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## General 2ac Stuff

### 2ac – No Link

#### No Political upside – public doesn’t think its important or perceive job upside

Yonah Freemark, independent researcher currently working as part of a Gordon Grand Fellowship from Yale University, 1-25-2012, http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/01/25/on-infrastructure-hopes-for-progress-this-year-look-glum/

In the context of the presidential race, Mr. Obama’s decision not to continue his previously strong advocacy of more and more transportation funding suggests that the campaign sees the issue as politically irrelevant. If the Administration made an effort last year to convince Americans of the importance of improving infrastructure, there seems to have been fewer positive results in terms of popular perceptions than hoped for. Perhaps the rebuffs from Republican governors on high-speed rail took their toll; perhaps the few recovery projects that entered construction were not visible enough (or at least their federal funding was not obvious enough); perhaps the truth of the matter is that people truly care more about issues like unemployment and health care than they do for public transit and roads.

### Non-Unique – Gay Marriage Thumper

#### Obama’s gay marriage stance guts his re-election – key states prove

Baltimore Sun, 5/16/12, “Same-sex marriage seals Obama's fate as a one-term president”, [http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bs-ed-obama-marriage-20120516,0,1078517.story](http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bs-ed-obama-marriage-20120516%2C0%2C1078517.story),

Barack Obama made himself a one-term president last week by telling ABC, "I think that same-sex couples should be able to get married." Up till now, he was politically savvy, saying his position was "evolving." But in repealing the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy, he revealed to sophisticates where he stood. Another clear signal was Mr. Obama's refusal to allow the Justice Department to defend in court the Defense of Marriage Act defining marriage as "a legal union between one man and one woman." Congress feared the U.S. government would pay Social Security survivor benefits to "husbands" of men dying of AIDS. DOMA passed in 1996 by 342-67 in the House and by 85-14 in the Senate. Even Joe Biden voted for it. By not saying he favored gay marriage, Mr. Obama clearly hoped to avoid galvanizing conservatives in such states as North Carolina, which last week passed a constitutional amendment to limit marriage to unions of one man and one woman. Follow @BaltSunLetters for the latest reader letters to The Sun. Vice President Joe Biden and Education Secretary Arne Duncan created an unexpected pressure on him to declare his support openly, but early last week his press spokesman would only say the president's position was "evolving." For three years? That was no longer a tenable position. He had to state his support, as he did on a previous occasion, when running for the Illinois Senate in 1996. But at what cost? North Carolina became the 32nd state on Tuesday to vote against same-sex marriage. The public has been given a voice 32 times and voted it down every time. Mr. Obama knew this fact on Wednesday in declaring his backing. Some said he was courageous. Perhaps, but I conclude he signed his political death certificate. North Carolina is a state he won narrowly in 2008. But it voted 61-39 in favor of traditional marriage. Will voters there forget Mr. Obama thumbed his nose at their vote the next day? Maine's legislature voted for same-sex marriage in 2009. But the public overturned it in a referendum in 2010 and voted out dozens of legislators who supported it. Maryland's legislature voted for same-sex marriage by one vote, but Catholic and black churches are gathering signatures for a November ballot, where I predict it will be overturned. Consider California, which gave President Obama a 24-point margin over Sen. John McCain in 2008 but at the same time approved Proposition 8, to put "one man, one woman" into its constitution, by 52-48. That was not an easy victory. An early poll found the liberal state opposed Prop 8 by 54 to 40. Thousands of evangelical and Catholic churches got involved and raised millions to make a case for Prop 8. One TV ad stated, "Children in public schools will have to be taught that same-sex marriage is just as good as traditional marriage." The supporters of gay marriage were horrified and raised millions for ads charging that Prop 8 had nothing to do with the schools, adding that same-sex marriage would not be taught in public schools. Counter ads proved that assertion wrong, noting that California's schools have to teach "respect for marriage and committed relationships." The battle then turned nasty, with acts of vandalism and claims of bigotry against supporters of traditional marriage. In the end churches raised $38 million for Prop 8, winning over many blacks who voted for President Obama. One African-American Democrat recently quoted in The Washington Post put it this way: "I'd love to be supportive of my president. I have to be loyal to my God." Now that Mr. Obama openly supports same-sex marriage, many blacks in Maryland — and across the nation — will be similarly torn.

Gay marriage issues will swing votes to Romney

Seth, Washington Times, 5/13/12, “ Gay marriage gives Romney chance to fire up base”, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/may/13/gay-marriage-gives-romney-chance-to-fire-up-base/?page=all#pagebreak>

While many Republicans consider the sudden emergence of gay marriage as an issue in the 2012 presidential campaign an unhelpful distraction, social conservatives Sunday insisted the Obama administration has given presumptive Republican nominee Mitt Romney an opportunity. “I think the president this past week took six or seven states he carried in 2008 and put them in play with this one ill-conceived position that he’s taken,” American Values President Gary Bauer said on CNN’s “State of the Union.” “I think that Barack Obama has helped fit that missing piece of intensity that Mitt Romney is going to need,” Tony Perkins, president of the conservative Christian organization Family Research Council, said on CBS‘ “Face the Nation.” Gay marriage is suddenly the country’s hottest political talking point after Mr. Obama last week said he now personally supports same-sex marriages — though he said the legality of such unions should be decided by individual states. Mr. Romney, who once argued in Massachusetts that he would be a better advocate for gay rights than Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, quickly drew a sharp contrast with the president on the issue, insisting that marriage is “one man, one woman.” Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, echoing earlier comments from fellow Republican John A. Boehner of Ohio, the speaker of the House, said on CNN the gay-marriage issue is “an attempt to distract the country from [Mr. Obama’s] record.” “He’s trying to raise divisive issues up to solidify his base and to divide the country, and that isn’t what we should be focusing on now. We should be focusing on jobs and the economy,” the Texas Republican said. Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus said on NBC’s “Meet the Press” that voters who consider gay marriage a key issue now “have a clear choice” in November. Mr. Romney reiterated his position over the weekend with a commencement address to graduating seniors at Liberty University, the conservative Christian university in Virginia founded by the Rev. Jerry Falwell Sr. in 1971. “Culture — what you believe, what you value, how you live — matters,” Mr. Romney told graduates gathered in the football stadium on Liberty's campus. The former Massachusetts governor, a Mormon who has struggled to connect with evangelical Christians, drew sustained applause when he said unequivocally: “Marriage is a relationship between one man and one woman.” The school has become a bellwether for spiritual thinking in fundamentalist and evangelical Christian circles and a powerhouse in state and national politics. Jerry Falwell Jr., the school’s chancellor, has carried on his father’s push to get evangelicals involved in politics by aggressively pushing to register the school’s more than 12,000 students to vote. In previous elections, the school has even canceled classes and lined up buses to shuttle students back to and from polling places. This year, for the first time ever, students had the chance in the Republican primary election to cast their vote at a polling place on campus. And more votes were cast there than at any other polling precinct in the state, according to the Virginia State Board of Elections. That kind of on-the-ground energy is symbolic of the enthusiasm and energy that Christian conservatives can inject into a campaign, making it a key constituency for Mr. Romney. He struggled to excite them in the primary, thanks to his evolving position on abortion and concerns about his Mormon religion, which fed into a lingering skepticism among evangelicals about whether he is truly committed to their causes. As a result, many voted for Rick Santorum, the former senator from Pennsylvania, who consistently touted his support of traditional marriage and pro-life stance on the campaign trail, helping him outperform Mr. Romney again and again in states where exit polls showed that more than half the electorate called itself evangelical or born-again Christian. Even when Mr. Romney won the Virginia primary in March, thanks to the absence of Mr. Santorum and conservative rival Newt Gingrich, he lost at the ballot box on the campus at Liberty to Rep. Ron Paul of Texas, by a 60 percent to 40 percent margin. “Santorum was this group’s preferred candidate in the primaries, and so far, there still isn’t much enthusiasm for Romney,” Larry Sabato of the University of Virginia’s Center for Politics said of conservative Christian voters. “Romney needs big margins in places like Lynchburg to overcome Obama’s margins in Northern Virginia and elsewhere.” Mr. Obama’s announcement last week, though, has given Mr. Romney another chance to get conservative Christians jazzed about his candidacy. “I think just that announcement has driven hundreds, if not thousands, of people to Mitt Romney or a lot closer than they would be,” said Zach Martin, executive director of the College Republicans at Liberty University. Democrats on Sunday defended the president’s decision to embrace same-sex marriage. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, appearing on “Fox News Sunday,” said there was “no political calculus in this, because it’s not smart.” “If he’s going to do it from a political point of view, it doesn’t make any sense,” she said. Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick said the president acted on his convictions. “Mitt Romney has occupied many positions on many issues, and back in 1994 when he was running for the U.S. Senate, he said publicly that he would be better than Ted Kennedy on gay and lesbian issues,” Mr. Patrick said. “He takes a different position in front of a different audience today.”

## Neg Shells

### 1nc Shell – Obama Good Disad

#### Obama will win the election --- forecast and polls

Nate Silver, FiveThirtyEight, 6-7-2012, Election Forecast: Obama Begins with Tenuous Advantage, p. <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/07/election-forecast-obama-begins-with-tenuous-advantage/>

The first look at the 2012 FiveThirtyEight presidential forecast has Barack Obama as a very slight favorite to win re-election. But his advantage equates to only a two-point lead in the national popular vote, and the edge could easily swing to Mitt Romney on the basis of further bad economic news. Mr. Obama remains slightly ahead of Mr. Romney in most national polls, and he has had a somewhat clearer advantage in polling conducted at the state level. Mr. Obama would be about 80 percent likely to win an election held today, according to the model. However, the outlook for the Nov. 6 election is much less certain, with Mr. Obama having winning odds of just over 60 percent. The forecast currently calls for Mr. Obama to win roughly 290 electoral votes, but outcomes ranging everywhere from about 160 to 390 electoral votes are plausible, given the long lead time until the election and the amount of news that could occur between now and then. Both polls and economic indicators are a pretty rough guide five months before an election.

#### Independent voters are the largest voting bloc --- spending kills support

Douglas Schoen, pollster for President Clinton, 2-8-2012, The Forgotten Swing Voter, Politico, p. http://dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=7ED8592F-2122-4A55-AA3B-C5460134BE4A

Neither party focuses on issues that matter most to people: reviving the economy, promoting job creation, balancing the budget, reducing debt and taking on entitlements. Both Republicans and Democrats are virtually ignoring the concerns of swing voters, now close to 20 percent of the electorate, and independents, now at least 40 percent of the electorate and, according to Gallup, the single largest voting bloc. These two groups share similar interests. And both give Republican and Democratic leaders net negative ratings. Independents disapprove of how Obama is doing his job, 52 percent to 37 percent, according to a recent New York Times/CBS poll. Just 31 percent had a favorable opinion of Obama, with two-thirds saying he has not made progress fixing the economy. Six in 10 independents say Obama does not share their priorities for the country. The president’s improved standing in the recent Washington Post poll has probably been overstated and has more to do with Romney’s weakness than with some dramatic turnaround in Obama’s own numbers. A majority of independents still disapprove of his job performance and a clear majority of the electorate disapproves of his handling of the economy, his performance in creating jobs and his efforts to balance the budget. Independents have similar negative impressions of leading GOP presidential candidates Romney and Gingrich, according to a recent Washington Post poll. Independents look unfavorably on Romney, 51 percent to 23 percent, and have an unfavorable impression of Gingrich, 53 percent to 23 percent. Another ominous sign for Romney, still the presumed nominee, is that voter turnout decreased about 15 percent in Florida’s primary from four years ago, and almost 40 percent of the voters said they were not satisfied with the current field. It’s crucial the GOP candidates address these voter concerns. A recent national survey I conducted sheds light on who the swing voters are and what they want from government — which meshes closely with the independents’ policy preferences. I isolated swing voters by looking at those voters who supported Bill Clinton in an imaginary trial heat against Romney but didn’t support Obama in a trial heat against Romney. This came to 15 percent of the electorate. In a two-way race for president between Clinton and Romney, an overwhelming majority prefers Clinton, 60 percent to 24 percent. Meanwhile, between Obama and Romney, voters split almost evenly — with Obama at 45 percent and Romney at 43 percent. A detailed assessment of swing voters shows that they are not liberal Democrats. Over three-quarters (76 percent) are moderates or conservatives, and close to two-thirds (65 percent) are Republicans or independents. Slightly less than half (49 percent) are Southerners. This data underscore the voters’ desire for politicians who advocate for bipartisanship and coalition-building in a polarized country. The substantial degree of support for Clinton versus Romney shows that the more bipartisan, centrist and fiscally conservative the appeal, the broader the support. A Third Way survey conducted after the midterms supports my findings. Sixty percent of voters who supported Obama in 2008, but voted Republican in 2010, feel that Obama is too liberal. About 66 percent say that Obama and the Democrats in Congress tried to have government do too much. A USA Today/Gallup Poll released late last year also shows that the electorate believes Obama is too far left ideologically. Americans were asked to rate their own ideology as well as that of the major presidential candidates on a 5-point scale. Most rated themselves at 3.3 (slightly right of center), and Obama at 2.3 (left of center) — further away than all other major presidential candidates. A majority of Americans, 57 percent, see Obama as liberal, while only 23 percent see him as moderate. Indeed, recent polling shows that independents want to rein in the size and scope of government. Gallup reports that 64 percent of independents say Big Government is the biggest threat to the country. Which may be one reason for Santorum’s growing support. Three-quarters are dissatisfied with the size and power of the federal government, while just 24 percent are satisfied. Other polling shows that these voters want policies that emphasize economic growth and budget reduction. In the wake of the crippling economic downturn, 82 percent believe it is extremely or very important to expand the economy, according to recent Gallup polling. Seventy percent say the federal budget deficit should be cut by a combination of spending cuts and modest tax increases — with many polls showing these voters feel spending cuts are key. Independents do not support more government spending. My polling last year shows independents believe government should refrain from spending money to stimulate the economy, given the large deficit we face, 62 percent to 24 percent. Independents, according to Gallup, are looking for government to expand the economy (82 percent), and promote equality of opportunity (69 percent). They are not looking for government to promote equality of outcome, since just 43 percent say they want to reduce the income gap between the rich and the poor. By 50 percent to 47 percent, they say the divide between the rich and the poor is an acceptable part of the economic system. So it’s clear what these voters are looking for, and also that neither party is addressing their concerns. To be sure, independent voters want conciliation and compromise. Some are more conservative and market-oriented. Others are ready to accept government stimulus spending for our economic recovery. But all share the desire for economic growth, job creation and a path to fiscal stability. The two parties cannot continue to ignore swing voters. Without them, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to win in November. Moreover, to win without addressing their concerns will almost certainly promise four more years of the same gridlock.

#### Obama’s reelection is key to CTBT ratification

Chris Schneidmiller, editor of Global Security Newswire, 7-18-2011, Senate Decision Key to Future of Test Ban Treaty, Nuclear Threat Initiative, p. http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/senate-decision-key-to-future-of-test-ban-treaty/

The Obama administration is preparing for a lobbying campaign that could determine the future of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (see GSN, July 15). Administration officials have declared in recent months that they intend to follow through on their long-stated pledge to seek the U.S. Senate’s advice and consent on the accord. Still to be determined are when that will occur and whether the White House can overcome entrenched divisions on Capitol Hill to secure necessary Republican support for ratification. The stakes are significant: U.S. approval could draw other holdout nations into the treaty regime, bringing it that much closer to becoming international law, proponents say. Failure would provide those states with continued reason to dismiss the pact -- though critics say they might do that anyway. Before seeking a vote, the administration intends to carry out a program to educate lawmakers and the public on the value of the treaty, Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher has said on multiple occasions this year (see GSN, May 11). The effort would address issues likely to be debated in the Senate -- the viability of the U.S. nuclear arsenal without testing, whether all CTBT member states have accepted an absolute ban on any trial blasts, and the ability to catch any state that attempts to cheat. “We continue a long, methodical process to lay the groundwork for Senate consideration of the CTBT,” the State Department said last month in a statement to Global Security Newswire. “Currently, we are in the process of engaging with members of the Senate and their staff on the importance of the CTBT.” It added: “We are not moving for a Senate vote, don’t expect one anytime soon, and will not push for one until we have done the engagement work needed to secure approval.” Several analysts agreed that the White House would not begin the fight until it felt secure the result would be an improvement on the last time a Democratic president tried to persuade the Senate to approve the treaty. The United States signed the pact in 1996, but three years later the Clinton administration ratification effort ran into a brick wall of skeptical lawmakers. The Senate voted 51-48 against approval. A two-thirds affirmative vote would be required for the United States to become a full participant in the accord. Washington is among 44 capitals that must ratify the test ban before it can enter into force. Thirty-five nations have taken that step, leaving only China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the United States. President Obama might wait to make his push until after publication of a new National Academy of Sciences report on the treaty, said arms control specialist Jeffrey Lewis. The follow-up to a 2002 academy study is expected to assess the effect that ratification would have on the U.S. capability to keep its nuclear weapons in working order without testing and on the capacity to identify atomic detonations in other nations. The new report is undergoing classification review, which could take weeks or years, according to Lewis. A classified National Intelligence Estimate on the matter was sent to Capitol Hill last August, but has not been seen by most lawmakers, said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. The document is said to offer an updated, thorough assessment of the ability to detect secret nuclear tests, according to Kimball. Senator Robert Casey (D-Pa.) suggested at the Arms Control Association’s annual meeting in May that the Senate might not take up the treaty until after the 2012 election. "In my judgment, we should act before the 2012 elections. I don't have a high degree of confidence that we will," the lawmaker said, echoing time line estimates from other observers. “I don’t think [the Obama administration is], at least in the near term, serious about putting this to a vote,” said Lewis, director of the East Asia Nonproliferation Program at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies. “I don’t think there’s a desire to have a vote if they think they’re going to lose, and I don’t think the votes are there yet.” Only 41 lawmakers who considered the treaty in 1999 remain in the Senate, Kimball said in a recent issue brief. Newer senators must be briefed on the matter, while the chamber as a whole must be informed of technical developments since 1999 that would promote entry into force. Politics plays a role in congressional policy debates and nuclear security will be a topic of discussion during the 2012 presidential election campaign, Kimball said. The White House is already taking heat over what Republicans say are inadequate attempts to rein in suspected proliferation activities in nations such as Iran and Syria (see GSN, March 30). Still, the Senate’s ratification last year of the U.S.-Russian New START nuclear arms control pact is cause for optimism about the test ban’s chances on Capitol Hill, Kimball said. Thirteen GOP senators voted in favor of the bilateral agreement. The two years it took Moscow and Washington to negotiate and approve New START “was relatively fast for a treaty,” according to Kimball. He said the administration should take whatever time is needed to see the test ban passed. “I would hope that the issue of the test ban treaty does not become a partisan political football because there is strong Republican support for the test ban treaty out there,” Kimball said. “If the treaty is not seriously considered by the Senate until after 2012, that will be because it took that much time to sort through the issues and to develop enough support to go ahead with the final stages of the ratification effort.” That plan, though, would hinge on Obama’s re-election. Should he be defeated next year, the pact would almost certainly remain frozen in place in Washington.

