessment of the Benefits,¶ Costs, and Risks R. James Woolsey¶ Keith B. Payne http://www.nipp.org/CTBT%203.11.11%20electronic%20version.pdf

What’s more, the argument that U.S. agreement to forgo nuclear testing would now rally the world against nuclear proliferation is contrary to some available evidence in this regard. The United States stopped nuclear testing in 1992. Since then, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea, and apparently Russia have conducted nuclear tests,¶ 3¶ and nuclear weapon states (e.g., Russia, China, ¶ and France) have modernized their nuclear arsenals, while other states (e.g., India, ¶ Pakistan, North Korea, Iran) have demonstrated or developed nuclear weapon ¶ technologies. If the end of U.S. nuclear testing actually is the key to rallying international opposition against proliferation, we have little evidence of it after almost two decades of no U.S. testing. In addition, the CTBT has questionable verification provisions and lacks any serious ¶ enforcement mechanisms. The history of arms control from the 1930s until today ¶ demonstrates that, absent strong verification and enforcement measures, some states ¶ will cheat. CTBT proponents too often dismiss this problem. In doing so, they ¶ undermine the enterprise and promote the mistaken notion that CTBT verification and ¶ enforcement problems have been solved

#### CTBT makes irreversible nuclear disarmament

Spring 07

Ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: A Bad Idea in 1999, aWorse Idea Today

By Baker Spring June 29, 2007

 Permanently forgoing explosive tests of nuclear weapons will lead to U.S. nuclear disarmament.[3] While the disarmament process will take an undetermined amount time, it is inevitable for two reasons. First, testing prohibition will foreclose the modernization steps necessary to keep the deterrent effective under changing circumstances. Proliferation is already changing these circumstances significantly; the U.S. arsenal, meanwhile, is designed to deter the former Soviet Union. The United States will eventually retire the weapons that are no longer suited to current purposes, with nothing to replace them. The second reason that a permanent testing prohibition will lead to disarmament is that questions will emerge about the safety and reliability of the weapons in the arsenal and stockpile. These concerns will cause the United States to remove those weapons. In short, a permanent ban on explosive testing will result in disarmament brought about by atrophy.

#### CTBT leads to not testing

Spring 07

Ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: A Bad Idea in 1999, aWorse Idea Today

By Baker Spring June 29, 2007

A treaty-based ban on the explosive testing of nuclear weapons creates a perverse incentive to refrain from fixing problems with the stockpile. Technicians responsible for maintaining a safe, reliable, and militarily effective arsenal and stockpile will feel immense pressure not to take any steps that are inconsistent with the treaty. Policymakers will demand that the technicians never find a need to conduct an explosive test, but rather just withdraw and dismantle the questionable weapons. However, testing is the most effective way to address problems with the stockpile. Specifically, testing is the best way to ensure that fixes to weapons have resolved any known problems. Further, testing is the only way to develop new militarily effective weapons to meet new requirements and missions.

#### No Point IMS solves. No reliance on CTBT

McGrath and Bobiak 08

By Keegan McGrath, Stephanie Bobiak and Jean du Preez, CNS The Future of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly <http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/issues/testing/future.htm> March 7, 2008 IMS (International Monitoring System)

Despite the Bush administration's dislike of the treaty, it has continued to partially fund the IMS, thereby benefiting from the data provided by the monitoring system. All signatory states receive information regarding nuclear events, whether or not the treaty has entered into force. While the U.S. Atomic Energy Detection System (USAEDS) enables the United States to detect nuclear explosions over large areas of the globe, only the IMS can truly provide worldwide coverage. There are, for instance, areas in Russia and China where the USAEDS cannot monitor with a high degree of confidence. There have also been instances in the past where the IMS, though incomplete, proved more effective than the U.S. system. For example, the IMS proved that a 1997 recorded event off the Novaya Zemlya island (former Russian nuclear test site) was an indeed an earthquake, and not a nuclear test, as the United States originally claimed.[13] In addition, the IMS is more credible source given its multilateral nature as opposed to a national system where intelligence claims may be viewed with more skepticism. In this way keeping up the IMS may be advantageous to current or future U.S. administrations and IMS monetary support could continue even if the treaty does not enter into force.