#### Ratification of the CTBT prevents multiple scenarios for nuclear war

Ian Davis, co-executive director of the American Security Information Council, 4-11-2007, Getting the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Back on Track, Huffington Post, p. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dame-anita-roddick-and-dr-ian-davis/getting-the-nuclear-test-\_b\_45625.html+CTBT+obama+priority&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=10&gl=us

The United States is key to progress. But the US Senate's highly partisan 1999 rejection of the CTBT, the opposition of the Bush administration, and the reluctance of the nine other CTBT hold-outs have left the treaty to languish. It never enjoyed formal entry into force and this inaction has left the door open to renewed nuclear testing. The new Senate leadership should make reinvigoration of the global nonproliferation regime a high priority. Ratifying the CTBT could provide a centerpiece to demonstrating a change in leadership: the US rejoining the rest of the world to promote international cooperative agreements, from reducing global warming to keeping lethal WMD material out of the hands of criminals and terrorists. This can't happen too soon. North Korea has marched through the open door with its first underground test of an atomic device. There is widespread agreement that the test has escalated tension in the region and raised the stakes in the stand-off with the United States. It could also destroy the prospects for the CTBT and open the floodgates to more nuclear-armed states. While we welcome the current agreement with Pyonyang which may ultimately eliminate the North Korean nuclear program, and lead to a nuclear-free Korean peninsula, the details of implementation have yet to be worked out, and already, strong conservative opposition to the agreement is beginning to appear. The door to an alternative way forward is also still open, and the United States could seize the moral high ground by leading the world through it. If President Bush were to press the Senate to reconsider and support ratification of the treaty, it could be part of a far-reaching strategy for shoring up the North Korean agreement, peacefully tackling the Iranian nuclear program and for preventing a world with 40 or more nuclear powers. The North Korean and Iranian nuclear crises exemplify an increasing number of damaging developments that make it clear that the non-proliferation system needs to be strengthened and updated, not neglected or discarded. The international community must not only work together to develop more effective diplomatic approaches towards North Korea and Iran, but it must also apply stricter international safeguards on all nuclear programs, prevent the spread of uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing, secure a global halt to the production of fissile material for weapons purposes, take new steps to reduce the number and role of nuclear weapons and achieve the entry into force of the CTBT. If, in 1963, at the height of the Cold War, the US, UK, and USSR could negotiate a limited test ban treaty. Why can't we ratify a comprehensive treaty now? Were we less threatened then? Are Iran and North Korea greater threats to the United States than was the USSR? The CTBT is vital to a system of security that does not rely on nuclear weapons. Its entry into force would put a cap on the nuclear age. Posturing for domestic politics and insisting on a macho attitude in international relations has dangerous long-term implications, both for America and the rest of the world. Since the Bush administration has come to power, global non-proliferation has gone into a holding pattern at best, a tailspin at worst. That can only lead to a world overpopulated with nuclear weapons and a nuclear war sooner or later. The consequences do not bear thinking about. So it is vital that CTBT supporters put the treaty back on the American and European political agenda and move to secure ratification by other key states.

## Uniqueness Debate

### Obama Winning

#### Obama will win the election --- expert forecasts and polls puts the edge with Obama. That’s the 1NC Silver evidence. Prefer it because Nate Silver is the leading election expert

#### More reasons –

#### Obama is ahead --- swing states and polls

The Hill, 6-9-2012, Obama and Romney locked in tight race with 150 days to go until Election Day, p. http://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/231861-obama-romney-tight-race-with-150-days-to-go-until-election-2012

President Obama and Mitt Romney are locked in a tightening race for the White House with just 150 days to go before Election Day. Polls show the two dead even nationally, with Obama enjoying perhaps a slight edge in the dozen or so swing states that will decide the contest.

#### Obama is ahead in Wisconsin --- it’s a must-win state

Los Angeles Times, 6-5-2012, Wisconsin exit polls show Obama ahead of Romney, p. <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/05/news/la-pn-wisconsin-exit-polls-show-obama-ahead-of-romney-20120605>

Wisconsin voters in Tuesday’s recall election seem ideologically fairly similar to those in 2010 – more heavily conservative than in the 2008 presidential election, but inclined to reelect President Obama nonetheless, according to early, partial exit poll results. Voters on Tuesday said by 51% to 45% that they would vote for Obama if the presidential election were being held today. They also said they thought Obama would do better than Mitt Romney, the Republican nominee, at handling the economy. On the other hand, as in the 2010 election, people who identified themselves as conservatives significantly outnumbered self-identified liberals. The exit poll results are preliminary and could be significantly revised, but so far, they seem likely to bolster morale at Obama campaign headquarters. Wisconsin is a must-win state for Democrats in the November election.

#### It will be close but Obama holds the edge

National Journal, 6-8-2012, The Presidential Race, p. http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/no-margin-for-error-for-obama-20120607)

President Obama’s bid for a second term stands on the edge of a knife. That’s the overriding message of the latest Allstate/National Journal Heartland Monitor Poll. In the survey, the country divides almost in half on Obama’s overall performance as president, his impact on the economy, and the choice between him and Republican Mitt Romney in the 2012 election. On the ballot test, the needle bends slightly toward Obama; on the critical job-approval measure, it tilts slightly away from him. But all of these gauges show that the president is operating with virtually no margin for error—a conclusion underscored by the fact that this survey was completed before the release of last week’s deeply disappointing jobs report. The latest Heartland Monitor Poll surveyed 1,000 adults, including 871 registered voters, by landline and cell phone from May 19-23. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points for the entire sample and 3.3 percentage points for the registered-voter subset. The poll’s first 2012 ballot test has Obama leading Romney among registered voters by 44 percent to 41 percent. (Unlike some other polls, this survey did not push undecided voters to lean toward one candidate.) But Obama’s job-approval rating, usually the most revealing measure of an incumbent’s standing, dipped to 47 percent in the latest poll, with 48 percent disapproving. That’s a decline from a 51 percent approval rating in the Heartland Monitor survey last March, albeit within the margin of error.

### Romney Winning

#### Polls show Romney ahead by 7 points -- low presidential approval over the economy

NewsCore, ’12(5/11/12, <http://www.myfoxdfw.com/story/18309658/romney-leads-obama-by-seven-points-in-new-national-poll>

ASBURY PARK, N.J. – Mitt Romney has jumped to a seven-point lead over President Barack Obama in a national poll released Friday. The Rasmussen Reports daily presidential tracking poll shows Romney ahead of the president with 50 percent to Obama's 43 percent. It is the highest level of support the presumptive Republican nominee has received in his matchup with Obama as well as his largest lead. The new numbers come a week after a disappointing jobs report that raised doubts about the continued economic recovery from the worst recession in the US since the Great Depression. Thirty-seven percent of those polled gave the president good or excellent marks on his handling of the economy while 48 percent disapproved of his handling of economic matters. Obama's overall approval rating is 44 percent compared to 55 percent of those who disapprove of his performance, according to the Rasmussen poll. It was his lowest approval rating in two months.

#### Stats prove Romney leads on the economy

Mike Dorning, Bloomberg, 5/4/12, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-05-04/obama-re-election-momentum-hits-snag-in-april-jobs-report.html>

Election Impact Only one U.S. president, Ronald Reagan, has been re-elected since World War II with a jobless rate above 6 percent. On Election Day 1984, the rate was at 7.2 percent, having dropped almost three percentage points in the previous 18 months. While the jobless rate has declined since its peak during Obama’s term of 10 percent in October 2009, the drop has been slow and halting. It was stuck at about 9 percent through the first three quarters of last year. Recent economic indicators have raised concern that the job market is cooling, mimicking a slowdown in early 2011. The world’s largest economy expanded at a 2.2 percent annual rate in the first quarter, slower than the 3 percent pace at the end of 2011, the Commerce Department reported last week. Concern About Future The Bloomberg Consumer Comfort Index (SPX) shows that Americans are still worried about their economic future. The index dropped last week to a two-month low as more Americans grew concerned about their personal finances. The index fell to minus 37.6 in the week ended April 29 from minus 35.8, surrendering gains that had lifted it to a four-year high last month. While Americans remained pessimistic about the economy, their views did improve with the index rising to minus 64.3 from minus 66.4. Real median household income in March was down $4,300 in since Obama took office in January 2009 and is down $2,900 since the recovery started in June 2009, according to an estimate from Sentier Research, an economic-consulting firm based in Annapolis, Maryland. Catherine Mann, a professor at Brandeis International Business School said a lot could change between now and the election. “Within six months we could see Europe finally getting their act together or the Euro collapsing,” she said in an interview before the report. “In six months we could see the bond markets look at the stalemate in the U.S. Congress and S&P and Moody’s downgrading us further.”

#### Massively undermines Obama’s re-election chances

Mike Dorning, Bloomberg, 5/4/12, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-05-04/obama-re-election-momentum-hits-snag-in-april-jobs-report.html>

 A slowdown in job growth in April cuts the economic momentum behind President Barack Obama’s re- election bid as he prepares to officially begin campaigning. U.S. employers added 115,000 workers to payrolls in April, the smallest gain in six months. The unemployment rate dropped to 8.1 percent as fewer people sought work. Roger Altman, a deputy Treasury secretary in the Clinton administration and a senior economic adviser to 2004 Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry, called the monthly jobs report “pretty disappointing.” “We need 200,000 to 250,000 jobs to really make this, or to illustrate that this is a healthy and strongish recovery,” Altman, chairman and founder of Evercore Partners, said in an interview on Bloomberg Television. “We’re nowhere near that.” Private payrolls crossed a boundary in April to positive territory during Obama’s term, with a net gain of 35,000 since he took office in January 2009. Total payrolls remain lower than when Obama was inaugurated because there are 607,000 fewer federal, state and local government employees. The jobs report was released a day before Obama formally opens his re-election campaign with political rallies in the swing states of Ohio and Virginia. Presumed Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney has made the president’s stewardship of the economy a point of attack and polls show voters are focused on jobs and growth. ‘Very Disappointing’ Romney termed the Labor Department report “terrible and very disappointing,” and called it evidence Obama’s policies aren’t working. “This is way, way, way off from what should happen in a normal recovery,” Romney said in an interview on the Fox News Channel. “We seem to be slowing down, not speeding up.” Stocks and bond yields dropped on concern a slowdown in hiring may restrain the wage growth needed to fuel consumer spending, which accounts for about 70 percent of the economy. The Standard & Poor’s 500 Index declined 1.5 percent to 1.371.11 at 12:18 p.m. in New York. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note fell to 1.88 percent from 1.93 percent late yesterday.

### Prefer Experts

#### Prefer expert predictions over arm-chair internet prognosticators --- they have access to the best data and are qualified to accurately interpret it

Charlie Cook, Cook Political Report, National Journal, 5-17-2012, <http://cookpolitical.com/node/12510>

To be honest, I’ve never been a big fan of Intrade, the Iowa Electronic Markets, or any of the other online prediction markets. People go to these sites and trade contracts or positions (read: take bets) on whether a given event will occur, such as which party will control the House or Senate (to the extent that anyone can control the Senate) after the next election, or which candidate will win the presidential race. The theory of collective intelligence—the rationale for paying attention to sites such as Intrade—was made by James Surowiecki in his 2004 book, The Wisdom of Crowds: Why the Many Are Smarter Than the Few and How Collective Wisdom Shapes Business, Economies, Societies, and Nations. My bias is to listen to the experts. I am more likely to pay attention to a crowd if the crowd is composed of political analyst Stu Rothenberg, NBC Political Director Chuck Todd, and about a dozen other folks whose opinions I respect rather than a random mass of people who have their own opinions, often times with little to back them up. Pros have enormous amounts of experience and background knowledge about a subject. Rothenberg, Todd, and other professionals constantly work their contacts and scrutinize data, including polling data, that are not necessarily available to the public. What they say and think is worth considering. When we agree, I feel reassured; when we disagree, I go back and test my assumptions, just in case they are right and I am wrong. The system has worked well for me. Having said all of that, I’ve finally found a use for Intrade. The website is a very convenient way to quantify conventional wisdom. According to Intrade on a recent (Monday) night, President Obama had precisely a 58.8 percent chance of getting reelected. Apparently, his odds had dropped about six-tenths of 1 percentage point in the previous day. This decline is presumably a result of the crowd’s assessment of the impact of Obama’s endorsement of same-sex marriage (as if that will really have an impact six months from now). On that Monday, the Intraders saw Republicans as having a 74.9 percent chance of keeping their House majority. Democrats had a 29.8 percent chance of regaining the chamber. These predictions strain credibility a bit, as the odds add up to more to than 100 percent, but that’s another matter. On this one wager, the numbers are not too far off The Cook Political Report’s prediction that Republicans have a 75 percent chance of holding the House (and, yes, Democrats have a 25 percent chance of taking it). In the Senate, Intrade says that Republicans have a 56 percent chance of taking control (its phrase, not mine). Democrats have a 27.9 percent chance. My hunch is that the odds of neither side controlling the Senate are 100 percent. At The Cook Political Report, we see the Senate as purely a 50-50 proposition. But it’s the 58.8 percent chance of Obama winning that interests me today, because that prediction stands in stark contrast to what most pollsters, Democrats and Republicans alike, whom I talked with privately, believe. The number crunchers who conduct and analyze polls, and others who study these things closely, see a lot of metrics pointing to a very close contest that could go either way. They don’t see an election in which either Obama, or Mitt Romney, is likely to have an almost six-in-10 chance of winning. Take the polls, for example. The averages of all major national polls show the race as extremely close. Pollster.com gives Obama a 1.2-percentage-point lead over Romney, 46.3 percent to 45.1 percent. Realclearpolitics.com pegs Obama’s lead at 2 points, 47 percent to 45 percent. Gallup’s seven-day tracking poll puts the president’s lead at 1 point, 46 percent to 45 percent. Undecided voters, particularly, often break away from well-known, well-defined incumbents (the “what you see is what you get” rule for those in office). Does this really translate into a strong advantage for the president? Obama’s job-approval ratings are often “upside down” in pollster parlance, with disapprovals running higher than approvals in both Pollster.com (46.9 percent approve; 48.4 percent disapprove) and Realclearpolitics (48 percent approve; 48.5 percent disapprove). Gallup also shows 47 percent approve and disapprove numbers for the week of May 7-13. Is that really a decisive edge? In terms of the Electoral College, seven states—Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia—are likely to be extremely close. New Hampshire might also be tight. (I am increasingly skeptical that Obama can win North Carolina.) I pay a lot of attention to the top-dollar surveys by the Obama and Romney campaigns—and, for that matter, what highly regarded pollsters doing surveys for various senatorial and gubernatorial candidates and for ballot initiatives in the states say. I don’t put a lot of stock in the dime-store polls, which bloggers and Internet armchair analysts so avidly follow (ask them about calling cell phones; that separates the top-notch pollsters from the cut-rate crowd). Don’t get me wrong: I’m not predicting that Obama will lose. I’m only pointing out that the discrepancy is real between what the pros on the sidelines and those in the press box are seeing, versus those with the view from the cheap seats. Just sayin’.

### Head to Head Polls Flawed

#### The election is a referendum on Obama – head-to-head polls and choices by Romney are irrelevant – all that matters is Obama’s approval rating

Charlie Cook, Cook Political Report, National Journal, 3-29-2012, http://cookpolitical.com/node/12313

When you look back at Barack Obama’s 7-point victory over John McCain in 2008, think of a four-legged stool. Obama needed each leg to support his candidacy. One leg was independent voters (29 percent of the vote); they chose Obama over McCain by 8 percentage points, 52 percent to 44 percent. The second leg was young voters, ages 18-29 (18 percent of vote); they broke for Obama by 34 percentage points, 66 percent to 32 percent. The third leg was Latinos (9 percent); they favored Obama by 36 points, 67 percent to 31 percent. And, finally, African-Americans (18 percent) backed Obama by 91 percentage points, 95 percent to 4 percent. To win reelection, Obama doesn’t need to match those performances, unless he dramatically underperforms with other demographic groups. But he needs to get relatively close to them to build a sufficient popular-vote cushion to assemble 270 electoral votes. Let’s focus for now on just one leg of the stool, the young voters. Visit any college campus today, and you are likely to sense a lack of passion and energy for Obama. It’s far from clear that he can reproduce the unusually strong turnout among younger voters that he sparked in 2008 or match the 66 percent performance level he achieved then. The data back up the doubts. Gallup tracking surveys in January and February recorded Obama’s job-approval rating at 52 percent and 54 percent, respectively, among 18-to-29-year-olds. The polling suggests he would win the majority of the youth vote, but not anything close to 66 percent. As with other key voter groups, Obama’s numbers with young Americans are better than they were last fall, when his approval ratings among that sector were typically in the mid-to-high 40s. The pattern is a common theme across so many voter groups: Obama is doing better, but his gains aren’t enough to put him close to 2008 levels. You may have noticed that I tend to focus on job-approval numbers rather than trial-heat figures from candidate matchups. Historically, when you have a president seeking reelection, the approval ratings for that incumbent are better measures of voter support than the trial-heat figures. When an incumbent is running, the election is usually a referendum on that person rather than a choice between two people.

### Likely Voter Polls Flawed

#### Likely voter polls are misused for partisan interests --- they shouldn’t be used to evaluate uniqueness

Nate Silver, Election Genius and NYT Columnist for 538, 5-15-2012, http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/05/15/a-30000-foot-view-on-the-presidential-race/

Likewise, most of the polls we are seeing now are of registered voters or adults rather than likely voters. That is something that needs to be accounted for. Usually a shift from registered voters to likely voters will improve the Republican candidate’s standing by a couple of points because Republican voters are older, wealthier and more likely to turn out in the average election. On the other hand, I do not think it is a good strategy to look solely at likely voter polls while ignoring the others. Some survey firms that use likely voter models have a history of a partisan skew in their polls that has nothing to do with the likely voter model itself.

### A2: Can’t Accurately Predict

#### Even though predictions methods are imperfect, they still overwhelmingly predict the correct winner --- don’t through the baby out with the bathwater

John Sides, Prof of PoliSci @ G. Washington U., 3-12-2012, http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/29/in-defense-of-presidential-forecasting-models/?partner=rss&emc=rss

Part of Nate’s critique has to do how these models are sometimes (though not universally) constructed and modified. For example, he criticizes ad hoc adjustments to models to account for idiosyncratic features of a single election — fitting the model to noise rather than signal, as it were. I agree. He has also noted that elections forecasts have a lot of uncertainty and that more could be done to emphasize this. I agree with that, too. In fact, elections forecasters often raise similar points by way of critiquing of each other. But I am less critical of the accuracy of these models than is Nate. For one, forecasters have different motives in constructing these models. Some are interested in the perfect forecast, a goal that may create incentives to make ad hoc adjustments to the model. Others are more interested in theory testing — that is, seeing how well election results conform to political science theories about the effects of the economy and other “fundamentals.” Models grounded in theory won’t be (or at least shouldn’t be) adjusted ad hoc. If so, then their out-of-sample predictions could prove less accurate, on average, but perfect prediction wasn’t the goal to begin with. I haven’t talked with each forecaster individually, so I do not know what each one’s goals are. I am just suggesting that, for scholars, the agenda is sometimes broader than simple forecasting. Second, as Nate acknowledges but doesn’t fully explore (at least not in this post), the models vary in their accuracy. The average error in predicting the two-party vote is 4.6 points for Ray Fair’s model, but only 1.72 points for Alan Abramowitz’s model. In other words, some appear better than others — and we should be careful not to condemn the entire enterprise because some models are more inaccurate. Third, if we look at the models in a different way, they arguably do a good enough job. Say that you just want to know who is going to win the presidential election, not whether this candidate will get 51 percent or 52 percent of the vote. Of the 58 separate predictions that Nate tabulates, 85 percent of them correctly identified the winner — even though most forecasts were made two months or more before the election and even though few of these forecasts actually incorporated trial heat polls from the campaign. This view reflects my “forest, not the trees” approach to consuming these models. I assume that any individual model will always have errors. I assume that although some forecasters are historically more accurate than others, no one has some special forecasting sauce that makes his model the best. So when I see a range of forecasts, I tend to look at the direction that forecast is pointing. That tells me who is likely to win. Looked at this way, the “forest” will rarely lead me astray in “Dewey Defeats Truman” fashion. Perhaps that’s a low bar, but that’s all I am looking for. (And, as Election Day draws closer, there will always be purely poll-based forecasts to draw on as well, both nationally and within states.) To be sure, the forest-not-trees approach does not render criticisms of forecasting models irrelevant. Moreover, forecasters themselves often use “the trees” — i.e., errors in any one model’s predictions — to evaluate the models. So Nate is entirely justified in using these metrics himself. I am also not suggesting that problems in forecast models should be ignored as long as they get the winner right — after all, some models called the winner correctly but overestimated his vote share by 10 points — or that the models cannot be improved, or that there might be better ways of forecasting elections than any of these models. I am simply suggesting that viewed at a distance, the models will rarely “fail” (as the headline of Nate’s post has it) in a way that misleads the average person who follows politics and wants to know only who’s the likely winner, but doesn’t care about root-mean-square error.

## Obama Good Links

### Link – Infrastructure Spending

#### Infrastructure spending will be an election issue --- it gets attached to the debt issue

Reuters, 2-11-2012, “Obama budget signals election-year tax battle,” p. http://mobile.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSTRE8191MJ20120211?irpc=932)

President Barack Obama will seek billions of dollars for jobs and infrastructure in his 2013 budget, an appeal to voters that draws election-year battle lines over taxes and spending as Republicans slammed him for "debt, doubt and decline." Obama's budget proposal, which he will submit to Congress on Monday, will project a much smaller deficit in 2013 compared with this year, White House officials said on Friday. "The budget targets scarce federal resources to the areas critical to growing the economy and restoring middle class security," the White House said in a statement, echoing Obama's recent messages on the campaign trial. The budget gives Obama one of his biggest platforms before the election to tell voters how he would govern in a second White House term, helping him cast Republicans as the party of the rich, while they paint him as a tax and spend liberal. Congress is free to ignore his proposal and Republicans, seeking to defeat him on November 6, declared it dead on arrival. "This unserious budget is a recipe for debt, doubt and decline," said Brendan Buck, spokesman for the top Republican lawmaker, Speaker of the House of Representatives John Boehner.

Infrastructure bills cause deficit fights – that allows GOP to galvanize support

Mark Gruenberg, editor of Press Associates Inc. (PAI), a union news service, 1/20/12, <http://peoplesworld.org/labor-maps-legislative-battle-for-201/>

In a Jan. 17 interview with Press Associates Union News Service, Samuel said the list includes fighting for a two-year transportation (highway-mass transit) funding bill, pushing for final resolution of a long-running war over airport construction and airways modernization - and union rights for airline workers - and extension of jobless benefits. It also includes legislation to curb Internet piracy of intellectual property, since the piracy robs dollars from royalty-based wages for musicians, actors, screenwriters, and other unionized creative professionals. And the agenda includes a longer extension of emergency federal jobless benefits for the long-term unemployed. But the outlook is cloudy for all. Even the jobless benefits bill, which both parties agree upon, is hung up by a partisan dispute over how to pay for the $150 billion measure. Congress returned to town Jan. 17 to start this year's session, after a first year characterized by Senate GOP filibusters on just about everything and by a tea party-dominated House GOP attacking spending and workers. Samuel expects those attacks to continue. He forecasts congressional Republicans will use the Congressional Review Act - a Gingrich-era GOP law - to try to overturn new federal rules streamlining union recognition election procedures. The big fights will be over job creation. Samuel expects the Obama administration to again support the infrastructure bill, jobless benefits, and other measures, though he concedes that aid to state and local governments may be iffy. Obama will outline his agenda in the Jan. 24 State of the Union address. Labor may have, finally, won one battle with the House GOP, Samuel said, over recognition elections for airline and railroad workers. "The Chamber of Commerce has finally dropped its opposition" to new rules for those elections, contained in the airport construction and modernization bill. That legislation would create 80,000-100,000 jobs. House Transportation Committee Chairman John Mica, R-Fla., has insisted that rules governing union recognition elections at airlines and railroads should force unions to win an absolute majority of all eligible voters at a worksite, with non-voters counted as "no" votes. That was the rule until last year when, after pressure from the labor movement and its allies, the government changed it. The requirement in union elections now is the same as in any other election - the winner is determined by the majority of those who actually cast ballots. Business and Mica fought the change, but with the 23rd temporary extension of the airport and airspace construction bill set to expire at the end of January, business seems to have given up. The question for congressional negotiators is if Mica will. As for extending jobless benefits, "we and the Democrats are hopeful" that Congress will OK an extension before the benefits expire Feb. 29, Samuel said. He also said the Democrats are holding fast against cutting any major programs to pay for the cost - even though in the past, Congress did not require cuts elsewhere to pay for aiding the unemployed. The House GOP is insisting on cuts, at least so far. If the GOP holds fast to its no-taxes-on-millionaires stand and the Democrats protect major programs, there could be a stalemate on jobless benefits, Samuel concedes. "But the Republicans badly miscalculated" when the last benefits extension was debated in December that their no-taxes stand was a winner. Instead, they got a political black eye for protecting the rich at the expense of unemployed workers. The two-year highway-mass transit bill, worth $106 billion plus inflation, still needs some details: Its mass transit sections are incomplete and so is its financing, outside of the federal gasoline tax. The measure would create tens of thousands of construction jobs and its passage is a major goal of building trades unions. Once Senate panels finish drafting the measure, the Democratic-run Senate is expected to approve it, Samuel said. The problem is the GOP-run House, again. Mica earlier proposed a five-year bill with much less spending per year - so much less that Laborers President Terry O'Sullivan called Mica's legislation a "job killer."

Funding issues uniquely make infrastructure bills unpopular

Carol Wolf, Bloomberg staff, 1/30/12, <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-01-30/obama-call-to-use-war-savings-on-roads-may-fail-in-congress.html>

Jan. 25 (Bloomberg) -- President Barack Obama’s call to rebuild U.S. infrastructure with money saved by bringing troops home may not resolve Congress’s struggles to set aside more money for roads and bridges, two analysts said. “I’m not entirely convinced that reallocation of war funds will necessarily pick up enough momentum to gain traction in Congress,” Patrick Hughes, an analyst with Washington-based research firm Height Analytics, said in a telephone interview yesterday after Obama’s State of the Union address. Obama is seeking to use half of the savings created by withdrawing troops from Afghanistan and Iraq to rebuild U.S. infrastructure, helping companies ship goods more efficiently, the White House said in a fact sheet yesterday. The plan would fix existing roads and invest more in high-speed rail, according to the fact sheet. “Take the money we’re no longer spending at war, use half of it to pay down our debt, and use the rest to do some nation- building right here at home,” Obama said yesterday. He didn’t specify how much the government expects to save. The Highway Trust Fund, which pays for highway, bridge and mass-transit projects, will run out of money in early 2013, according to the Congressional Budget Office. The U.S. hasn’t passed new legislation to pay for surface-transportation projects since 2005. Funding has continued through a series of extensions since 2009. The current deadline expires March 31. Cutting Red Tape Obama also said he plans to issue an executive order that would reduce regulations that slow down construction projects. The average U.S. transportation project takes 11 years to complete, according to the CBO. Vulcan Materials Co. and Martin Marietta Materials Inc., the two largest U.S. producers of sand, gravel and crushed stone, and cement maker Texas Industries Inc. are among companies that could benefit if war savings were used to fund a highway bill, said Keith Johnson, an analyst with Morgan Keegan & Co. in Memphis, Tennessee. “Infrastructure spending could employ a lot of people quickly, but it’s a matter of getting a bill through Congress,” Johnson said in a telephone interview. Johnson has a “market perform” rating on Vulcan and Texas Industries and an “outperform” on Martin Marietta. Gasoline Tax The U.S. needs $2.2 trillion to repair its infrastructure, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers. Proposals for new highway bills by House and Senate committees don’t increase funding beyond the current legislation. Neither addresses funding for the highway fund’s shortfall. The federal fuel tax, which finances the Highway Trust Fund, has been 18.4 cents a gallon since 1993. Obama has opposed increasing the fuel tax. In last year’s State of the Union address, Obama outlined a goal to give 80 percent of Americans access to high-speed rail within 25 years. Obama’s administration has allotted $10.1 billion for high-speed and intercity rail since 2009. Congress eliminated funding for high-speed rail in the 2012 budget. The House and Senate committees both seek to expand the Transportation and Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act to $1 billion a year from the current $122 million. The program provides low-interest loans to fund transportation projects. Mica Proposal “America needs to rebuild its infrastructure, but I do not support what appears to be the president’s plan to finance that effort by downsizing the military,” Representative John Mica, the Florida Republican who is chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, said in an e-mailed statement. Mica’s committee will introduce a proposal for a five-year, $260 billion surface-transportation bill on Feb. 2, Justin Harclerode, a spokesman, said by phone. Mica said yesterday his committee’s transportation measure would be partially financed through increased U.S. energy production. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, headed by California democrat Barbara Boxer, has approved a two-year plan with funding at current levels. With that version, the Highway Trust Fund’s projected expenditure would exceed its incoming revenue by about $12 billion.

GOP leadership will thwart the plan to boost party support

Rob Perks, serves as Transportation Advocacy Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council, 1/31/12, <http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/rperks/republicans_pushing_controvers.html>

I've heard of "my way or the highway" but this is ridiculous. In an unprecedented move, House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) is hell-bent on crashing the transportation bill by loading it up with controversial issues that will guarantee more political gridlock. This afternoon Boehner & Co. will unveil their so-called "American Infrastructure and Jobs Act," which is really just a backdoor way to push Big Oil's profits even higher. Transportation legislation has long been a bi-partisan policy area, as evidenced by two polar opposite politicians co-sponsoring the Senate transportation bill: liberal Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), the chair of the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee, and conservative Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-OK), the ranking Republican on the committee. The fact that these two members representing opposite ends of the political spectrum can work together these days on legislation of national importance proves that policy can transcend partisan politics. Not so in the House of Representatives apparently. Speaker Boehner is pushing legislation -- to be added to the House transportation bill that Congress will take up next -- which proposes to cover a portion of infrastructure funding via royalty revenues from new drilling in protected areas off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, as well as opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. This "drill and drive" scheme is bad for the environment and makes absolutely no economic sense. In fact, conservative critics of this "bait-and-switch" funding proposal include the Competitive Enterprise Insitute, the Reason Foundation and the Heritage Foundation. As Heritage's CEO Michael Needham told Politico: “As more and more people get educated about this, there are members who are starting to raise eyebrows. That's one of the reasons this is moving so quickly.” Certainly Sen. Inhofe's eyebrows are raised. He has repeatedly criticized Boehner's proposal for not adding up and for needlessly politicizing the process -- sharply reducing the prospects of passing a new federal surface transportation bill this year. The deadline for doing so is March 31, when the current bill expires. That would force a ninth temporary extenstion over the past three years. [UPDATE: Today Sen. Inhofe opted to toe the party line by publicly backing away from his previous steadfast criticism of the GOP proposal to tie transportation funding to new drilling. “There is no denying that increased energy production could fund a portion of the bill,” he stated on his website. With a proposed funding level for the transportation bill set at $260 billion for the next five years, even the most generous estimates of the funding that might be derived at some future date from new drilling falls well short of infrastructure needs. In fact, an analysis of the drilling proposals by The Wilderness Society puts potential revenues at $262.5 million over five years -- or less than 1% of transportation funding needs outlined in the House bill. The fact remains that Sen. Inhofe prefers his own bi-partisan transportation bill, which is not hampered by the contentious elements of the House bill. NRDC also prefers the Senate bill as the only viable way toward enacting transportation legislation in Congress this year.] Making matters worse, Speaker Boehner is also threatening to add another poison pill to the bill. On the weekend talk shows, he said Republican lawmakers will try to force the Obama administration to approve the Keystone XL pipeline by attaching it to the transportation bill. President Obama recently denied TransCanada's application for the tar sands pipeline. "If (Keystone) is not enacted before we take up the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act, it will be part of it," Boehner said on ABC's "This Week" news program. NRDC has been leading the charge to stop the Keystone pipeline, which would cut through America's heartland to deliver heavy, highly acidic crude oil from Canada all the way to Texas for easy export to other countries. For all the reasons why Keystone is a dirty deal for us, go here. Given the intense PR battle being wage over the pipeline, Speaker Boehner knows that using the House transportation bill as the policy vehicle to enact the GOP's fossil fuel-friendly agenda will provoke a backlash in the Senate. Best case scenario is two transportation bills -- one passed in the Senate, one in the House -- that cannot be reconciled in a conference committee. Such a stalemate will stymie passage of a new long-term transportation bill to fund much-needed infrastructure improvements, leaving our nation's roads, bridges, rails, runways and ports in disrepair and thousands of Americans out of work. When will politicians realize that putting people back to work fixing America's crumbling infrastructure is job one -- not boosting Big Oil's profits? Unfortunately, by tying transportation programs to controversial and dangerous efforts to require oil drilling in areas that have long been protected, and constructing a dirty oil pipeline, the House Republicans leadership is hijacking a must-pass bill in order to advance an extreme agenda. This is bad policy and bad politics --designed to fail. The result will be that no transportation bill will pass Congress this year, for which you can be sure that Republicans will try to pass the blame.

### Ext – Spending (General)

#### Obama is hinging the election on REDUCING spending – the plan causes independents to vote Republican

Stephanie Kirchgaessner, “Obama looks to independent voters,” April 15 2011, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7dd54d5c-678c-11e0-9138-00144feab49a.html#axzz1T844vB9m

Barack Obama is betting that his attack on the Republican deficit reduction plan, which he has derided as un-American, will resonate with independent voters as he prepares to hit the campaign trail next week. The president will hold town hall meetings in California and two swing states: Nevada and Virginia. The political winds seemed to shift in favour of Democrats this week, with Mr Obama looking – for the first time in months – as if he is primed to lead his party into the difficult fiscal battles that lie ahead. It was, at the same time, a tumultuous week for the increasingly divided Republican majority in the House of Representatives. Party lawmakers called for their leaders to be more aggressive in demanding spending cuts and almost unanimously endorsed a 2012 budget plan that could have dire political consequences in the next election. The proposal by Republican Paul Ryan to cut $5,800bn in the next decade and transform Medicare, the insurance programme for the elderly, passed 235 to 193 in the House without a single Democratic vote. House passes 2012 budget Republicans in the House of Representatives united on Friday behind a 2012 budget plan slashing trillions of dollars in government spending while cutting taxes. The vote effectively serves as the Republicans’ opening gambit in what are likely to be contentious negotiations with President Barack Obama and his Democrats over debt and deficits in the coming months. The U.S. Congress must decide within weeks on raising the $14,300bn US debt ceiling. By a vote of 235-193, the House passed the plan written by House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan for the 2012 fiscal year beginning October 1. Democrats rejected the measure, which proposes slashing spending by nearly $6 trillion over a decade and reducing benefits for the elderly and poor. All but four Republicans supported it. There is almost no chance of the Senate approving the measure in its current form. The White House swiftly condemned the measure but said it was committed to working with Republicans to bring down record deficits that all sides acknowledged imperil the country’s economic future. Reuters “I think Obama has had his best week in a while,” said Democratic strategist James Carville. “His speech really has got Democrats excited again. Also, they feel they are on the right side of public opinion here.” Mr Obama’s address on Wednesday satisfied the liberal base by reaffirming his support of tax increases for the wealthy to pay for entitlement programmes for the poor and elderly. It also spoke to independent voters who abandoned Democrats in last year’s congressional election by reassuring them that he believed the deficit required immediate action.

### HSR Links

#### Voters reject the high spending cost of high-speed rail

Brian Koenig, 6-7-2012, “California Voters Turn on High-Speed Rail Project, The New American,” p. <http://www.thenewamerican.com/usnews/politics/item/11646-california-voters-turn-on-high-speed-rail-project>)

After enduring a series of financial and logistical hiccups, California’s landmark high-speed rail project has become increasingly unpopular among voters, as the project’s enormous price tag continues to inflate and as the state’s budgetary woes grow more severe. Without a concrete plan for funding, supporters of the state’s high-speed rail project pitched a revised proposal in April to lawmakers and the general public. Due to severe budget constraints, the updated plan narrowed the scope of the project while speeding up construction to save money. Furthermore, about $1 billion in voter-approved bonds will be available to revamp existing tracks, which will purportedly make rail service more efficient and potentially bring in more customers. In a previous article, The New American reported on the revised proposal: The newly minted plan expedites completion of the first true U.S. high-speed rail system, moving it to 2028, trimming the project timeline by five years and shaving $30 billion off the original budget drafted last year by the California High-Speed Rail Authority. In 2008, when residents first voted to authorize the bonds, they were told the overall cost of the project would be $45 billion — and four years later, the total became $98 billion. The new proposal has reduced that number to $68.4 billion, still $23.4 billion more than the original total. However, despite the purported cost savings, the rail system still relies heavily on shaky federal funding and speculative private-sector investments. "We've seen numbers in the $30 billion, $40 billion, the $90 billion range, and now we're back in the $60 billion range," Sen. Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto) said at the time. "I think there is understandably both some confusion and skepticism about what is the system going to cost, and then there's the question of where is the money going to come from?" Due to such uncertainty, voters in the state are turning on the project, as a new poll conducted by USC-Dornsife and the Los Angeles Times found that 55 percent of California voters want the $9-billion bond issue — which was approved in 2008 to fund early stages of the rail system — back on the ballot. And a startling 59 percent affirmed that they now would vote against it.

#### California voters will reject HSR construction

Los Angeles Times, 6/2/2012, “Voters have turned against California bullet train, polls show”, p. <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/02/local/la-me-0603-bullet-poll-20120604>)

California voters are losing faith in a proposed $68-billion bullet train project, saying the state has higher priorities, they would seldom use the service and they would halt public borrowing for construction if they could, a USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times poll found. A strong majority of voters have turned against the project just as Gov. Jerry Brown is pressuring the Legislature to green-light the start of construction in the Central Valley later this year, a major step in the plan to connect Los Angeles and San Francisco with high-speed rail service by about 2028. In a state renowned for betting big on mega-infrastructure projects, including the world's most famous freeways and canals that move oceans of water across hundreds of miles, the fast-approaching decision on the bullet train project marks a historic Golden State moment. Whether eroding public support will sway the Legislature is unclear. Brown, the Obama administration, labor unions and Democratic leaders, including Rep. Nancy Pelosi of San Francisco, are ramping up pressure on key state senators to cast aside doubts and commit funding this summer for an initial 130-mile section of track. But the new poll numbers show that proceeding could put lawmakers on the wrong side of public opinion. Across the state, 55% of the voters want the bond issue that was approved in 2008 placed back on the ballot, and 59% say they now would vote against it.

### Ext – HSR Really Expensive

#### High-speed rail will cost hundreds of billions

Joshua Rogers, J.D. University of Illinois College of Law, Spring 2011, The Great Train Robbery: How Statutory Construction May Have Derailed an American High Speed Rail System, University of Illinois Journal of Law, Technology & Policy, p. Lexis

Not surprisingly, estimates of the cost of high speed rail infrastructure construction vary widely. n104 Some estimate the total cost of developing high speed rail in the east and the west coast will be approximately $ 800 billion based on the cost of Spain's high speed rail system. n105 Under that same comparison, a comprehensive U.S. system would cost approximately $ 1.5 trillion. n106 Another estimate has the California corridor alone costing $ 33 to $ 37 billion. n107 That route comprises 8% of the track miles anticipated for a corridor system, n108 so a rough estimate would place the entire corridor system cost at $ 370-$ 460 billion. Another simple estimate can be calculated by multiplying the route length by cost per track mile. Dedicated lines (for enhanced steel wheel or tilting train systems) cost between $ 30-$ 50 million per mile to construct. n109 When multiplied by the 8,439 mile length of the proposed corridor system, n110 the dedicated lines of a corridor system would cost approximately $ 253-$ 422 billion to construct. And, that estimate does not include the costs of either articulated trainsets, which run $ 40 to 50 million each or new high speed rail stations. n111 Given the above analysis, it is safe to say that a U.S. high speed rail network of heavy traffic corridors would cost anywhere from $ 400-$ 800 billion.

### Independent Voters Key

#### Independent voters will swing the election --- they make up 40% of the vote

Huma Khan, ABC News Analyst, 1-9-2012, Independent Voters on the rise But Do They Matter?, ABC News, p. <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/01/independent-voters-on-the-rise-but-do-they-matter/>)

A day before the nation’s first primary in New Hampshire, Republican front-runner Mitt Romney is busy courting independent voters, a burgeoning group that has the power to sway the results in this year’s presidential election. Forty percent of voters identified themselves as politically independent in 2011, according to a new Gallup poll released today, the highest number recorded in the poll yet. The previous high for independents was 39 percent in 1995 and 2007. Democrats won both presidential races in the following years. Independent voters are an increasingly important voting bloc. They have outnumbered both Democrats and Republicans continuously for the past two and a half years, by far the longest period in which they’ve done so in ABC News-Washington Post polls dating back to 1981.