## CTBT Good

#### The U.S. not ratifying the CTBT in 1999 lead to more proliferation so we need to do it now to stop the increase

Shah 2000

http://www.globalissues.org/article/70/the-us-and-the-comprehensive-test-ban-treaty

Anup Shah August 07, 2000 The US and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

October 13, 1999, the US Senate [decided not to ratify](http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/oct1999/1999-10-14-07.asp) the CTBT. This drew condemnation from Bill Clinton and the White House Administration, environmental groups and other governments. The grounds for rejection (ignoring the bipartisan politics that some claim affected this decision) was that if the US ratified this treaty, it would not stop others trying to go nuclear and therefore the US should not ratify on the grounds of national security. The ironic thing is that many nations around the world feel threatened by recent US unilateral actions and are thus beginning to feel that they will need to procure weapons that are more dangerous to assure their own national security. If the U.S. reduced its aggressive postures then other nations perhaps would not feel as threatened -- instead they do and are arming themselves as a result.

#### CTBT would help to eliminate Proliferation

Katz 12

Fern Katz membership chair of Southeast Michigan Women's Action for New Directions. Katz also is a member of the Southfield school board. Jul. 8, 2012 Rid world of nuclear tests <http://www.hometownlife.com/article/20120708/OPINION/207080313/Rid-world-nuclear-tests>

America should renew our commitment to achieve a permanent ban on nuclear weapons testing with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). U.S. ratification of the CTBT will enhance U.S. security by adding an essential tool to current efforts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons. There are three significant ways that this treaty benefits U.S. security.¶ First, developing a nuclear arsenal under the best of conditions is expensive, time intensive, and technologically difficult. By eliminating the testing option for new or potential nuclear states, the global community throws a nearly insurmountable monkey wrench at their proliferation aspirations.¶ Second, a test ban would diminish the ability for countries with nuclear weapons, like China for example, to innovate smaller and deadlier nuclear weapons technology.¶ Third, American ratification of CTBT would support essential global efforts to curb nuclear proliferation. With the most sophisticated nuclear arsenal in the world, the United States is in a unique position to take on a leadership role. That said, pushing others to not test while refusing to commit to a permanent ban ourselves makes American leadership in nonproliferation look hypocritical. Ratification would enhance the U.S. credibility needed to push for greater world cooperation to more effectively isolate and thwart nuclear weapons development in countries like North Korea and Iran.

#### CTBT ratification would lower proliferation

Woolsey and Payne 11

National Institute Press, 2011 The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty:¶ An Assessment of the Benefits,¶ Costs, and Risks R. James Woolsey¶ Keith B. Payne http://www.nipp.org/CTBT%203.11.11%20electronic%20version.pdf

CTBT proponents argue that U.S. CTBT ratification would inspire the international ¶ community to rally with the United States in support of nuclear nonproliferation and ¶ strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This cooperation, it is said, ¶ would reduce the potential availability of nuclear weapons to terrorists. In this fashion, ¶ CTBT proponents link ratification directly to nonproliferation success and countering the ¶ threat of nuclear terrorism. Given the high priority of nonproliferation and countering ¶ terrorism, CTBT proponents believe the United States has a moral responsibility to ratify ¶ the treaty. Indeed, some argue that even if U.S. CTBT ratification cannot in fact ¶ contribute to nonproliferation and countering terrorism in this fashion, the U.S. must at ¶ least be seen as “leaving no stone unturned” in its efforts to advance these goals, ¶ including by ratifying CTBT

#### CTBT is good for relations with Russia

Kerry 09

Chairman Kerry Advocates A New Partnership In US-Russian Relations; Senate Foreign Relations Committee News Release U.S. SENATE DOCUMENTS March 30, 2009 http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/?

When it comes to nuclear weapons, America and Russia inevitably lead by example - whether we seek to or not. For proof we need only look to our own histories. We tested and deployed the atomic bomb, and Russia raced to follow. We developed a long-range bomber to deliver the bomb, and Russia followed our lead. We tested and deployed a hydrogen bomb, and so did Russia. Both sides raced one another to launch nuclear ballistic missiles from underwater, to "MIRV" our missiles, and to find ever more battlefield scenarios to use our bombs. Each time one party upped the ante, the other simply doubled down- inspiring country after country to do all they could to join the table. We built up our arsenals to levels that truly earned the descriptor "MAD." To have as many weapons as we do today is, frankly, mindless inertia--and, ladies and gentlemen, need I remind you, it is shockingly expensive as well as dangerous. Experts estimate that America alone has spent $7.5 trillion on nuclear weapons that we hope to never use, an amount greater than the GDP of any other country on earth for an entire year. And we continue to spend billions more on stockpile stewardship and hedges against each other's bets on warheads, delivery systems and tactical weapons. That's why, to advance US-Russian partnership, and to reduce the nuclear threat, it is vital that we reach agreement on a legally-binding successor to the START treaty this year. With START set to expire in December, we must make it a priority to strike a deal or create a bridge before we lose the only rules we have to verify a nuclear agreement with Russia. President Obama has committed to pursuing these negotiations with the intensity they deserve, and I urge him and President Medvedev to take advantage of their upcoming meeting on the sidelines of the London economic summit to set bold and timely goals for these discussions. I am convinced that a new treaty can take us well below the levels established by the Moscow Treaty, and do so with robust verification rules and with obligations that last more than a day. We should set a near-term goal of no more than 1,000 operationally deployed warheads--and experts affirm this can increase our national security, rather than diminish it. Obviously we must pursue such a goal in close consultation with our allies and our military, but 1,000 warheads is more than enough to deter aggression. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is already working to lay the groundwork for the United States to follow Russia's lead and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.