#### Independent voters are uniquely key in this polarized atmosphere --- most partisan voters have made up their mind

Judy Woodruff, 2-29-2012, “Woodruff: Will Independents Return to Obama in 2012?, The Rundown,” p. <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/2012/02/woodruff-will-independents-return-to-obama-2012.html>

There's a lot of talk thrown around in every election about the influence of independents -- voters who are registered as neither Democrat nor Republican or who swing back and forth. To listen to some pundits (even this reporter has been guilty of this), independent voters hold awesome power in close elections. This may be one election when that conventional wisdom holds up. With a stubbornly polarized atmosphere and partisans on each side fiercely holding to the candidates in their party, the role played by swing voters becomes even more significant. In recent years, independents have made up about 30 percent of the electorate. Republicans and Democrats split most of the other 70 percent, leaving a little room for minority parties. In 2008, President Obama won 52 percent of independent voters, helping propel him to the presidency. This year, there's good reason to believe those same voters who sided with Obama -- rather than the 44 percent of independents who went with Sen. John McCain -- will determine the outcome. First, it's safe to assume almost all self-described Republicans and Democrats will vote for their party's candidate. And it's almost as safe to assume that the McCain independents in 2008 will be reluctant to switch to Obama four years later. That leaves the focus on the Independents who swung to Obama four years ago. They are the subject of a paper by two policy analysts at the Third Way, a Washington, D.C.-based centrist think tank. According to Michelle Diggles and Lanae Erickson, the Obama independents of 2008 have certain qualities that may help us understand which way they'll go in 2012. Diggles and Erickson identify 10 qualities in particular but stress four. First, Obama independents are the most moderate segment of the electorate. Second, they are true swing voters in that nearly half of them did not vote for the Democratic candidate in 2004. Third, they look like the U.S. in that they include more women and are more racially diverse than McCain independents. Fourth, they are secular and attend church less often. With growing signs that independent voters may make up the highest proportion of the electorate since 1976, all eyes are on these prized citizens. But as Diggles and Erickson note: "Not all independents are the same, and the real showdown for 2012 is over who will win the Obama independents." They said that if Obama can win the majority of them, he will win re-election. But if he does no better among them than Democrats did in the 2010 congressional elections when a quarter of the Obama independents voted Republican, the story could be different. Watching how Obama appeals to this crucial voting group is one story we plan to watch throughout this exciting election.

#### A close uniqueness debate magnifies the importance of the link --- independent voters are swing close elections

Stephen Kaufman, 4-13-2012, Who Are America’s Independent Voters? Why Are They Crucial?, International Information Program Digital, p. <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2012/04/201204133847.html#axzz1sqNkxizT>

The United States may have a political system dominated by two parties, Republican and Democratic, but according to a recent poll, more Americans identify themselves as being independent rather than belonging to either party, and the historical record has shown that independents tend to sway the outcome of U.S. elections. According to a Gallup Poll released in January, the number of Americans identifying themselves as independent rose to 40 percent, the highest level ever measured by Gallup, followed by Democrats and Republicans with 31 percent and 27 percent, respectively. But according to Tara McGuinness, a senior vice president at the Washington-based public policy research and advocacy group Center for American Progress, the apparent surge in the number of independents does not mean that most votes in the November presidential election between President Obama and his probable opponent, former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, are undecided. Speaking at the Washington Foreign Press Center April 13, McGuinness said perhaps half of independents actually lean toward one of the two parties. In reality, she said, only about 15 percent of American voters are truly independent, voting sometimes for Democrats and sometimes for Republicans, and they are statistically less likely to vote than their partisan counterparts. U.S. presidential elections are often very close in terms of the popular vote. In 2008, President Obama beat Arizona Senator John McCain with 52.9 percent of the popular vote, compared to 45.7 percent for McCain. That figure closely resembles the fact that Obama won 52 percent of independent voters, compared with 44 percent for McCain. “As independents go, frequently elections go,” McGuinness said. “Especially in close elections, you could not win … [by] simply targeting independent voters, but frequently you cannot win an election without targeting

## Obama Bad Links

### 1nc Links – TI helps Obama

#### Funding Transportation Infrastructure popular and can swing elections – prefer ev about likely voters.

HNTB ’12 [National highway survey polled a random nationwide sample of 1,024 Americans April 2-10, 2012. It was conducted by Kelton Research. Quotas were set to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total U.S. population ages 18 and over. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percent. HNTB Corporation is an employee-owned infrastructure firm serving public and private owners and contractors. “Americans value highways and bridges as a national treasure” – May 18th – http://www.hntb.com/news-room/news-release/americans-value-highways-and-bridges-as-a-national-treasure]

A new survey from HNTB Corporation finds two-thirds (66 percent) of Americans who intend to vote during this year's presidential election feel that a candidate's standing on American transportation infrastructure will influence their decision; more than one in five (22 percent) say this will be extremely influential on who they vote for. "Our highways, bridges and other transportation infrastructure are essential assets that support growth and investment in the U.S. economy," said Pete Rahn, HNTB leader national transportation practice. "People expect them to be resilient, reliable and safe." Clearly, Americans hold the nation's infrastructure in high regard. Nearly nine in ten (89 percent) Americans feel it’s important for the federal government to fund the maintenance and improvements of interstate highways. Yet, this infrastructure isn’t receiving the fiscal attention it deserves. Congress recently approved the ninth extension of transportation legislation that originally expired in 2009. The Highway Trust Fund – due to inflation, rising construction costs and increasingly fuel efficient vehicles – no longer collects enough money to support the U.S. surface transportation system, remaining solvent only through a series of infusions from federal general revenue funds. More than half of Americans (57 percent) believe the nation’s infrastructure is underfunded. The uncertainty over a long-term bill also is a challenge for state departments of transportation, which rely heavily on federal funding to support major highway and bridge programs, and creates ambiguity for planners and contractors who need the certainty of a long-term bill to commit to large, complex multiyear projects. "The absence of a long-term bill is hurting our economic competitiveness," said Rahn. "Recent efforts by the House and Senate to move discussions into a conference committee and hammer out potential details of a bill are a step in the right direction, but what’s really needed is a stable, long-term authorization that can adequately pay for our transportation system." Overall, 4 in 5 (80 percent) Americans would rather increase funding and improve roads and bridges than continue current funding levels and risk allowing our roads and bridges deteriorate.

#### Transportation legislation is a win for Obama --- looks like job creation

David Lightman, Transportation Spending – Washington Spin Makes Good Look Even Better, 3-12-2012, McClatchy, p. http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2012/03/12/141581/transportation-spending-washington.html)

The Senate on Tuesday plans to debate, and likely pass this week, an ideal election-year bill: a bipartisan plan to spend billions on highway and transit projects. Passage of the bill not only would be an economic boost, but it would serve several important political purposes. Lawmakers are boasting how the $109 billion, two-year measure would save or create as many as 2.8 million jobs. They are congratulating one another for working across party lines, a trait that hasn't been evident much in recent years. And they can go home and point to rutted roads and congested highways and brag that they did something about it. Or can they? "The highway bill is fairly routine. It's not like a special stimulus bill," said Robert Bixby, executive director of the nonpartisan Concord Coalition, a budget watchdog group. While the bill is welcome as a job producer, he said, "it's not going to make a significant dent in the jobs market." Politicians, though, tout the bill as a vital jobs measure. "This is an important piece of legislation. Not dealing with tens of jobs or hundreds of jobs or thousands of jobs, but millions of jobs," said Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev. Many House of Representatives Republicans prefer a longer-term approach. The House is expected to consider legislation later this month. "At this point in time, the plan is to bring up the Senate bill," said House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio. Independent analysts tended to agree with Bixby. "The bill does take steps in the right direction," said Joshua Schank, president and chief executive officer of the Eno Center for Transportation, a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank. But, he said, "There's a huge amount of politics here. Congress wants to look like they're doing something for the economy, and that they're doing something in a bipartisan way."

### 2nc – Jobs Link

#### Passage is key to Obama’s jobs pitch – he gets credit and it swings the election – even GOP voters support spending

Donna Cooper, Senior Fellow Economic Policy, Center For American Progress, 1-25-2012, http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2012/01/infrastructure\_sotu.html

Will Congress Block Infrastructure Spending? President Obama’s Defeat Is More Important than Job Creation Just as America refocused its war resources on building our nation’s highway system after World War II, President Barack Obama’s State of the Union address included a courageous call for Congress to redirect half of the funds formerly claimed for the war in Iraq to rebuild our nation’s crumbling infrastructure. His strong pitch for putting Americans to work repairing our infrastructure is an essential element of the president’s strategy to help the middle class grow and prosper. At first glance it would appear that the president’s call to invest in infrastructure should enjoy wide bipartisan support. The leadership of both parties in Congress is on record as strong advocates for rebuilding the nation’s roads, bridges, rail, ports, and airports. On Fox News earlier this week, Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH) said he wants the president to follow the recommendations of the White House Jobs and Competitiveness Council on increasing federal investments in infrastructure (look for the transcript on the speaker's blog). And Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) is on the record saying, “Everybody knows we have a crumbling infrastructure. Infrastructure spending is popular on both sides. The question is how much are we going to spend.” Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) also strongly support President Obama’s infrastructure plans. But bipartisanship isn’t always what it seems, especially when it comes to infrastructure. In 2011 Republicans in the House and Senate unveiled a new strategy that linked new infrastructure investments with divisive environmental proposals. They know this linkage is unacceptable to the president, Senate Democrats, and most of the American public. Yet congressional Republicans are making this push so they can block movement to create jobs and rebuild our infrastructure while sounding like they are in favor of policies that do both. This is a serious claim, but the evidence is clear. In the past year, instead of rolling up their sleeves and drafting long-term highway and aviation spending bills, the House leadership cranked out a package of bills that include measures to weaken clean water and clean air protections and to restrict union organizing. They disingenuously called this a "jobs package." In spite of the compelling evidence that federal investments in infrastructure are an effective tool for creating jobs—the U.S. Department of Transportation 2007 estimates indicated that $1 billion in highway investments can create 27,800 jobs—this “jobs package” included the House-passed fiscal year 2012 budget bill that makes deep cuts in spending for highway and other surface transportation repairs. This package of bills willfully neglects the dire state of our aging infrastructure and the need to create more well-paying construction jobs. They haven’t stopped there. While ignoring the president’s very popular American Jobs Act, they’ve joined the all-out offensive campaign to push the environmentally dangerous Keystone pipeline project, claiming it as their solution to the jobs crisis. This project is more like a jobs pipedream. It’s already three years behind schedule and may never see the light of day due to broad-based U.S. opposition to building the pipeline, including from the Republican governor of Nebraska, who opposes the pipeline route through his state. None of this is news to the House Republicans. They are desperate to shift attention away from their failure to advance legislation to address our nation’s crumbling infrastructure because they are more concerned with blocking a jobs victory for President Obama that would help him win the 2012 presidential election. Emblematic of this strategy was the announcement in a November House leadership press conference where Speaker Boehner indicated that he intended to release a multiyear highway funding bill early in 2012 and fund it with revenues dependent on a massive expansion in oil-and-gas drilling offshore and on public lands, including in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. The only problem is that the House leadership knows that this drilling-dependent approach is likely to be dead on arrival in the Senate. Just this past May, 57 senators voted against a motion to proceed to consider the House bill to permit expanded offshore oil-and-gas drilling. If the House leadership were sincere about creating new construction jobs, then why not start by getting behind a bill that can pass both chambers so that private contractors can get to work repairing more of the 150,000 bridges that need it or the $52.3 billion in improvements needed at the nation’s airports? Instead we are now on the eighth temporary extension of a federal highway bill that expired in 2009 and now only runs through the end of March 2012. Then there’s the Federal Aviation Administration funding bill. Yesterday before the president’s State of the Union address, House Transportation Committee Chairman John Mica (R-FL) held a vote for the 23rd temporary extension of the legislation that will provide funding for our airport safety and construction only through the end of February 2012. These extensions enable the status-quo level of inadequate funding for infrastructure to limp along while our national assets crumble. The House Republicans have blocked the passage of a long-term aviation funding bill for the past two years, demanding that arcane and unfair union election rules be included in the bill. As of today a compromise among all parties takes the union issue off the table. But there are many more details to work out, including the level of funding and what is funded. Given the Republican track record on passing the legislation that is needed to rebuild our infrastructure, it is premature to consider this aviation funding bill a done deal. The House is not the only problem. Sen. Reid late in 2011 put the president’s American Jobs Act, which included $60 billion to repair our schools and fund a National Infrastructure Bank, to a vote, but Senate filibuster rules that require 60 favorable votes to put a bill on the floor for consideration made moving this infrastructure funding bill impossible. After failing to reach that 60-vote threshold, Sen. Reid said, “Republicans think that if the economy improves, it might help President Obama. So they root for the economy to fail and oppose every effort to improve it.” Indeed, Sen. McConnell blocked passage of the Senate version of the Jobs Act while lambasting the president for pointing it out and blasting the Senate Democrats for not working with the House Republicans to reach a compromise. But that statement begs the question of why McConnell isn’t working with his own party’s leadership in the House to make sure the Senate receives a bill that has a chance of a positive vote. The answer is clear: The Republican leadership is very concerned that responding to the American popular call for infrastructure investment will benefit President Obama politically—never mind the pain suffered by the American people and our future economic competitiveness by their failure to act. The president should not be deterred, however, by the roadblocks he faces in Congress. In his speech in Kansas this past December, he summoned the nation to redouble its commitment to an economy that lifts all boats. Echoing President Theodore Roosevelt’s progressive sentiments, he said: We simply cannot return to this brand of "you're on your own" economics if we're serious about rebuilding the middle class in this country. We know that it doesn't result in a strong economy. It results in an economy that invests too little in its people and in its future. We know it doesn't result in a prosperity that trickles down. It results in a prosperity that's enjoyed by fewer and fewer of our citizens.

#### It’s the number one voter priority

Rockefeller Foundation, 11(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

This Rockefeller Foundation Infrastructure Survey highlights 4 key findings: American voters see improvement in transportation infrastructure as a way to improve the economy and their quality of life: With federal unemployment rates hovering at 9%, Americans feel that improvements to transportation and infrastructure will create millions of jobs – eight in ten voters think transportation and infrastructure will boost local economies and create jobs including 64% of Tea Party supporters and 66% of Republicans. American voters are looking for consensus and cooperation in Washington: Americans want their elected officials to work together, especially around the issue of transportation and infrastructure. 66% of voters say this is a time where they would like leaders in Washington to make compromises and seek common ground). More than any other issue tested, American voters would like to see compromise on legislation related to transportation and infrastructure (71%). American voters see room for improvement in how government spends money on infrastructure: With a high federal deficit, Americans overwhelmingly say that that current government spending on building and maintaining transportation infrastructure is inefficient and unwise – 64% overall and 72% of Republicans. Americans support a host of reforms aimed at making spending more efficient while still producing results. For instance, 90% support allowing local regions to have some input on how transportation dollars are used in their area. American voters are open to several funding streams for national transportation projects: With overwhelming support for transportation and infrastructure improvements, Americans are open to several funding streams. Seventy-eight percent encourage more private investment and 72% of voters support imposing penalties on projects that go over budget or exceed their deadline. Sixty percent of voters support establishing a National Infrastructure Bank, 59% support issuing new transportation bonds and 58% support eliminating subsidies for American oil companies that drill in other countries. Only 27 percent support increasing the gas tax, although almost half of all respondents believe it increases annually (it has not increased since 1993). “As the transportation debate in Washington begins to heat up, this new Rockefeller Foundation Infrastructure Survey shows that the American people, no matter their political party, support transportation and infrastructure reform, said Marcia L. Hale, President of Building America’s Future Education Fund. “As voters continue to demand that economic reforms come ahead of politics, I call on all our representatives in Washington to listen closely to what the public is saying.”

### 2nc – Governance Link

#### Plan is the single most important issue to demonstrate effective governance

Rockefeller Foundation, 11(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

Key Findings Voters—be they Democrats, Republicans, or independents—are looking for cooperation and consensus in Washington. As has been the case for well over a year, a majority of the public believe that things in the country are off on the wrong track—55% say this is the case, while 33% say things are headed in the right direction. One of the key things the public is looking for right now is for elected leaders to work together. Two-thirds (66%) of voters say this is a time where they would like leaders in Washington to make compromises and seek common ground, compared with just 20% who say leaders should hold fast to their positions (another 10% say it depends on the issue). Interestingly, this sentiment crosses party lines—74% of Democrats, 65% of independents, and 58% of Republicans say leaders should be seeking common ground. Even a plurality (46%) of voters who identify as Tea Party supporters want common ground, versus 34% who say leaders should hold fast to their positions. Voters want common ground on transportation legislation more than on any other issue. Americans want leaders to seek common ground across a host of issues, but they want it on transportation legislation more than any other area. 71% of voters say there should be common ground on this issue—higher than other major issues—while 19% say leaders should hold fast to their positions, which is lower than other major issues. By comparison, the next-highest issue is legislation dealing with the budget deficit, where 69% would like to see common ground and 25% want to see leaders holding fast to their positions. This pattern holds across other issues as well, from energy development to health care reform to tax cuts to Social Security.

#### That’s key to Obama victory and independent voters – regardless of plans popularity

Will Marshall, President and Founder of PPI, Progressive Policy Institute, Politico.com, 3-17-2012, http://progressivepolicy.org/tag/deficits-and-debt/page/3)

Obama was elected on a promise to tackle the nation’s biggest challenges — with health reform as Exhibit A. Independent voters have drifted away from his winning 2008 coalition during the past year, in part because they are losing confidence in the Democrats’ ability to govern. The party may thus have more to fear from wasting a year to produce nothing than from passing a controversial bill. Failure won’t just make Democrats look bad; it will also vindicate the Republicans’ hyperpartisan campaign to torpedo comprehensive reform.

### 2nc – Labor Unions Link

#### The plan is massively popular with unions

Keith Laing, Transportation Columnist @ The Hill, 6-12-2012, <http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/231939-house-senate-highway-funding-talks-veering-toward-stalemate>)

Supporters of a multiyear bill found reason to cheer Friday when the House voted to defeat a motion to instruct conferees to limit spending levels on the proposed transportation bill. “An overwhelming House majority…rejected a motion that would have done serious damage to our nation’s transportation system and delivered a deathblow to our economy,” AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department President Ed Wytkind said in a statement. The motion, from Rep. Paul Broun (R-Ga.), called for limiting spending on the highway bill to the amount of money that is collected through the 18.4 cents-per-gallon gas tax.

#### Key to Obama victory – plan revitalizes their support

Dave Boyer, Columnist, Washington Times, 2-17-2012, http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/feb/16/visit-to-boeing-plant-viewed-as-a-victory-lap/

Mr. Obama "is certainly indebted to organized labor," Mr. Semmens said. At the same time, some union leaders have been diverting resources away from national Democratic campaign committees and toward states such as Wisconsin and Ohio where Republicans have waged campaigns to eliminate or roll back collective-bargaining rights. AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka has spoken of a new strategy of labor forging an independent voice separate from the Democratic Party. Mr. Trumka also voiced anger last summer with Mr. Obama for his negotiations with congressional Republicans on debt reduction. Since then, Mr. Obama has promoted a plan to spend hundreds of billions of dollars to create construction jobs and to hire more teachers and police officers. In what is viewed as a tight presidential election, Mr. Obama's campaign team will need enthusiastic union support for a strong get-out-the-vote effort. Several trade unions have threatened to boycott the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., because of its location in a right-to-work state and their disappointment with the weak economy.

### Airport Investment Popular

#### Investment in airports is popular with the public – Obama gets the credit

Volodymyr Bilotkach, Department of Economics, University of California, Irvine, October 2010, <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~vbilotka/Draft_September10.pdf>

The federal government plays a crucial role in the infrastructure investment in the United States, including allocation of funds to the airports. Given that airports are perceived to bring substantial benefits to the respective communities, federally funded airport infrastructure projects are both sought after, welcomed, and should be beneficial to the politicians capable of securing the funds. Complicated structure of the American political system creates possibilities for strong influence of political factors on the process of allocation of infrastructure investment funds. Understanding the role of politics in this area is of no trivial importance, as currently perception of the airports’ role is being revised. An increasing number of countries have started viewing airports as the firms rather than the infrastructure objects. Privatization and deregulation of the airports is also becoming more common. It is believed that involvement of the private sector will bring about efficiency gains, and that privately run airports may be more willing and able to contribute to solving the congestion problem. This study offers the first look at the issue of impact of political factors on the aviation infrastructure investment in the USA. We take advantage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 (more broadly known as the Stimulus) to examine contribution of political factors to allocation of the $1.1 billion worth of the airport grants included into the package. The Stimulus provides an excellent case for studying political economy of airport (and more generally, infrastructure) investment, at least as far as involvement of the federal government is concerned. The law was set up rather hastily – Barack Obama was elected President in November of 2008, inaugurated on January 20, 2009, and ARRA became law on February 17, 2009. The criteria for the airport infrastructure projects to be funded under the ARRA were rather vague 2 . We can therefore suspect that the airport infrastructure grants could have been used by the Administration, or the Congress as a mechanism to reward districts which brought more votes in the latest election. Additionally, members of the corresponding Congress Committees (in particular, of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure) might have used ARRA as an opportunity to bring more money to their districts. Empirical research on the impact of politics on transport infrastructure investment deals mostly with the European data. The studies examining US evidence are rare, and include McFadden (1976) and Knight (2004). The former study looks at determinants of highway project selection by the California Division of Highways, while the latter examines congressional voting on transportation projects. Our data analysis showed the association between the airport’s location in the Congressional District with the larger Obama-McCain vote differential in November 2008 Presidential election, and the amount of the ARRA grant received by the airport. At the same time, district level election results are poor predictors of whether the airport receives the grant; and estimation results are not entirely robust to taking election results from the adjacent districts into consideration. We also detect rather robust evidence of the impact of Senate on the grant allocation process. This paper contributes to two broad strains of literature. First, we extend the literature on public provision of infrastructure. Research in this area has been addressing the issues of both effects of the publicly provided infrastructure on private sector productivity, and the determinants of the infrastructure investment. The former literature (e.g., Aschauer, 1989; Holz-Eakin, 1994) is much richer than the latter. Studies of the determinants of public infrastructure investment include Cadot et al. (2006), Castells and Sole-Olle (2005), Kemmerling and Stephan (2002, 2008), Fridstrom and Elvik (1997), Bel and Fageda (2009). All the listed papers study infrastructure investment in Europe, and the latter has the most relevance to our paper, as it examines (and confirms the existence of) the impact of political factors on airport investment in Spain. On the US side, we find a lot of studies asserting the disproportionate power of the Senate 3 (e.g., Hoover and Pecorino, 2005) and Congressional Committees (e.g., Garrett et al., 2006) in allocation of the federal funds across the jurisdictions. Garrett and Sobel (2003) find that states which are politically important to the president will have a higher rate of the disaster declaration; the authors also find the election year effects on the amounts of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster payments. The only studies of political determinants of transport infrastructure investment in the US are McFadden (1976) – an examination of project choices by California Division of Highways, finding limited impact of political determinants on the selection process; as well as Knight (2004), asserting that congressmen respond to common pool incentives when voting for transportation projects.

#### The plan garners votes for Obama

Volodymyr Bilotkach, Department of Economics, University of California, Irvine, October 2010, <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~vbilotka/Draft_September10.pdf>

The literature suggests three possible sources of political influence: the White House (President), the US Senate, and the Congressional Committees. We hypothesize that the impact of the White House should be the strongest in this particular case – recall that passing the economic stimulus legislation was one of Barack Obama’s priorities as a candidate. As for hypotheses related to the impact of the White House, we can suppose that ARRA grants might have been used to reward districts which showed support to Obama, as evidenced by the election results. An alternative explanation – grants could be used to sway voters in the districts where support for Obama was not sufficiently strong – is less plausible, as the grants have been appropriated after the election and almost four years before the next Presidential election is scheduled to take place. Cont… Moreover, study of aviation related infrastructure offers an attractive environment for examining the more general issue of political factors behind the allocation of federal funds. Airports and airfields are ubiquitous, unlike, for instance, tornadoes or corn fields. Also, airports are generally viewed favorably by the public, unlike some other kinds of federally provided infrastructure (e.g., prisons). For this study, we make use of information on the airport infrastructure grants, appropriated under the ARRA of 2009. We supplement this data with airport characteristics, simple demographic measures, congressional district level results of November 2008 election (both Presidential and House), and Senate election results. Data analysis suggests the following general conclusions about the supposed impact of political factors on allocation of ARRA airport infrastructure grants. First, results of the presidential election appear to affect the amounts of grants, but do not have an impact on whether the airport receives the grant. Second, controlling for the State level composition of the Senate, we find that airports located in the States carried by a Republican at the latest Senate election show higher likelihood of obtaining the grant; the amounts involved are also higher. At the same time, airports located in States represented by two Democratic Party senators are also more likely to obtain the grants, other things equal. Third, we do not find strong evidence of impact of the House of Representatives election results or membership in Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Throughout the world, regulators have been reconsidering the role of the airports. Also, our understanding of the determinants of public infrastructure investment, and especially of the role of political factors, is far from complete. This study is one of the first attempts at looking into both issues together. We find that political factors matter. The next issue to be addressed – and the one which will require a more thorough investigation of these political factors – is what our results imply for such important public policy issues as airport regulation, privatization, and congestion.

### HSR Investment Popular

#### Public supports HSR

Rockefeller Foundation, 11(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

The public understands the economic benefits of infrastructure improvement. Four in five (80%) voters agree that federal funding to improve and modernize transportation “will boost local economies and create millions of jobs from construction to manufacturing to engineering.” Just 19% disagree with this. And 79% agree that “in order for the United States to remain the world’s top economic superpower we need to modernize our transportation infrastructure and keep it up to date.” Again, 19% disagree. In fact, voters are in strong agreement with President Obama’s ideas on investment in transportation. Survey respondents were read excerpts from the president’s State of the Union address related to transportation and asked their reaction. “The American Dream has required each generation to sacrifice and meet the demands of a new age. We know what it takes to compete for the jobs and industries of our time. We need the fastest, most reliable ways to move people, goods, and information—from high-speed rail to high-speed Internet. So over the last two years, we've begun rebuilding for the 21st century, a project that has meant thousands of good jobs for the hard-hit construction industry. We should redouble those efforts. We'll put more Americans to work repairing crumbling roads and bridges. We'll make sure this is fully paid for, attract private investment, and pick projects based on what's best for the economy, not what's best for politicians.” Fully 80% of voters agree with this statement, including 46% who strongly agree, while 19% say they disagree. Agreement is nearly unanimous among Democrats (95%) and is exceptionally high among independents (75%) and Republicans (66%). Indeed, 91% agree with the specific idea that “our generation has a responsibility to the future to invest in America's infrastructure--just as our parents and grandparents did”; only 8% disagree with this

#### They support increasing federal funding

Linda Schulz, Vice President, Public Affairs, Harris Interactive –a market research firm, known for the Harris Poll, 9- 24-2011, http://www.harrisinteractive.com/NewsRoom/HarrisPolls/tabid/447/mid/1508/articleId/700/ctl/ReadCustom%20Default/Default.aspx)

A very public issue surrounding high-speed rail today is funding. Several states have declined the use of federal funds including Ohio, Wisconsin and most recently Florida (this survey was conducted before Florida declined funding). However, almost two thirds of Americans (64%) say they somewhat or strongly support using state funding for HSR and a similar number (62%) support using federal funds. The areas with the greatest support for high-speed rail funding include the California corridor where 70% support state funding being used and 73% support federal funding. 70% of both the Pacific North West and Gulf corridor residents also support state funding with more than 60% each also supporting federal funding. Additionally, more than two thirds of Florida residents support state and federal funding of high-speed rail, "a particularly poignant point", notes Schulz, as Florida recently declined federal HSR funding the state had actively sought. While those in states without a high-speed rail project still support state funding (61%), they are more likely to oppose federal funding for these projects (32%).

### Roadway Investment Popular

#### Road investment is politically popular

Will McGahan, 4-2-2012, National League of Cities, <http://citiesspeak.org/2012/04/02/the-state-of-the-cities-in-2012-focus-on-infrastructure-investment/>

Roadway improvements are the obvious first place you think when the topic of transportation infrastructure is brought up. Cities are of course making the necessary improvements there, but they are focusing their efforts on the bigger picture as well. Light rail is a transportation option that a number of communities are focusing on. Oklahoma City is starting construction this year to bring street cars back to the city by connecting the downtown area to the suburbs, while Pasadena is investing $735 million in extending their Gold Line after seeing a record number of riders. The city of Baltimore is making the effort to preserve its position as a bustling port. Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake said “We are preparing the port for growth by reinvesting in our roads and bridges that support freight movement.” For cities, transportation is not simply about the movement of goods and people. Quality transportation infrastructure is vital to the health and happiness of a community. In Eugene, OR Mayor Kitty Piercy spoke about the importance of updating transportation and land use plans to match the overarching goals of the city. Those goals include, “accessible and attractive transportation choices that reduce carbon emissions, set us on the path to the future, and continue to keep our road infrastructure safe and efficient for all modes to move people and goods.” In Pasadena, Mayor Bill Bogaard has set similar goals for his city. The land use and mobility elements of the general plan are being updated to “reflect community priorities such as sustainability, historic preservation, urban design and public participation.” Infrastructure man at Delaware rest stop on I-95. Let’s not pretend that infrastructure improvements aren’t a powerful economic driver as well. The time to improve infrastructure is now, with cheap goods and services. The city of Washington, DC, has leveraged $2.1 billion of investment into 3,000 construction jobs, and anticipates 6,000 permanent jobs upon the completion of fourteen major projects. Mick Cornett, Mayor of Oklahoma City, knows that even the sight of construction can have lasting effects. “When the dirt is flying, people realize that their local businesses and their governments are investing in their future. There may be no better way to visually fuel consumer confidence.” Most recently, Mayor of Chicago Rahm Emanuel announced the Building A New Chicago campaign, which will invest $7 billion over three years in infrastructure improvements, and will create 30,000 new jobs.

#### That’s true across all party lines – no backlash

Ashley Halsey III, staff writer for The Washington Post – Washington Post – 2-14-2011 – lexis

But among voters who responded to the poll, 71 percent said they want elected officials to put aside partisan differences and find a meeting point on transportation. "The American people across all party lines want to see government work toward common ground to actually create change and move issues forward," Turner said. "The results tell us that almost half of all Americans think our roads and transportation options are inadequate, a staggering number when you think about the fact that transportation is infused into almost every part of American life - from how we get to work, how we access services, how businesses make money, and how we value our homes."

### Ext – TI Helps Obama

#### Extend 1nc HNTB – transportation infrastructure spending is popular and a key issue that will swing votes in the coming election – here’s another card that’s shockingly good on this question

A.D.S. ’12[A.D.S. Logistics – This article internally quotes the HNTB Report, a survey conducted by Kelton Research – Our staff of authors at ADS Logistics are pulled from all of our different divisions. Collectively they have over 100 years of experience in the metals, transportation, and supply chain management industry, which they comb through on a daily basis to bring you the best and most important information that you need to know – ADS Logistics Supply Chain Management Blog –

“Transportation Infrastructure Weighs Heavy on the Minds of Voters” – May 29, 2012 – http://www.adslogistics.com/blog/bid/78595/Transportation-Infrastructure-Weighs-Heavy-on-the-Minds-of-Voters]

With all the political issues you will be hearing about as the election nears, one important topic that will be on many Americans’ minds may surprise you. The transportation infrastructure concerns many in this country, and it will be heavily considered before voters decide who they want for the next president. In fact, according to Truckinginfo, about two thirds of American voters claim that each candidate’s stance on transportation infrastructure will help them vote. This is not exactly a hot button issue that you may see discussed on the news frequently, but it is clearly important to the average voter. The survey, which was conducted by HNTB Corp., also discovered the following results: 89% of citizens surveyed feel that federal funding is crucial to improve interstate highways. More than 80% wish to increase current funding for highways. 57% claimed that this country’s infrastructure is underfunded. Why Do Voters Care? Though people may not discuss this issue as much as they talk about hot topics, it is easy to see why it is important to most. When highways and bridges are left to deteriorate, they become unsafe for travel. In addition, when new roads and bridges are not being built as the population grows, travel becomes more difficult. A crumbling infrastructure is not just unsafe, it is also unappealing, as some older roads and bridges have simply become eyesores that passers-by and local residents alike do not want to look at. Putting additional money into improving the infrastructure, therefore, can increase safety, travel, and appeal. So it should be obvious now why so many voters will consider this issue when voting in the upcoming election

#### Every voting demographic loves it – they perceive economic benefit and support federal funding

Rockefeller Foundation, 11(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller

Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

The public understands the economic benefits of infrastructure improvement. Four in five (80%) voters agree that federal funding to improve and modernize transportation “will boost local economies and create millions of jobs from construction to manufacturing to engineering.” Just 19% disagree with this. And 79% agree that “in order for the United States to remain the world’s top economic superpower we need to modernize our transportation infrastructure and keep it up to date.” Again, 19% disagree. In fact, voters are in strong agreement with President Obama’s ideas on investment in transportation. Survey respondents were read excerpts from the president’s State of the Union address related to transportation and asked their reaction. “The American Dream has required each generation to sacrifice and meet the demands of a new age. We know what it takes to compete for the jobs and industries of our time. We need the fastest, most reliable ways to move people, goods, and information—from high-speed rail to high-speed Internet. So over the last two years, we've begun rebuilding for the 21st century, a project that has meant thousands of good jobs for the hard-hit construction industry. We should redouble those efforts. We'll put more Americans to work repairing crumbling roads and bridges. We'll make sure this is fully paid for, attract private investment, and pick projects based on what's best for the economy, not what's best for politicians.” Fully 80% of voters agree with this statement, including 46% who strongly agree, while 19% say they disagree. Agreement is nearly unanimous among Democrats (95%) and is exceptionally high among independents (75%) and Republicans (66%). Indeed, 91% agree with the specific idea that “our generation has a responsibility to the future to invest in America's infrastructure--just as our parents and grandparents did”; only 8% disagree with this

### Ext – Key to Jobs

#### Key to Obama election – jobs perception, key campaign issue, media raises profile

Fawn Johnson, Correspondent, National Journal, 2-17-2012, <http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2012/02/infrastructure-becomes-campaig.php>

Infrastructure Becomes Campaign Fodder If you want proof that President Obama is distancing himself as far from Congress as he can, look no further than his proposed infrastructure budget. The White House proposed $476 billion over six years for surface transportation in the fiscal 2013 budget, which is at least $200 billion more than House Republicans are proposing. It's also at least $150 billion more than current infrastructure spending levels. Obama is aiming high, even though he knows he'll probably get much less. Infrastructure means jobs, and "jobs" are the name of the game for his reelection. It's an added bonus that infrastructure has been in the news, which gives politicians of all stripes the opportunity to exploit it for reelection purposes. Both the House and the Senate are attempting (and so far not succeeding) to pass surface transportation bills. Obama ideally wants to increase federal infrastructure investment, but he has also praised the Senate for its more modest bill that simply maintains the current spending levels over two years. Leaders say it could take a few weeks to get that measure completed.

#### Voters pay attention – it’s a key issue for them

Zach A. Callen, PhD in PoliSci @ U Chicago, August 2009, “The Seams of the State” http://gradworks.umi.com/3369449.pdf

Further, spatial development continues to be a salient political issue into the present day. In 2006, there was conflict over shipping ports that were sold to a foreign company based in Dubai. Much of the concern that originated about this sale related directly to issues of security and questions over where companies that controlled the entrance of goods to American shores should be housed (Sanger, 2006; Sanger and Lipton, 2006). More closely tied to daily experience, following the astronomic rise of gas prices in the summer of 2008, there was increased discussion about mass transit in American cities. Related to automobiles, but more grimly, the bridge collapse in Minnesota during the summer of 2007 raised serious questions about the age and maintenance of American infrastructure (Wald, 2008). The increasing costs and risks of infrastructure maintenance has actually led some states, such as Indiana, to turn over the operation of toll roads to private companies, an action that generated considerable debate (Desk, 2006). Thus, far from being a settled concern, infrastructure projects continue to generate considerable debate, conflict, and attention from voters. The issue that perhaps speaks most strongly to the ongoing pertinence of infrastructure politics is, of course, the sizable role infrastructure played in the most recent presidential campaign. Following his victory, Barack Obama made a sizable commitment to infrastructure repair and development as part of his economic development package in early 2009. Interestingly, an important facet of Obama's plan is the building of several high speed rail corridors throughout the country. Significantly, Obama's infrastructure plans also directly relate to the problem of federalism in American political development. The components of Obama's stimulus package that are geared towards infrastructure programs build directly on local projects, with federal funds being being utilized to jump start state and city e orts stalled by the economic recession (Baker and Broder, 2008). Thus, local competition for limited local resources continues to color modern infrastructure construction, much as in the antebellum period. As evidenced by these brief, contemporary anecdotes, space and how it should be organized within a federal system continues to be a topical political issue that challenges human ingenuity and sparks heated political conflict within the American federal system.

#### It’s the centerpiece of jobs agenda – swings election

USA Today 5-1-2012, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/story/2012-05-01/federal-transportation-highway-bill/54660278/1>

The bill is driven partly by election-year politics. Both Congress and President Obama have made transportation infrastructure investment the centerpiece of their jobs agendas. But the political imperative for passing a bill has been complicated by House Republicans' insistence on including a mandate for federal approval of the Keystone XL oil pipeline. The White House has threatened to veto the measure if it retains the Keystone provision. And there are other points of disagreement between the GOP-controlled House and Democratic-controlled Senate, including how to pay for transportation programs and how much leverage the federal government should have over how states spend their aid money. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has said it's unlikely Congress will pass a final bill until after the November elections. Despite LaHood's pessimism, lawmakers and transportation lobbyists said they believe prospects are improving for passage of a final bill by June 30, when the government's authority to spend highway trust fund money expires. The fund, which pays for roads and transit, is forecast to go broke sometime next year. A House-Senate conference committee is scheduled to begin formal negotiations May 8. It has taken Congress years to get this far. Work on a transportation overhaul began before the last long-term transportation bill expired in 2009. The Senate finally passed a $109 billion bill with broad bipartisan support in March. The bill would give states more flexibility in how they spend federal money, step up the pace of road construction by shortening environmental reviews, impose a wide array of new safety regulations and boost funding for a federal loan guarantee program to encourage private investment for major infrastructure projects. House Republicans, after failing to corral enough votes to pass their own plan, recently passed a placeholder bill that allows them to begin negotiations with the Senate. That bill included the Keystone provision, as well as provisions limiting the public's ability to challenge transportation projects on environmental grounds and taking away the Environmental Protection Agency's power to regulate toxic coal ash. "I feel like people are worn out on this issue and would like to get something done," said Jeff Shoaf, a lobbyist with the Associated General Contractors of America, a trade association for the construction industry. "I think the prospects are good." Winning approval of the Keystone provision, which would give federal regulators no choice but to approve a pipeline to transport oil from Canada's tar sands, appears to be House Speaker John Boehner's top priority, lawmakers and transportation lobbyists said. Republicans portray Obama's delay in the pipeline as a contributor to high gasoline prices. "Boehner wants to push Keystone as hard as he can because he sees it as a political winner," said Joshua Schank, president and CEO of the Eno Center for Transportation, a nonprofit foundation dedicated to improving transportation. Senate Democratic conferees on the bill appear to have enough votes to block inclusion of the Keystone provision in the final product. Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., one of four Senate committee chairmen responsible for a portion of the bill, has announced he'll oppose Keystone and other House environmental provisions. An open question is whether House Republicans will balk on an overall transportation bill if they can't get Keystone. Similarly, despite their public statements, it's unclear whether Senate Democrats would be willing to sacrifice the bill in order to block a Keystone provision, and whether Obama would follow through on his veto threat, especially if the Keystone language were softened in negotiations. The president painted a bleak picture of America's infrastructure in a speech Monday to union workers in the construction industry, saying U.S. highways are clogged, railroads are no longer the fastest in the world and airports are congested. A transportation construction bill would boost employment and the economy, but "the House Republicans are refusing to pass a bipartisan bill that could guarantee work for millions of construction workers," Obama said, referring to the Senate bill. "Instead of making the investments we need to get ahead, they're willing to let us all fall further behind," he said. The transportation bill "is incredibly important to the president," said Ed Wytkind, president of the transportation trades department of the AFL-CIO. Both sides ultimately must decide whether they want an issue to be used as a campaign weapon or an accomplishment they can tout to voters.