#### Obama wants to ratify the CTBT

The New Yorker 12

The New Yorker June 18, 2012 The Second Term; What would Obama do if reelected <http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic/>? Ryan Lizza

Obama has an ambitious second-term agenda, which, at least in broad ways, his campaign is beginning to highlight. The President has said that the most important policy he could address in his second term is climate change, one of the few issues that he thinks could fundamentally improve the world decades from now. He also is concerned with containing nuclear proliferation. In April, 2009, in one of the most notable speeches of his Presidency, he said, in Prague, "I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons." He conceded that the goal might not be achieved in his lifetime but promised to take "concrete steps," including a new treaty with Russia to reduce nuclear weapons and ratification of the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.

#### CTBT is on Obamas agenda

THE WHITE HOUSE 09

Office of the Press Secretary For Immediate Release September 15, 2009 Statement by the Press Secretary on the U.S. delegation to the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/statement-press-secretary-us-delegation-conference-facilitating-entry-force-compreh

The President has asked Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to lead the U.S. delegation and deliver the U.S. national statement at the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), to be held on September 24 and 25 in New York City. Since 1999, this conference has been held every other year to provide a forum for discussions on how best to encourage states to sign and ratify this important nonproliferation treaty, especially those states listed in Annex II that are required to ratify the Treaty before it can enter into force.

While the United States sent a delegation to the initial conference in 1999, it has not attended the subsequent four conferences. Accordingly, U.S. participation in this year’s conference will reaffirm the strong commitment of the Obama Administration to support the CTBT and to work with other nations to map out a comprehensive diplomatic strategy to secure the Treaty’s entry into force. To advance the latter agenda, Under Secretary of State Ellen Tauscher will hold a series of bilateral sessions during the Conference. This commitment to realize the promise of the CTBT is part of the President's comprehensive agenda to prevent nuclear proliferation, and to pursue the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

#### Ratification would make Obama well liked

Overberg and Costello 12

Nancy Soderberg & Ryan Costello (2012): President Obama's Nuclear Legacy, American Foreign Policy

Interests: The Journal of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, 34:3, 111-124

In a potential second term, President Obama should pursue an additional round of arms reductions with Russia that lowers the number of strategic¶nuclear weapons in each country to one thousand or¶ below; secure Senate ratiﬁcation of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT); reach an agreement to reduce¶ and ultimately eliminate tactical nuclear weapons¶ in Europe; enhance Russian–North Atlantic Treaty¶ Organization (NATO) cooperation on missile defense; continue to pursue the denuclearization of North Korea; and ensure that Iran does not develop or obtain a nuclear weapon. If President Obama were to achieve substantial progress on this agenda, it would be one of his most substantial and longstanding accomplishments

#### US not ratifying made others not ratify

McGrath and Bobiak 08

By Keegan McGrath, Stephanie Bobiak and Jean du Preez, CNS The Future of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly <http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/nuclear-weapons/issues/testing/future.htm> March 7, 2008 IMS (International Monitoring System)

Though China has repeatedly affirmed its support for the treaty's objectives and hosts numerous IMS stations, Beijing has not ratified the treaty, arguing that the ratification process has been delayed in the Standing Committee of People's National Congress. This position deprives China of a significant opportunity to assert itself as a responsible world leader while at the same time increasing diplomatic pressure on the United States. It is however, unlikely, for China to ratify until the United States takes the first step to do so. Regional tensions also play an important role in some states' hesitancy to ratify the CTBT. For instance, Israel's status as a non-signatory to the NPT has been a major factor in Egypt's refusal to ratify the CTBT. At the same time, Israel has not ratified the test ban due in part to Egypt and Iran's refusal to do so. Since Israel has neither confirmed nor denied its nuclear weapon program, its refusal to ratify the CTBT creates and exacerbates tensions in the region. Additionally, since the United States has walked away from the treaty, there is no pressure on Israel to support the accord.