#### Swings election – high profile and perceived as key jobs issue

David Lawder, Journalist @ Reuters 6-8-2012, <http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/06/07/usa-infrastructure-boehner-idINL1E8H7AH320120607>)

Signaling that hopes for a deal on a transportation construction bill may be fading, U.S. House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner on Thursday floated the idea of a six-month extension of current funding to push the issue past the November elections. Boehner told reporters that if House and Senate negotiators fail to agree on new long-term funding by June 30, when the latest stop-gap authority for road, bridge and rail transit projects expires, he would not want another short-term extension. "Frankly, I think if we get to June 30, there would be a six-month extension and move this thing out of the political realm that it appears to be in at this moment," Boehner said. The fight in Congress over the transportation bill is one of several being waged between Democrats and Republicans on high-profile issues, with each side trying to gain the upper hand in their bids to win re-election on Nov. 6. The highway bill is particularly important as it would authorize major job-creating construction projects across the United States at a time when the economic recovery is losing momentum and jobs are the top issue for voters. Boehner said he still wanted agreement on a long-term transport bill. But House members are preparing to depart from Washington for another recess next week, leaving just two weeks to reach a deal, pass it through both chambers and get a signature from President Barack Obama. Four weeks of haggling so far has produced little progress on core differences. "I'm very hopeful that they will get into serious discussions quickly," Boehner said. A major sticking point in the House-Senate negotiations over the two-year, $109 billion transportation bill passed by the Senate is House Republicans' insistence on including approval of TransCanada Corp's $7 billion Keystone XL oil pipeline. Asked whether Boehner would insist on Keystone approval as a condition of a six-month extension or agree to a "clean" extension of current law, Boehner's spokesman, Kevin Smith, said no decisions have been made at this point. President Barack Obama opposes any move to fast-track the project until new environmental reviews are completed. The 1,700-mile pipeline, which would carry crude from Canadian oil sands to Texas refineries, was not included in a compromise offer made by lead Senate negotiators Barbara Boxer, a Democrat, and James Inhofe, a Republican. Boehner also has had a difficult time getting his own caucus to support a transportation bill -- even one with Keystone and new oil drilling rights included -- because of its costs. Many fiscal conservatives backed by the Tea Party movement will not support a multibillion spending bill at a time of high budget deficits. DELIBERATE ROADBLOCKS? Since presenting the Senate plan on Tuesday, Boxer has not received a counteroffer from House negotiators in the closed-door talks. The senator from California complained that another extension would exhaust the Highway Trust Fund because it is currently not collecting enough gasoline taxes to support current project spending levels. The fund is expected to be depleted sometime after Oct. 1. "I am very disappointed that Speaker Boehner is even talking about a long-term transportation extension, which would lead to the Highway Trust Fund going bankrupt, when all of our efforts must be focused on passing a transportation bill by the June 30th deadline, Boxer said in a statement. "Three million jobs and thousands of businesses are at stake." Although the current extension is keeping projects going that have already started, the uncertainty over long-term funding is hampering states' ability to proceed with long-term projects, preventing the hiring of hundreds of thousands of idled construction workers. Construction was particularly hard-hit in May's dismal U.S. jobs data released last week, with employment in the sector falling 28,000 during the month. House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi accused Republican leaders on Thursday of trying to undermine Obama by deliberately holding up the transport bill and thus keeping the U.S. economy weak for political gains in November's elections. "They're afraid of passing a transportation that would save more than 2 million jobs, that puts hundreds of thousands of construction workers back on the job," she said.

#### Plan perceived as highly visible jobs win – key to election

Thomas Dorsey, CEO, Soul of America, 1-25-2012, <http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/01/25/on-infrastructure-hopes-for-progress-this-year-look-glum/>

As much as I’d like to disagree, I think you are correct. The Tea Party GOP is determined not to show any more infrastructure success under President Obama at this time. Team Obama realized this fact, so they didn’t name Transportation funding in his SOTU comment “Split the savings from Defense drawdown to rebuild America and pay down the Debt.” Team Obama deliberately withheld that contentious point so the GOP could not pounce on it in post-SOTU media coverage this week. But Obama will have plenty of time to talk and negotiate Transportation funding in the 9 weeks preceding March 31st. Two factors MAY simultaneously occur to change GOP negotiation about Surface Transportation before that date. 1. If Obama’s poll numbers rise, while Congress’ poll numbers remain static by late March, a small group of Congressional GOP, may break from the Tea Party’s iron fist for reasons of self-preservation. Yes the Tea Party will threaten to cut them from funding, but if some Congressional GOP don’t show serious attempts at job creation through at least Highway projects that their constituency can see, they’ll be hitting the bricks after November anyway. 2. In the next 2-3 weeks American public’s appetite for GOP personal attacks will wane. Even though many voters are disappointed that more jobs have not been created on Obama’s watch, they have not seen Gingrich, Santorum or Romney detail realistic job creation plans. To become the GOP presidential nominee, one of them must differentiate from the pack and Transportation funding is a proven means to illustrate realistic job creation. So Congress may negotiate a Transportation bill that includes Highway, Transit and some HSR funding.

Gives Obama a key win – swings election

Keith Laing, Transportation Columnist @ The Hill, 6-12-2012, <http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/231939-house-senate-highway-funding-talks-veering-toward-stalemate>)

But one transportation industry source said on Friday that Boehner raising the possibility of what would be a tenth temporary extension of current highway funding, as well as the recent barbs thrown between Senate Majority Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.), showed the talks are now on “life support.” “I think House GOP, led by Cantor, is trying to run out the clock to the fall election and deny Obama a win,” the source told The Hill. Reid accused Cantor last week of trying to sabotage the U.S. economy by blocking an agreement on the transportation bill, a suggestion that was called “bull----” by a spokesman for Boehner. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (Calif.) echoed the sentiment from Reid, saying the GOP only wanted to approve extensions even though they are “using up the trust fund, the highway trust fund, they are hurting job creation — in fact people will lose jobs — and it's just the wrong thing to do." The sharp rhetoric from the highest-ranking leaders in both political parties is causing supporters of the multiyear highway bill to become more pointed in their comments about the ongoing congressional negotiations. “We’re doing more than urging them; we’re calling them out,” Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa (D) said on a conference call organized by the U.S. Conference of Mayors on Friday.

#### Plan swings election – key to economic message and outweighs spending turn

Reuters, 2-13-2012, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/13/us-usa-budget-idUSTRE8191MJ20120213>

Obama's 2013 spending proposal is expected to go nowhere in a divided Congress and is widely seen as more of a campaign document that frames his economic pitch to voters and seeks to shift the focus from deficits to economic growth. It fleshed out a major theme of his re-election campaign: "economic fairness." Obama wants wealthier Americans to bear more of the burden of slashing a federal deficit that was a trillion plus dollars for a fourth year in a row. The $3.8 trillion budget proposal is a "reflection of shared responsibilities," the Democratic president said at a campaign-style event in Annandale, Virginia, referring to his call for a minimum 30 percent tax on millionaires. Obama would like to use revenue from the so-called "Buffet Rule," named after billionaire investor Warren Buffett, to replace the Alternative Minimum Tax, which is aimed at ensuring the wealthy pay at least some tax but is now catching many middle class taxpayers. In one of his best platforms to lay out his economic priorities before the November 6 election, Obama called for more than $800 billion for job creation and infrastructure investment, including billions of dollars for roads, railways and schools. Analysts were skeptical of the proposals. "This is all politics; there is no fundamental strategy. This does not answer any of the warnings we saw from S&P," said William Larkin, fixed income portfolio manager at Cabot Money Management in Salem, Massachusetts. Standard & Poor's ratings agency last year cut the United States' top-notch AAA credit rating, citing concerns that Washington lacked the political will to tackle rising debt levels. The annual budget deficit was projected at $1.33 trillion in fiscal 2012, or 8.5 percent of gross domestic product, falling to $901 billion in 2013, or 5.5 percent of GDP. "The president's budget is a gloomy reflection of his failed policies of the past, not a bold plan for America's future. It is bad for job creation, our economy, and America's seniors," said House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner, the top Republican in Congress. Republicans also highlighted Obama's pledge in 2009 to halve the deficit by 2013, a target that he has failed to meet. The White House argues the depth of the recession he faced when he took office demanded emergency spending, and that it was more important to protect growth than impose austerity measures to trim the deficit. Obama's plan sets aside money to hire more teachers, police and firefighters and invest in manufacturing, while extending tax breaks to spur hiring, in an appeal to voters who remain worried about the economic recovery. "At a time when our economy is growing and creating jobs at a faster clip, we've got to do everything in our power to keep this recovery on track," Obama said. Republicans paint the president as a tax and spend liberal while Obama, who will take his plan on the road later this week in a trip to Wisconsin, California and Washington state, casts them as the party of the rich. The budget projects deficits remaining high this year and next before starting to decline, meaning more borrowing that will add well over $7 trillion to the national debt over the next decade. DEAD ON ARRIVAL Congress is free to ignore the plan and Republicans, who control the U.S. House of Representatives, have made clear that it will be dead on arrival as their party prepares an election battle over taxes, spending and the size of the government.

#### Its highly visible – plan gives Obama his biggest legislative victory of year

Yonah Freemark, an independent researcher currently working in France on comparative urban development as part of a Gordon Grand Fellowship from Yale University, from which he graduated in May 2008 with a BA in architecture. He writes about transportation and land use issues for The Transport Politic and The Infrastructurist, 1-25-2012, http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/01/25/on-infrastructure-hopes-for-progress-this-year-look-glum/

Even so, it remains to be seen how the Administration will approach the development of a transportation reauthorization program. Such legislation remains on the Congressional agenda after three years of delays (the law expires on March 31st). There is so far no long-term solution to the continued inability of fuel tax revenues to cover the growing national need for upgraded or expanded mobility infrastructure. But if it were to pass, a new multi-year transportation bill would be the most significant single piece of legislation passed by the Congress in 2012.

### Ext – TI Investment Popular

#### Overwhelming bipartisan public support – key issue for voters

Rockefeller Foundation, 11(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

Even with a highly polarized electorate that remains steadfast in its belief that things in the nation are off on the wrong track there is wide agreement—across the partisan spectrum—that leaders in Washington should be seeking common ground. Nowhere is this more true than legislation related to the country’s transportation infrastructure. Indeed, two in three voters say that making improvements in infrastructure is very important, and most voters say that in its current state the nation’s transportation system is barely adequate. Voters seek better and safer roads and more public transportation options, widely agreeing that the United States would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system.

#### It’s a key issue and all voting demographics love it

Rockefeller Foundation, 11(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

Two in three voters say that improving the nation’s infrastructure is highly important, and many say our current infrastructure system is inadequate. 66% of voters say that improving the country’s transportation infrastructure is extremely (27%) or very (39%) important. Another 27% say it is somewhat important. Just 6% say it is not important. Again, majorities of Democrats (74%), independents (62%), and Republicans (56%) say this is very or extremely important, as do 59% of Tea Party supporters.

### Ext – TI Perceived As Key to Econ

#### Its all about perception – and voters across the board support the plan

Rockefeller Foundation, 11(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

The Bottom Line: Voters of all political stripes are tired of partisan gridlock in Washington—they want leaders to work together and seek compromise to get things done for the country. They overwhelmingly say elected leaders should cooperate when it comes to transportation infrastructure, seeing improvement in this area as a way to improve the economy, make communities safer, and improve Americans’ quality of life. And while voters oppose some funding streams they widely endorse others, and they clearly see a need for reform when it comes to financing transportation projects.

### Ext – Labor Supports Investment

#### Labor unions love infrastructure investment – creates jobs

Doc Hastings, Chair, National Resources Committee, US House of Reps, 2-1-2012, <http://naturalresources.house.gov/News/DocumentSingle.aspx?DocumentID=277534>

Business and Labor Organizations Support Republican Plan to Expand American Energy Production, Create Jobs, and Fund Critical Infrastructure Organizations representing various sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, and energy are joining multiple labor unions to call for passage of energy portions of the American Energy & Infrastructure Jobs Act, a common sense Republican plan to expand American energy production, create jobs and fund high-priority infrastructure projects. What They’re Saying: U.S. Chamber of Commerce “This suite of bills would create jobs while keeping energy prices low, a true win-win scenario for American consumers.” Laborers International Union of North America LIUNA believes that expanding access to America’s domestic energy resources will create good jobs, lower energy prices and generate desperately needed new revenues. The fact that these revenues are intended to help pay for desperately needed infrastructure improvements is a win/win for the American people.” International Union of Operating Engineers Simply put, without an increase in employment in the construction economy, sluggish growth will continue to plague the American macro economy. These will be good-paying jobs for U.S. workers, and this legislation should be a congressional priority.” United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

#### It’s a top labor priority

Erik Siemers, staff, Portland business journal, 1-27-2012, <http://www.bizjournals.com/portland/print-edition/2012/01/27/state-explores-private-equity.html?page=all>

He noted how there’s a growing interest from labor unions in using funds from pensions and other investment assets on infrastructure projects. An example of that came in November, when the American Federation of Teachers — through the union-owned financial services firm Ullico Inc. — said it would invest up to $15 million in infrastructure and energy efficiency projects at Oregon schools. Ullico spokesman Bill Thornton said the company has placed a high priority on infrastructure investments, particularly projects such as toll-roads and sewage treatment plants that generate revenue while also putting union labor to work.

### Ext – Labor Key to Election

#### Unions are essential for Obama victory and he’s losing them now

Elizabeth Flock, columnist @ US News and World Report, 6-13-2012, <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/washington-whispers/2012/06/13/afl-cio-redeploying-funds-from-obama-campaign-to-advocacy-and-infrastructure>)

The AFL-CIO has told Washington Whispers it will redeploy funds away from political candidates smack dab in the middle of election season, the latest sign that the largest federation of unions in the country could be becoming increasingly disillusioned with President Obama. The federation says the shift has been in the works for months, and had nothing to do with the president's failure to show in Wisconsin last week, where labor unions led a failed recall election of Governor Scott Walker. [See: Latest political cartoons] "We wanted to start investing our funds in our own infrastructure and advocacy," AFL-CIO spokesman Josh Goldstein told Whispers. "There will be less contributions to candidates," including President Obama. While there were "a lot of different opinions" about whether Obama should have gone to Wisconsin, according to Goldstein, "this is not a slight at the president." The AFL-CIO has been at odds with the president before Wisconsin on issues such as the public health insurance option and renewing the Bush tax cuts. The shift in funding is significant due to the federation's role in past presidential campaigns, where the AFL-CIO built up a massive political structure in the months leading up the election, including extensive "Get Out The Vote" efforts, as well as financial contributions.

**Unions Key**

Jay Cost, “Beware the Union Label,” NPR, 6-12-2012, http://www.npr.org/2012/06/12/154845061/weekly-standard-beware-the-union-label

Public sector unions on the state and local levels have enjoyed enormous privileges for their 50 years of existence. Like their private sector counterparts, they have used collective bargaining to maximize their pay and benefits. Yet unlike trade and industrial unions, public sector unions essentially bargain with themselves. They are such an integral part of the Democratic coalition — delivering to Democratic candidates and causes not just money but massive numbers of voters and volunteers — that the party dare not defy them. Thus, "negotiations" between Democratic-led governments and public sector unions are really anything but.

#### Unions continue to have tons of clout – they’ll play a key role

The Hill, “Divisions in Dem Coalition Resurface,” 6-11-2012, http://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/231967-as-november-election-nears-splits-in-democratic-coalition-resurface

Outside observers also suggest that reports of the demise of the union movement as a political force in the wake of the Wisconsin vote may be exaggerated. “What I expect to see is a weaker union movement that is less popular, but that doesn’t mean that public employee unions aren’t going to continue to be major players in electoral politics for the foreseeable future,” said Taylor Dark, a political science professor at California State University, Los Angeles, who is an expert on labor unions. “They will continue to have a lot of money and numbers.”

### A2: Public Wants Repairs

#### Voters support not limited to maintenance – want new transportation

Rockefeller Foundation, 11(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

The Rockefeller Foundation funded this survey as part of the Foundation’s Transportation initiative, a $66 million investment aimed at promoting equitable and sustainable transportation policies at the federal and state level. Through this investment, the Foundation is committed to the development of policies that provide access to opportunity, more transportation options and help create vibrant and healthy communities, all while increasing access to good jobs for lower income Americans.

“Half a century ago, Americans built an interstate highway system that enabled unrivaled economic prosperity and opportunity, said Rockefeller Foundation President Judith Rodin. “Today, almost half of Americans think that their transportation options and roads are inadequate. The Rockefeller Foundation Infrastructure Survey shows that American voters want Washington to work together to pass laws that ensure we fix the infrastructure we have and provide more Americans with more transportation options befitting a 21st century economic power.”

#### Voters top priority is new transportation infrastructure – not just repairs

Rockefeller Foundation, 11(Survey Methodology: From January 29 to February 6, 2011, Hart Research (D) and Public Opinion Strategies (R) conducted a national survey of voters on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf>)

Voters’ top priorities for additional infrastructure investments are safer streets and having more transportation options. Voters’ top goal by far is “safer streets for our communities and children”—57% say this should be one of the top-two priorities if more money is invested in infrastructure. This is the top choice for most major subgroups of the electorate. The second-highest priority for voters overall at 32% is “more transportation options.” But there is a socioeconomic difference here—for voters in lowerincome households the second-highest priority (at 37%) is “less money spent out-of-pocket on transportation.”

### A2: Spending Turn (General)

#### Our link outweighs – support for infrastructure investment outweighs concerns about spending or mismanagement – voters perceive economic benefit

Ashley Halsey III, staff writer for The Washington Post – Washington Post – April 24, 2012 – lexis

The plan to energize public support was outlined Monday in a report by transportation experts brought together by the Miller Center at the University of Virginia. After a conference in November, the group concluded that most Americans are aware of the infrastructure crisis and support spending to address it. "Recent public-opinion surveys have found overwhelming support for the idea of infrastructure investment," the report said. "After the 'bridge to nowhere' controversies of recent years, the public has become sensitized to issues of pork-barrel spending and understandably demands to see a clear connection between federal expenditures, actual transportation needs, and economic benefits." Despite apprehension about wasteful spending, the report said, more than two-thirds of voters surveyed by the Rockefeller Foundation said infrastructure improvement was important and 80 percent said spending on it would create millions of jobs. The transportation group, co-chaired by former transportation secretaries Norman Y. Mineta and Samuel K. Skinner, compiled a comprehensive study on infrastructure in 2010. That report estimated that an additional $134 billion to $262 billion must be spent per year through 2035 to rebuild and improve roads, rail systems and air transportation.

#### That’s true for every voting group – it’s a key issue and they want federal funding

Rockefeller Foundation, 2-14-2011, http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/news/press-releases/rockefeller-foundation-infrastructure)

Rockefeller Foundation Infrastructure Survey Reveals Bipartisan Support for Transportation and Infrastructure Investments and Reform Four in five voters agree that federal funding to improve and modernize transportation will boost local economies and create jobs An exclusive Rockefeller Foundation survey released today reveals overwhelming bipartisan support for federal investment in transportation and infrastructure projects. The survey showed that 71% of voters think leaders in Washington should seek common ground on legislation related to roads, bridges and transit systems, including 66% of Tea Party supporters and 71% of Republicans. Two out of three voters say that improving the country’s transportation infrastructure is highly important. Nearly half of all voters said that roads are often or totally inadequate and that only some public transportation options exist. Eighty percent of voters agree that federal funding to improve and modernize transportation will boost local economies and create millions of jobs, and view it as critical to keeping the United States as the world’s top economic superpower.

Perceived as saving money

Richard J. Barcaskey, Executive Director, CAWP, Construction Association of Western Pennsylvania, Pitt Post Gazette, 7-18-11, ln

Neglecting our infrastructure will only force taxpayers to pay more later since it is more expensive to fix broken infrastructure than it is to properly maintain it. The public can discern the difference between wasteful government spending and desperately needed investments that boost economic activity and support private-sector commerce. Let's hope that in the coming months we will see our federal elected officials working to achieve bipartisan support for a bill that is both fiscally responsible and responsive to our nation's very significant transportation needs.

#### Fear of spending crushes Obama with independents and the liberal base

Jackie Calmes, White House Correspondent, NYT, 7-30-2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/31/us/politics/31dems.htm

However the debt limit showdown ends, one thing is clear: under pressure from Congressional Republicans, President Obama has moved rightward on budget policy, deepening a rift within his party heading into the next election. Entering a campaign that is shaping up as an epic clash over the parties’ divergent views on the size and role of the federal government, Republicans have changed the terms of the national debate. Mr. Obama, seeking to appeal to the broad swath of independent voters, has adopted the Republicans’ language and in some cases their policies, while signaling a willingness to break with liberals on some issues. That has some progressive members of Congress and liberal groups arguing that by not fighting for more stimulus spending, Mr. Obama could be left with an economy still producing so few jobs by Election Day that his re-election could be threatened. Besides turning off independents, Mr. Obama risks alienating Democratic voters already disappointed by his escalation of the war in Afghanistan and his failure to close the Guantánamo Bay prison, end the Bush-era tax cuts and enact a government-run health insurance system. “The activist liberal base will support Obama because they’re terrified of the right wing,” said Robert L. Borosage, co-director of the liberal group Campaign for America’s Future. But he said, “I believe that the voting base of the Democratic Party — young people, single women, African-Americans, Latinos — are going to be so discouraged by this economy and so dismayed unless the president starts to champion a jobs program and take on the Republican Congress that the ability of labor to turn out its vote, the ability of activists to mobilize that vote, is going to be dramatically reduced.”