## CTBT Impact

### CTBT WILL DECREASE IRAN’S WILL TO HAVE NUKS

The Economist, Feb 25th 2012. <http://www.economist.com/node/21548233>.

Is there a danger that Iran will get a nuclear weapon before that happens? Yes, but bombing might only increase the risk. Can you stop Iran from getting a bomb if it is determined to have one? Not indefinitely, and bombing it might make it all the more desperate. Short of occupation, the world cannot eliminate Iran's capacity to gain the bomb. It can only change its will to possess one. Just now that is more likely to come about through sanctions and diplomacy than war.

### CTBT solves for nuclear proif.

**G**lobal **S**ecurity **N**ewswire, Obama Administration Promotes CTBT Ratification, 2.22.12, http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/white-house-again-lobby-congress-ctbt-ratification/

Advocates say the treaty would help stem nuclear proliferation by preventing nations from conducting test explosions required to develop new or more potent weapons. Opponents of the U.S. ratification argue the potential remains for countries to secretly detonate nuclear devices without being detected and that the United States might in the future need to end its two-decade voluntary moratorium on testing to ensure the viability of its strategic deterrent.

Gottemoeller said she has been informing congressional lawmakers and their aides on issues related to the treaty. "I expect to be doing a lot more of that in 2012

## Iran Impact

IRAN PROLIFERATION POSSIBLE
The Economist, Dec 3rd 2009. <http://www.economist.com/node/15016192>.   Inspectors, meanwhile, suspect that Iran may have other secret sites. They have plenty of evidence to suggest that Iran has done warhead development, besides other experiments whose purpose can only be to build a nuclear weapon, or enable one to be assembled at speed. But Iran refuses to answer their questions, and now threatens to increase its enrichment effort tenfold. An exaggerated boast, perhaps: it appears to be running short of uranium ore, as well as high-strength steel for the planned expansion at Natanz. But it is moving ahead fast.

**IRANIAN PROLIF HAS GLOBAL POWERS ON EDGE**
[Nicholas KULISH](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/k/nicholas_kulish/index.html?inline=nyt-per) and [James KANTER](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/k/james_kanter/index.html?inline=nyt-per), March 6, 2012.<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/07/world/middleeast/iran-agrees-to-inspection-of-secret-military-site-report-says.html?_r=1&hp>.

Hanging over the resumption of talks is deep concern about a rerun of previous negotiations in Istanbul that broke off in January 2011 when the Iranians resisted discussing the nuclear issue. In France, Bernard Valero, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, warned against a repeat of “the experience of the fruitless discussions in Istanbul” and underlined that Iran faced a “united” front from global powers.

**IRAN WILL CONTINUE TO PROLIFERATE**
Talitha Dowds, MAR 7, 2011. <http://csis.org/blog/eliminating-irans-nuclear-proliferation-program>.

Diplomatic efforts have been tried and have failed to produce results. Most recently, Iran rejected the terms and conditions of a nuclear fuel swap deal between Iran, Russia, and France. Furthermore, United Nations Security Council sanctions that isolate Iran from the rest of the world economically have failed to deter Iran’s quest for nuclear power. Recent covert actions by the west have yielded the most promising results in delaying Iran’s nuclear proliferation.

**US WORRIED ABOUT IRAN PROLIFERATION**

Anthony **DiMaggio**. September 30, 20**09**. DiMaggio teaches U.S. and Global Politics at Illinois State University.  He is the author of: Mass Media, Mass Propaganda: Examining American News in the “War on Terror” (2008) and When Media Goes to War: Hegemonic Discourse, Public Opinion, and the Limits of Dissent (February 2010). <http://sacsis.org.za/site/article/363.1>.