#### GOP base is irrelevant – they’ll be fired up no matter what

Charlie Cook, Cook Political Report, National Journal, 5-7-2012, http://cookpolitical.com/node/12467)

Here’s some totally unsolicited advice from the peanut gallery, first for Mitt Romney and then for Barack Obama. Having devoted every waking hour for the last year and a half to catering to the carnivores in his party, Romney needs to cut back on the red-meat rhetoric that was required of him to win the GOP nomination. The vast majority of conservatives would vote for very nearly anyone running against Obama. In a New York Times piece, Campbell Robertson wrote that “the antipathy toward the current administration among Republican voters, described here in terms ranging from the vulgar to the apocalyptic, can hardly be exaggerated.” While Romney must win a few Democratic votes, he doesn’t need to switch to a vegan or even a vegetarian diet. By the same token, independent and swing voters don’t eat all their meals at steak houses. He needs a more balanced and reasoned rhetoric, appealing to brains and not just to glands. A discussion with Republicans and conservatives about health care reform has usually entailed talking about big government. Independents, meanwhile, were concerned about Obama’s health care law because they already had health insurance. They were reasonably happy with it and were fearful that any major changes to the system would either raise premiums or cut benefits. Unlike conservatives and Republican partisans, independents don’t see health care or any other issue through an ideological lens. Transitioning from primary to general-election politics is rarely easy. Candidates and campaign operatives develop Pavlovian conditioning. For months, they talk exclusively to partisans, looking for rhetoric that will elicit heads moving up and down in agreement. This rhetoric may create frowns or at least cause puzzled responses from swing voters. Sitting Romney down in front of a laptop, watching focus groups with swing voters, may resensitize him.

#### Overwhelmingly popular – it’s a key issue and spending concerns don’t apply

David Madland, Center For American Progress, 3-22-2012, http://www.americanprogressaction.org/experts/MadlandDavid.html

And make no mistake, the broader American public supports increased investments in infrastructure. Ninety-three percent feel making improvements to infrastructure is important; 72 percent support “increasing federal spending to build and repair roads, bridges, and schools”; and 81 percent are prepared to pay more in taxes to do so.

### A2: Spending Turn (Fiscal Discipline)

#### Jobs perception massively outweighs fiscal discipline concerns for voters

Pew Research Center, 1-20-2011, http://www.people-press.org/2011/01/20/about-the-surveys/)

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Jan. 5-9 among 1,503 adults, finds that concern about the budget deficit has increased in recent years. Currently, 64% view reducing the budget deficit as a top priority, up slightly from 60% a year ago, and 53% in 2009. Yet reducing the deficit continues to lag far behind the economy and jobs among the public’s priorities.

#### Fiscal discipline is irrelevant with independent voters

Pew Research Center, 1-23-2012, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/01/23/public-priorities-deficit-rising-terrorism-slipping/>

The number of Republicans rating the budget deficit as a top priority has spiked to 84% from 68% a year ago and just 42% five years ago. Meanwhile Republicans are placing far less emphasis on terrorism, which was their top priority in every year between 2002 and 2008. Today 72% rate it as a top priority, down from 83% a year ago and 93% five years ago. By contrast, the emphasis Democrats and independents give to terrorism and the budget deficit has changed far less.

### A2: Spending Turn (Base O/Ws)

#### Picking fight with GOP base on economic policy and winning mobilizes dem base – vital to Obama’s chances

Michael Tomasky, editor of Democracy: A Journal of Ideas, Newsweek, 6-26-11, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2011/06/26/2012-how-obama-can-mobilize-his-liberal-base.html>

It’s a solid inventory. But it’s countered by the undeniable reality that the country hasn’t noticeably moved in a more liberal direction (quite the opposite), and by the widely held perception among progressives that Obama will never wage fierce battle on behalf of liberal ideals. When I interviewed Justin Ruben, the executive director of MoveOn.org, whose 5 million members (many in swing states) must be revved up and mobilized if the president is to be reelected, he gave me four or five variants of the line “People need to feel like the president and the Democrats are really going to fight for their side.” Unfortunately, making tough, partisan economic arguments has never been the president’s strong suit. “Since the beginning of his candidacy in 2007, Barack has struggled to put together a sustained, winning economic argument,” said Simon Rosenberg of NDN, a Washington-based think tank. “With ‘Morning in America’ not really a viable option for 2012, he is going to have to draw brighter lines with the GOP, and particularly do much more to discredit their failed and reckless economic approach.” The base vote can still emerge in large numbers, but the dominant factor this time won’t be hope and change. Instead, the factors will be fear of the other side, state and local political conditions (think of how motivated Democrats are to regain control of their politics in Wisconsin), and demographic changes that are still redounding to the Democrats’ benefit. And because we elect presidents by states, the place to assess Obama’s prospects is on the ground. Wake County, N.C.; Arapahoe County, Colo.; Franklin County, Ohio—these are representative base Democratic counties. They are in swing states, which means the president will need a big vote in these places to offset a presumed high conservative turnout in other parts of these states. And they are counties that have only recently become solidly Democratic, because of demographic changes. “Obama’s majorities in these counties are not secure,” says Ruy Teixeira, coauthor of the 2002 book The Emerging Democratic Majority, which predicted the bluing of states like then-red Colorado. “He needs a full-bore mobilization effort in these counties to get his supporters out and develop the margins he needs to carry swing states like Ohio, Colorado, and North Carolina.” Cont… That’ll be about the strongest argument Obama can make to base voters: it could, and will, be a lot worse if you don’t vote for me. That’s true, and fear is usually a pretty good motivator in politics. But it still isn’t what people were hoping for, and it seems inevitable that some percentage of the most loyal Democrats will stay home. In these three counties and others like them, that percentage will be the difference between reelection and retirement.

#### Liberal government spending on economy and job growth initiatives boost Obama in key battleground states

Ruy Teixeira and John Halpin, Center for American Progress, November 2011, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/11/pdf/path_to_270_execsumm.pdf>

Given the findings in this paper, Obama’s recent steps to define the election on more progressive terms through a commitment to a new jobs and growth program and a deficit reduction plan based on “shared sacrifice” will likely aid the president politically. Public polling over the past year suggests that a sustained posture of defending the middle class, supporting popular government programs, and calling for a more equitable tax distribution will be popular among many key demographic groups necessary to win in the 12 battleground states analyzed here.

### A2: Obstruction Turn

#### Blaming GOP obstructionism only hurts Obama

Andrew Leonard, Staff Writer @ Salon, 6-4-2012, <http://www.salon.com/2012/06/04/obamas_blame_game_problem/>

Of course, the more time Obama spends blaming Republicans for the current state of the economy, the more he reminds voters a) that the economy sucks and b) of his own inability to overcome GOP obstructionism. It’s a no-win situation, and it invites unappetizing scrutiny of Obama’s record: For example, Obama allowed himself to get sucked into a fight over who could cut the deficit faster when that was the exact wrong strategy, both politically and economically; he failed to pick a major fight with Republicans over getting the right people appointed to the Federal Reserve early enough in his first term; and his efforts to address the foreclosure crisis have been almost comically incompetent. Any sustained campaign of throwing mud at Republicans over blocking Obama’s agenda just reminds us of how bad Obama has been at pursuing his own agenda.

#### Our link outweighs the turn --- wins are more important for Obama than playing the obstruction card

Debra J. Saunders, Columnist @ San Fransisco Chronicle, 1-7- 2012, lexis

The bigger issue, however, concerns Team Obama's apparent decision to win re-election by playing to the liberal base, not the American political middle. While the administration should be working to heal the economy, the administration is busy pointing fingers at bad Republicans. Tea Party Express co-founder Sal Russo likened the Obama strategy to Bush guru Karl Rove's strategy to win re-election in 2004 by ginning up the base. Russo doesn't see how it could work for the Democrats this year. To independent voters especially, the president's failure to work with Congress doesn't compute. "Look, you're president," Russo said. "Why can't you just walk over to Congress and talk to these guys?" To the average Joe, there's only one standard, noted Russo. "You've got to get the job done."

#### Appearing ineffective simply hurts Obama more --- 2010 midterm drubbing proves

Ron Bancroft, independent strategy consultant and president of Bancroft and Company LLC consulting, 7-27-2010, “GOP's obstructionism stains Democrats' image with voters,” http://www.pressherald.com/opinion/gops-obstructionism-stains-democrats-image-with-voters\_2010-07-27.html

GOP's obstructionism stains Democrats' image with voters By not cooperating with the president on his signature issues, Republicans have made it appear he is ineffective. President Obama and his family were in Maine just a week or so ago. By all accounts, they had a typical Maine summer vacation experience, filled with lots of outdoor activities, and the requisite number of lobster rolls. Seeing the president, Michelle and their two girls on summer vacation, enjoying the kinds of things many of us enjoy in the summer, takes some of the edge off the corrosive political dialogue that often magnifies our differences and adds an unpleasant element of personal vilification to national politics. The most recent issue of The Economist has a column "respectfully proposing a temporary ban on references in political debate to both American greatness and American exceptionalism." It makes the case for the ban because those overworked phrases in American political debate have lost all serious meaning. By way of explanation, the British newsweekly refers to President Obama's rather innocent and diplomatic comment in France last year when asked if he believed in American exceptionalism. He said he did -- and also that others like the Brits (it was a British reporter who asked the question) probably thought of themselves as exceptional. Some conservatives have seized on this comment as showing that the president is somehow not worthy of his office. Charles Krauthammer in The Washington Post penned the most recent comments on the president's response -- suggesting that it shows the president does not truly believe in American greatness. We could write Krauthammer's column off as simply representing a slow week and a dearth of good material, but for the fact that his was one of several similar columns on this issue from the pundits of the right. I am sympathetic to The Economist's plea. It is summer -- a time when most Americans put politics aside. We tend to take a more relaxed view on life -- often by getting away for a few days of vacation, by putting aside hefty nonfiction reading for the engaging summer novel, by coming home a little earlier from work and enjoying the coolness of long, light-filled evenings. Some of us even stop watching the news on TV -- a piece of summer relaxation that has the potential to raise one's joyfulness index by several points. Remember back to the election of 2008? It seems so long ago now. Many of us were drawn to candidate Obama that summer and fall because he spoke about a kinder, gentler political dialogue -- a way to bridge our differences and generate bipartisan solutions to our most serious problems. For me it is a stretch to recall how frustrated I was by the uber-partisan politics of George W. Bush. Here we are but two years later right back in the same corrosive dialogue. Whatever happened? From the perspective of this former Republican, much of the blame falls on national Republican leadership. From the beginning of the Obama presidency, Sen. Mitch McConnell, Rep. John Boehner and company made the political calculus that it would be better tactics to simply oppose the president on all issues -- save perhaps the war in Afghanistan. The president certainly tried to bring Republicans on board for the three major initiatives that have defined his presidency: the federal stimulus bill, the health care reform bill, and, most recently, the financial reform bill. Each of these pieces of legislation was landmark in scope, yet fewer than a handful of Republicans voted for them. I believe there is a strong case to be made for each of these pieces of legislation. Each addressed an element of national crisis -- the time when we should be putting partisanship aside to do the nation's work. The president was willing with each of these bills to entertain significant Republican input. Instead he got obstructionism. I frankly don't understand why there is not more backlash against Republican leadership for backing away from addressing real national crises. Instead, it appears the Republican tactic is actually working.

#### Obama gets blame for inaction – he doesn’t effectively campaign against GOP obstructionism

Paul Krugman, Professor of Economics and International Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, NYT, 6-4-2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/04/opinion/krugman-this-republican-economy.html?src=me&ref=general>

So the Republican electoral strategy is, in effect, a gigantic con game: it depends on convincing voters that the bad economy is the result of big-spending policies that President Obama hasn’t followed (in large part because the G.O.P. wouldn’t let him), and that our woes can be cured by pursuing more of the same policies that have already failed. For some reason, however, neither the press nor Mr. Obama’s political team has done a very good job of exposing the con. What do I mean by saying that this is already a Republican economy? Look first at total government spending — federal, state and local. Adjusted for population growth and inflation, such spending has recently been falling at a rate not seen since the demobilization that followed the Korean War. How is that possible? Isn’t Mr. Obama a big spender? Actually, no; there was a brief burst of spending in late 2009 and early 2010 as the stimulus kicked in, but that boost is long behind us. Since then it has been all downhill. Cash-strapped state and local governments have laid off teachers, firefighters and police officers; meanwhile, unemployment benefits have been trailing off even though unemployment remains extremely high. Over all, the picture for America in 2012 bears a stunning resemblance to the great mistake of 1937, when F.D.R. prematurely slashed spending, sending the U.S. economy — which had actually been recovering fairly fast until that point — into the second leg of the Great Depression. In F.D.R.’s case, however, this was an unforced error, since he had a solidly Democratic Congress. In President Obama’s case, much though not all of the responsibility for the policy wrong turn lies with a completely obstructionist Republican majority in the House. That same obstructionist House majority effectively blackmailed the president into continuing all the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy, so that federal taxes as a share of G.D.P. are near historic lows — much lower, in particular, than at any point during Ronald Reagan’s presidency. As I said, for all practical purposes this is already a Republican economy. As an aside, I think it’s worth pointing out that although the economy’s performance has been disappointing, to say the least, none of the disasters Republicans predicted have come to pass. Remember all those assertions that budget deficits would lead to soaring interest rates? Well, U.S. borrowing costs have just hit a record low. And remember those dire warnings about inflation and the “debasement” of the dollar? Well, inflation remains low, and the dollar has been stronger than it was in the Bush years. Put it this way: Republicans have been warning that we were about to turn into Greece because President Obama was doing too much to boost the economy; Keynesian economists like myself warned that we were, on the contrary, at risk of turning into Japan because he was doing too little. And Japanification it is, except with a level of misery the Japanese never had to endure. So why don’t voters know any of this? Part of the answer is that far too much economic reporting is still of the he-said, she-said variety, with dueling quotes from hired guns on either side. But it’s also true that the Obama team has consistently failed to highlight Republican obstruction, perhaps out of a fear of seeming weak. Instead, the president’s advisers keep turning to happy talk, seizing on a few months’ good economic news as proof that their policies are working — and then ending up looking foolish when the numbers turn down again. Remarkably, they’ve made this mistake three times in a row: in 2010, 2011 and now once again.

#### Media coverage means GOP avoids blame for obstructionism

Adam H. Shah, JD @ Michigan Law, 4-18-2012, http://mediamatters.org/blog/201204180018

How The Mainstream Media Enables Senate GOP Obstructionism Of The Majority's Will Yesterday, we documented how the conservative media, following the release of a report by the Secretary of the Senate, covered up obstructionism by Senate Republicans in order to cast Democrats as "do-nothing" and "lazy." In fact, Republicans have routinely resorted to filibusters to try to block bills that would have otherwise passed the Senate. But the right-wing media would not easily get away with this if not for the complicity of the mainstream media. On Monday, a majority of senators voted in support of legislation to enact the Buffett Rule, which would set a minimum effective tax rate for annual income in excess of $1 million. Fifty-one senators voted in favor of the bill, while 45 senators opposed it. The legislation did not pass the Senate, however, because a Republican filibuster meant that a supermajority of 60 senators was needed in order to pass the bill. But the mainstream media was noticeably derelict in reporting that the bill had majority support and was blocked by procedural tricks by the minority. For instance, The Boston Globe article on the subject stated: "Monday night's Buffett rule vote, which blocked consideration of the bill in a 51-45 tally, was timed to coincide with Tuesday's IRS filing deadline." The article continued: "Republicans prevented the measure from receiving the 60 votes necessary to open debate. All Republicans but Senator Susan Collins of Maine voted against it. All Democrats except for Mark Pryor of Arkansas voted for it." Unless a reader knew the number of Democrats and Republicans in the Senate, the reporting makes it seem that 51 senators voted against the bill rather than in favor of it. USA Today similarly failed to inform its readers that the bill received majority support. USA Today noted that the bill failed "to reach a supermajority needed to pass a tax plan," but never made clear that the bill did have a majority or that a supermajority was necessary because Republicans used procedural tricks to prevent an up-or-down vote. Indeed, the most natural reading of the article makes it seem that 51 senators voted against the Buffett Rule. The article reported: The Democratic-controlled Senate failed on Monday to reach a supermajority needed to pass a tax plan offered by President Obama to require millionaires to pay a 30% minimum effective tax rate. The 51-45 defeat of the "Buffett rule," named after billionaire investor Warren Buffett, fell mostly along party lines. The bill needed 60 votes to move forward. Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, was the only Republican to vote with Democrats, while Arkansas Democrat Mark Pryor sided with the GOP. While The Washington Post noted in the body of its article on the subject that 51 senators voted in favor of the Buffett Rule, the headline of its article was: "Senate rejects consideration of 'Buffett rule' tax increase for millionaires." And The New York Times reported the facts necessary for readers to know that the Buffett Rule got majority support, but still failed to straightforwardly report that 51 senators voted in favor of the Buffett Rule. Instead, the Times stated: "[T]he fierce debate preceding the 51-45 vote -- the Democrats were nine votes short of the 60 they needed -- set off a week of political wrangling over taxes that both parties insist they are already winning." With the mainstream media making it so difficult for readers to learn that Senate Republicans are using procedural tricks to block the will of the Senate majority on issues like the Buffett Rule, it's that much easier for the right-wing media to hide the obstructionism of Senate Republicans.

## Obama Good Links

### Federal Spending Unpopular

#### Increasing federal funding for transportation infrastructure is a political loser for Obama – its widely distrusted by the public

Ken Orski, editor and publisher of Innovation NewsBriefs, an influential and widely read transportation newsletter, served as Associate Administrator of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration under President Nixon and President Ford, and JD @ Harvard Law, 2-5-2012, NewGeography, http://www.newgeography.com/content/002662-why-pleas-increase-infrastructure-funding-fall-deaf-ears

Finding the resources to keep transportation infrastructure in good order is a more difficult challenge. Unlike traditional utilities, roads and bridges have no rate payers to fall back on. Politicians and the public seem to attach a low priority to fixing aging transportation infrastructure and this translates into a lack of support for raising fuel taxes or imposing tolls. Investment in infrastructure did not even make the top ten list of public priorities in the latest Pew Research Center survey of domestic concerns. Calls by two congressionally mandated commissions to vastly increase transportation infrastructure spending have gone ignored. So have repeated pleas by advocacy groups such as Building America’s Future, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the University of Virginia’s Miller Center. Nor has the need to increase federal spending on infrastructure come up in the numerous policy debates held by the Republican presidential candidates. Even President Obama seems to have lost his former fervor for this issue. In his last State-of-the-Union message he made only a perfunctory reference to "rebuilding roads and bridges." High-speed rail and an infrastructure bank, two of the President’s past favorites, were not even mentioned. Why pleas to increase infrastructure funding fall on deaf ears There are various theories why appeals to increase infrastructure spending do not resonate with the public. One widely held view is that people simply do not trust the federal government to spend their tax dollars wisely. As proof, evidence is cited that a great majority of state and local transportation ballot measures do get passed, because voters know precisely where their tax money is going. No doubt there is much truth to that. Indeed, thanks to local funding initiatives and the use of tolling, state transportation agencies are becoming increasingly more self-reliant and less dependent on federal funding Another explanation, and one that I find highly plausible, has been offered by Charles Lane, editorial writer for the Washington Post. Wrote Lane in an October 31, 2011 Washington Post column, "How come my family and I traveled thousands of miles on both the east and west coast last summer without actually seeing any crumbling roads or airports? On the whole, the highways and byways were clean, safe and did not remind me of the Third World countries. ... Should I believe the pundits or my own eyes?" asked Lane ("The U.S. infrastructure argument that crumbles upon examination"). Along with Lane, I think the American public is skeptical about alarmist claims of "crumbling infrastructure" because they see no evidence of it around them. State DOTs and transit authorities take great pride in maintaining their systems in good condition and, by and large, they succeed in doing a good job of it. Potholes are rare, transit buses and trains seldom break down, and collapsing bridges, happily, are few and far between.