**Iran’s admission that it will be enriching uranium at a second nuclear site** was greeted with alarm in the halls of Washington and in American newsrooms on last Friday. **Obama has long warned about the “existential threat” that Iran poses to the U.S. and its allies.** Concern over a nuclear Iran is understandable for those who are committed to the abolition of nuclear weapons, and for those who worry about the danger that nuclear proliferation poses for human survival. It should be noted, however, that the Obama administration does not share those concerns. **U.S. officials have always been preoccupied with how to prohibit enemy states from developing these weapons, while ensuring maximum U.S. and allied maneuverability in keeping such weapons, and even in using them when deemed necessary.**

### IRAN SECRETLY PROLIFERATING

Anthony **DiMaggio**. September 30, 20**09**. DiMaggio teaches U.S. and Global Politics at Illinois State University.  He is the author of: Mass Media, Mass Propaganda: Examining American News in the “War on Terror” (2008) and When Media Goes to War: Hegemonic Discourse, Public Opinion, and the Limits of Dissent (February 2010). <http://sacsis.org.za/site/article/363.1>. **It is also at least theoretically possible that Iran already decided to proceed with a weapons program, although the uranium disclosed at Iran’s two nuclear plants is clearly unfit to be used in developing such weapons**.  All of the uranium currently used in Iran - at least the uranium that has been reported to or found by the IAEA - is not of a weapons grade quality. The BBC reports that legally, Iran “does not need to inform the IAEA of any new [nuclear] site until 180 days before any nuclear material is placed in the facility.”  **For the record, the second plant reported in the news this week is not yet operational. Hence it is not evidence - contrary to the claims of Obama - of an Iranian violation of the inspection process or the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.  The major point that needs to be understood is that, as of today, there is still no hard evidence that Iran is developing nuclear weapons.**

### IRAN PROLIFERATION WILL SPUR OTHER COUNTRIES TO DEVELOP NUKS

The Economist, Feb 25th 2012. <http://www.economist.com/node/21548233>. Make no mistake, an Iran armed with the bomb would pose a deep threat. The country is insecure, ideological and meddles in its neighbors’ affairs. Both Iran and its proxies—including Hizbullah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza—might act even more brazenly than they do now. The danger is keenly felt by Israel, surrounded by threats and especially vulnerable to a nuclear bomb because it is such a small land. Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, recently called the “Zionist regime” a “cancerous tumor that must be cut out”. Jews, of all people, cannot just dismiss that as so much rhetoric. Even if Iran were to gain a weapon only for its own protection, others in the region might then feel they need weapons too. Saudi Arabia has said it will arm—and Pakistan is thought ready to supply a bomb in exchange for earlier Saudi backing of its own program. Turkey and Egypt, the other regional powers, might conclude they have to join the nuclear club. Elsewhere, countries such as Brazil might see nuclear arms as vital to regional dominance, or fear that their neighbors will.

**IRAN WON’T DISCLOSE PROLIFERATION**
Arms Control Association1997-2012 . <http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/iranprofile>. Iran continues to expand its uranium enrichment program and has not fully disclosed the extent of its nuclear-related activities. It relies on a variant of Pakistan's P-1 centrifuge, which is known to be crash-prone and unreliable. Iran has been developing more advanced designs capable of enriching uranium three times faster. In September 2009, the revelation of a secret nuclear facility under construction near Qom deepened international suspicions about Iran’s uranium enrichment activities. Iran has also refused to provide the IAEA with timely design information and access to nuclear facilities and persons or discuss outstanding concerns regarding a potential military dimension to its nuclear program.

## Defense

### No Healthcare Repeal

#### No risk healthcare reform is repealed, regardless of who wins the election

Oxford University Press 7/17 (Andrew J. Polsky,“After a ‘Referendum’ Election”, OUPblog, online, 2012

At the moment, the two campaigns are pursuing very similar strategies — each tries to inspire the partisan base without antagonizing centrist, independent minded voters. There is a good deal of posturing to please those toward the extremes. Thus Republicans in the House weigh whether to cast a meaningless vote to repeal Obama’s signature health care measure, while the president declares himself in favoring of ending the Bush tax cuts for those earning over $250,000. For all the staging and fanfare, neither proposal stands the slightest chance of approval before or even after the election.

### Partisanship

#### Partisanship will sink next term’s agenda

Oxford University Press 7/17 (Andrew J. Polsky,“After a ‘Referendum’ Election”, OUPblog, online, 2012

On the campaign trail, the president spends a good deal of time defending his record and blaming the Republicans for obstructing his efforts to do more. Since the 2010 mid-term election returned control of the House to the GOP, the country has been in a policy holding pattern, legislation stacked up like airliners waiting for their landing slots while the runways are solidly fogged in by campaign politics. The president makes showpiece announcements such as the new tax proposal to dramatize the contrast between his dedication to fairness for ordinary Americans and the Republicans’ solicitude for the wealthy. As to what Obama might actually do in a second term, however, we can really only guess and speculate. If he wins, it will be a triumph that sends no coherent signal, and he will struggle to fashion an agenda to which the Republicans must defer. (The GOP will retain control of the House; neither party will come close to the sixty votes needed in the Senate to move legislation.)