### 2nc – Wasteful Spending Link

#### Transportation funding is distinct from other wasteful spending – triggers unique public backlash against porkbarrel waste

Ari Natter, Columnist @ Bloomberg news, Ranking Member Transportation Committee, Pacific Shipper, 11-3-2008, ln

Perhaps more than any national campaign in recent history, the major candidates have staked out very clear and decidedly different stances on transportation infrastructure investment. McCain has made criticism of earmarks something of a crusade in his campaign, and says he wants to send more decisions on spending priorities to the states. "I believe that a higher share of the taxes collected at the gas pump should go back to the state where those taxes were paid," the Arizona Republican told the American Automobile Association in an interview with AAA newsletter, "and I've co-sponsored legislation that would allow states to keep almost all of their gas tax revenues for their own transportation projects without interference from Washington." "We've got a problem," Mortimer Downey, a former deputy secretary of transportation in the Clinton administration and an adviser to the Obama campaign, told a public forum in Washington last week on transportation policy. "Infrastructure needs more investment. It is important, it is crumbling, and other countries are doing more than we are. We've got national issues we need to deal with, and transportation is the critical tool for doing that." He said the Obama camp has "a vision" for the next highway bill. "It should be a much better bill than the last couple. It shouldn't have so many earmarks in it," Downey said. At the same forum, Douglas Holtz-Eakin, chief economic adviser to the McCain campaign, said the spending priorities are critical. "There is no area where earmarking has been more visible than in highway bills. We have to get more bang for the buck." James Burnley, a former DOT secretary under two Republican presidents who also has advised the McCain campaign, said in an interview that if McCain is elected, "You will have two additional issues; one, he has said he is against increasing any taxes; second, he is deadly serious when he says he is not going to accept earmarks, so I think you would have the ultimate historic constitutional clash about the earmarking issue." Downey notes the earmark approach "is going to be a very tough diet to get off of," and comments from transportation backers in Congress suggest just how strong the opposition to a McCain plan would be. "If John McCain wants to say earmarks to build bridges on the I-5 so trucks don't have to detour across the Cascade Mountains are pork, well then he's an idiot," Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., said at an American Road and Transportation Builders Association conference in September. "If John McCain is elected, we are going to have a diminutive surface transportation bill," DeFazio said last month. "McCain's attitude on infrastructure is like that of the public's, that it's just a bunch of boondoggle pork barrel bridges to nowhere," said Robert Dunphy, a senior resident fellow at the Urban Land Institute.

That’s electoral suicide – no perception of economic benefit and fiscal discipline is top issue for key independent voters

Douglas Schoen, who served as a pollster for President Bill Clinton, is author of "Declaring Independence: The Beginning of the End of the Two-Party System.", NY Daily News, 7-11-2010, http://articles.nydailynews.com/2010-07-11/news/29438716\_1\_fiscal-discipline-swing-voters-president-obama

What Bam can learn from Bill: President Clinton's ex pollster tells Obama how to win independents The news for President Obama is bad. Very bad. This week's Gallup tracking poll indicates that public support for Obama has fallen to a record low - with his job approval rating dropping to 45% among all voters and 38% among Independents. With ratings this low, the President and his party will almost certainly be unable to avoid devastating losses in the fall midterm elections. The only hope is a fundamental midcourse correction. What then should the President do? The independent swing voters who hold the fate of the Democratic Party in their hands are looking for candidates and parties that champion fiscal discipline, limited government, deficit reduction and a free market, pro-growth agenda. They respect leadership that bucks the Washington establishment and the special interests. Above all else, these swing voters will not tolerate any lack of focus on the most pressing economic concerns: reigniting the economy and creating jobs while simultaneously slashing the deficit and exhibiting fiscal discipline. Some say these are mutually exclusive objectives. They are not. I should know. When I first met with former President Bill Clinton privately in late 1994, jobs and the deficit were major concerns. In the aftermath of that year's devastating mid-term elections when the Republicans gained control of Congress for the first time since 1954, I emphasized that unless Clinton simultaneously stressed fiscal discipline and economic growth, he simply could not be reelected in 1996. By adopting a bold new agenda that included a balanced budget, frank acknowledgment of the limits of government, welfare reform, as well as the protection of key social programs, we were able to win a decisive victory over former Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole in 1996. Without that fundamental repositioning, Clinton would almost certainly have lost. While the circumstances are different, the electorate now wants the same things that it wanted back then. The American people, exhausted and demoralized by a sluggish economy, recognize that the stimulus package, as currently crafted and implemented, has at best produced short-term results through subsidization of the public sector. And they are increasingly uneasy about rising deficits, which remain the independent voter's touchstone. The left-wing economists urging Obama to ignore the latter concern and pour more taxpayer money into the economy now, regardless of the impact on the deficits, are prescribing electoral suicide.

### 2nc – Spending Link O/Ws

#### Funding collapses theoretical support – becomes key election issue regardless of how its paid for

Berstein Research, widely recognized as Wall Street’s premier sell-side research firm, 2-3-2012, <http://www.fraternalalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Washington-Research-2012-Preview-Transportation-Funding.pdf>

Expected passage of a long-term aviation financing bill next week gives ground transportation advocates cause for hope, but that's likely a red-herring. The politics surrounding how to pay for infrastructure financing simply remain too hot to handle in an election year. President Obama has run away from any discussion of increasing the 18.4 cents per gallon federal gasoline tax, while Republicans won't support a tax increase of any kind to pay for new spending, even if some groups are willing to pay additional taxes. Those views are generally consistent with a voting public that wants to spend more on transportation infrastructure – but does not want to foot the bill out of their own wallets.

### 2nc – Gas Tax Link

#### The plan forces gas tax hikes

Detroit News, 5-20-2008, lexis

Fixing roads, bridges will mean gas tax hike Here's a proposal not likely to win a popularity contest: With gasoline touching the $4-per-gallon mark, why not tack on another 30 to 50 cents or so to finally answer our responsibility to the national and state infrastructures? We know it's crazy to think either state or federal lawmakers will vote to raise fuel taxes when motorists already threaten revolt over the 40 percent increase in pump prices during the past year. But that doesn't change the fact that roads and bridges are disintegrating in Michigan and across the nation. The interstate highway system is more than 60 years old, and the nation has never spent the money necessary to properly maintain it. Because of decades of neglect, keeping up with repairs and building needed new capacity will cost an estimated $320 billion a year. Currently, the 18-cent federal gasoline tax raises roughly $85 billion. The only way to cover the gap between what's needed and what's available is to raise the gasoline tax. Adding another quarter to 40 cents to the 18-cent-per-gallon federal gasoline tax and nine cents to the 36-cent per gallon state tax would raise much of the needed revenue. Of course, it would also help if highway funds were used more efficiently. The public will for paying more taxes is understandably weak, in large part due to boondoggle projects such as the Bridge to Nowhere in Alaska and the Big Dig in Boston. The National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission just issued a report that urgently recommends more spending on infrastructure. It's a bipartisan group, and it was charged with assessing the need and the revenue required to meet it. Its conclusion, in a nutshell, is that "significant new funding ... will be needed." The commission's definition of "significant" is $225 billion a year, raised from a variety of sources, for the next 50 years. Notably, it also suggests "depoliticizing" decisions on project funding, meaning removing them from the realm of congressional earmarks. Higher gasoline taxes would bear much of the burden for raising the funds, but the commission also urges more toll roads and bridges, "congestion pricing" during peak driving times in urban areas, a freight fee and a rail ticket tax.

#### That causes popular backlash against Obama

David Grant, Staff Writer, CSM, Christian Science Monitor, 5-8-2012, http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/2012/0508/Transportation-bill-not-yet-passed-already-blasted-by-critics)

The problem is that paying for American infrastructure more fully means raising taxes on someone. One solution, pegging the gas tax to inflation – or raising it outright – would risk further angering Americans already angry about gas prices. A recent Washington Post/ABC News poll showed 65 percent of Americans disapprove of how President Obama has handled gasoline prices, compared with 26 percent who approve.

#### Its political suicide

William Rafey, Staff Writer, Harvard Political Review, 6-1-2010, http://hpronline.org/united-states/how-to-pass-a-gas-tax/)

In 1993, President Bill Clinton pushed the last bill through Congress to increase the gas tax. Even this, however, was watered-down reform; the tax was not indexed to inflation and increased the price of gas by only 4.3 cents per gallon. The modesty of the increase should not be surprising: since 1993, no prominent American politician has seriously supported a major increase in the gas tax. Virtually everyone agrees that supporting the gas tax is political suicide. As Michael Cragg, an energy consultant at The Brattle Group, told the HPR, “It’s hard to see in this political environment how you’d get a gas tax passed.” A similar consensus exists among economists, but on a different issue. According to a study in the Journal of Economic Literature, the vast majority of economists support a gas tax in order to make the private cost of driving a car reflect its actual social costs: global warming, air pollution, traffic congestion, and highway maintenance. Economists from across the political spectrum—Freakonomics author Steven Levitt, Nobel laureate and New York Times columnist Paul Krugman, and even the chairman of George W. Bush’s Council of Economic Advisors, N. Gregory Mankiw—have come out in support of raising the gas tax. How can a policy make so much economic sense and garner so little political support? Significant obstacles, including the anti-tax movement, vested interests in low energy prices, regional differences, and America’s short election cycle, have historically made the gas tax unpopular and unfeasible. Our energy future and climate security depend on either tweaking the tax to make it more politically palatable, or exploring creative alternatives. The Anti-Tax Establishment Perhaps the most fundamental reason why a higher gas tax is so controversial is because it hits everybody, and hits them in a very public way. William Gale, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and co-director of the Tax Policy Center, told the HPR that the anti-tax movement “will seize on every tax,” and the gas tax is an easy target. Represented by vocal advocacy groups such as Americans for Tax Reform and the various Tea Parties, the anti-tax movement “does not make a distinction between distortionary and distortionary-correcting taxes,” Gale said. “They just hate all taxes,” he continued, “and every attempt at an increase in taxes becomes an opportunity for [their] political gain.” Looking closer at the particulars of the gas tax raises an equally problematic obstacle: the culture of low energy prices. According to Henry Lee, director of the Environment and Natural Resources Program at Harvard’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, America’s energy policy has been governed by a single goal for the last 40 years. “Americans for almost two generations have lived under the idea of cheap energy,” he explained, making it almost impossible to pass laws involving price increases. At this point, such laws could seem almost un-American. Democratic Divisions The gas tax also raises a thorny question of fairness. Rural inhabitants, who drive farther and more often than do urban residents, would face steeper costs if the federal gas tax went up. Politicians that represent rural districts are simply responding to their constituents’ concerns by opposing the gas tax. Gale identified this “urban-rural divide” as one of the two most salient obstacles to the gas tax, in addition to the anti-tax movement. Recognizing these regional disparities raises questions about institutional problems in American democracy. To say, as many do, that lack of progress on the gas tax is part of a Big Oil conspiracy ignores the ways in which representative democracy can often forestall consensus. America’s short, two-year election cycle is a major barrier to passing a higher gas tax. Politicians tend to ignore proposals that involve an immediate, perceivable cost and provide less tangible, long-term benefits. Thomas Sterner, former president of the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists, told the HPR that this is the “big problem” of gas tax politics. In countries with short electoral cycles of two to four years, attempts to increase the gas tax “will only cause protests,” Sterner said. It can be very difficult to promote farsighted, technocratic solutions in a political environment defined by short-term gratification.

## Obama Good – CTBT Scenario

### 2nc Impact Overview

#### CTBT outweighs case

#### A. Magnitude – ratifying the CTBT is critical to prevent an explosion of nuclear wars across the globe. Our Davis ev says that there will be 40 new nuclear powers that will make nuclear confrontation inevitable

#### B. Probability – the explosion of nuclear weapons makes it more likely that conventional wars escalate to nuclear war and magnifies the costs of small conflicts.

#### The 2AC concedes several warrants which we’ll impact here

#### North Korean war results in extinction

Africa News, 10/25/1999, p. lexis

Lusaka - If there is one place today where the much-dreaded Third World War could easily erupt and probably reduce earth to a huge smouldering cinder it is the Korean Peninsula in Far East Asia. Ever since the end of the savage three-year Korean war in the early 1950s, military tension between the hard-line communist north and the American backed South Korea has remained dangerously high. In fact the Koreas are technically still at war. A foreign visitor to either Pyongyong in the North or Seoul in South Korea will quickly notice that the divided country is always on maximum alert for any eventuality. North Korea or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has never forgiven the US for coming to the aid of South Korea during the Korean war. She still regards the US as an occupation force in South Korea and wholly to blame for the non-reunification of the country. North Korean media constantly churns out a tirade of attacks on "imperialist" America and its "running dog" South Korea. The DPRK is one of the most secretive countries in the world where a visitor is given the impression that the people's hatred for the US is absolute while the love for their government is total. Whether this is really so, it is extremely difficult to conclude. In the DPRK, a visitor is never given a chance to speak to ordinary Koreans about the politics of their country. No visitor moves around alone without government escort. The American government argues that its presence in South Korea was because of the constant danger of an invasion from the north. America has vast economic interests in South Korea. She points out that the north has dug numerous tunnels along the demilitarised zone as part of the invasion plans. She also accuses the north of violating South Korean territorial waters. Early this year, a small North Korean submarine was caught in South Korean waters after getting entangled in fishing nets. Both the Americans and South Koreans claim the submarine was on a military spying mission. However, the intension of the alleged intrusion will probably never be known because the craft's crew were all found with fatal gunshot wounds to their heads in what has been described as suicide pact to hide the truth of the mission. The US mistrust of the north's intentions is so deep that it is no secret that today Washington has the largest concentration of soldiers and weaponry of all descriptions in south Korea than anywhere else in the World, apart from America itself. Some of the armada that was deployed in the recent bombing of Iraq and in Operation Desert Storm against the same country following its invasion of Kuwait was from the fleet permanently stationed on the Korean Peninsula. It is true too that at the moment the North/South Korean border is the most fortified in the world. The border line is littered with anti-tank and anti-personnel landmines, surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles and is constantly patrolled by warplanes from both sides. It is common knowledge that America also keeps an eye on any military movement or build-up in the north through spy satellites. The DPRK is said to have an estimated one million soldiers and a huge arsenal of various weapons. Although the DPRK regards herself as a developing country, she can however be classified as a super-power in terms of military might. The DPRK is capable of producing medium and long-range missiles. Last year, for example, she test-fired a medium range missile over Japan, an action that greatly shook and alarmed the US, Japan and South Korea. The DPRK says the projectile was a satellite. There have also been fears that she was planning to test another ballistic missile capable of reaching North America. Naturally, the world is anxious that military tension on the Korean Peninsula must be defused to avoid an apocalypse on earth. It is therefore significant that the American government announced a few days ago that it was moving towards normalising relations with North Korea.

#### Iranian proliferation causes nuclear war

Henry Sokolsky, executive director – nonproliferation policy education center, 10/1/2003, Policy Review, p. lexis

If nothing is done to shore up U.S. and allied security relations with the Gulf Coordination Council states and with Iraq, Turkey, and Egypt, Iran's acquisition of even a nuclear weapons breakout capability could prompt one or more of these states to try to acquire a nuclear weapons option of their own. Similarly, if the U.S. fails to hold Pyongyang accountable for its violation of the NPT or lets Pyongyang hold on to one or more nuclear weapons while appearing to reward its violation with a new deal--one that heeds North Korea's demand for a nonaggression pact and continued construction of the two light water reactors--South Korea and Japan (and later, perhaps, Taiwan) will have powerful cause to question Washington's security commitment to them and their own pledges to stay non-nuclear. In such a world, Washington's worries would not be limited to gauging the military capabilities of a growing number of hostile, nuclear, or near-nuclear-armed nations. In addition, it would have to gauge the reliability of a growing number of nuclear or near-nuclear friends. Washington might still be able to assemble coalitions, but with more nations like France, with nuclear options of their own, it would be much, much more iffy. The amount of international intrigue such a world would generate would also easily exceed what our diplomats and leaders could manage or track. Rather than worry about using force for fear of producing another Vietnam, Washington and its very closest allies are more likely to grow weary of working closely with others and view military options through the rosy lens of their relatively quick victories in Desert Storm, Kosovo, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Just Cause. This would be a world disturbingly similar to that of 1914 but with one big difference: It would be spring-loaded to go nuclear.

### Ext – Obama Key to CTBT

#### Obama will pass CTBT if reelected --- new NRC report provides momentum

Steven Pifer, senior fellow at the Center on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution, 3-30-2012, New Support for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, p. http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2012/0330\_nuclear\_pifer.aspx)

In 1996, the United States became the first country to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which would ban all nuclear explosions. The Senate, however, failed to ratify the treaty in 1999. If President Obama is reelected, he may ask the Senate to consider it again. On March 30, the National Research Council released a study that bolsters the case for ratification. Two concerns underlay the Senate vote not to ratify the treaty in 1999: the reliability of the U.S. nuclear deterrent absent testing, and the U.S. ability to verify that other states observed the test ban. The National Research Council report addresses both issues. Ellen Williams, who chaired the committee that prepared the report, stated that the United States “has technical capabilities to maintain safe, reliable nuclear weapons into the foreseeable future without the need for underground weapons testing.” This results from the Stockpile Stewardship Program, which was launched in the 1990s to maintain the deterrent without testing. That program has produced significant knowledge about the reliability, sustainability and operation of U.S. nuclear weapons, including yielding information that U.S. scientists never discovered in 47 years of tests. For example, we now know that the nuclear “pits”—the plutonium packages that are the heart of modern U.S. nuclear weapons—can last 85-100 years, far longer than originally believed. The National Research Council study also notes that the techniques for monitoring a comprehensive test ban have improved dramatically over the past decade and can reliably detect nuclear explosions with yields well below one kiloton—the equivalent of one thousand tons of TNT—and in some cases much smaller. In addition to U.S. national means, the Preparatory Commission for the CTBT Organization has brought on line more than 80 percent of its planned international monitoring system, which will ultimately consist of 337 facilities worldwide. When the North Koreans tested a small nuclear device in 2006, 61 international monitoring stations reported the event. The report adds that, while there may be ways to “hide” a very small nuclear test, such test scenarios involve serious costs and practical difficulties, might nevertheless be detected, and would not require that the United States resume nuclear testing.

#### Obama will push CTBT after the election --- prevents a South Asian arms race

Kingston Reif, director of nuclear nonproliferation at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, 4-9-2012, The Case for the CTBT: Stronger Than Ever, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, p. <http://www.thebulletin.org/web-edition/columnists/kingston-reif/the-case-the-ctbt-stronger-ever>)

As of March 2012, 157 countries have ratified the CTBT. However, the treaty will not enter into force until 44 states that have been deemed "nuclear capable" have also ratified it -- including China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, and the United States. But a move forward by the United States would establish the leadership needed to bring other countries along. If nothing else, China has indicated that it will ratify if the United States does. This would further strengthen the global norm against nuclear testing and encourage other holdouts, such as India and Pakistan, to ratify, reducing the possibility of a dangerous arms race in South Asia. After the longer-than-anticipated effort to win Senate approval of New START, the administration postponed plans to seek a vote on the CTBT in its first term. Instead, the White House has begun a cautious campaign to engage with the Senate on the treaty in preparation for a possible Senate vote in Obama's second term (should he win reelection). A critical piece of this outreach has been to encourage senators to carefully examine the remarkable improvements in America's ability to maintain the arsenal (via the stockpile-stewardship program) and to detect nuclear testing. In order to assist senators, the administration commissioned both the NAS report and a classified National Intelligence Estimate on the US ability to verify compliance with the treaty.

### A2: Obama Won’t Push

#### It’s Obama’s priority

Paul Deaton, Daily Kos member, 2011, On the 15th Anniversary of the CTBT, Daily Kos, p. http://www.dailykos.com/story/2011/09/19/1018266/-On-the-15th-Anniversary-of-the-CTBT

During his 2009 speech in Prague, President Obama said ratification of the CTBT would be a priority for his administration. Others in the administration indicate that this continues to be the case. Despite some significant action on the administration’s arms control agenda, including entry into force of the New START Treaty ratified by the United States Senate last December, few now believe the President will take up CTBT ratification with the Senate before the 2012 election. If President Obama fails to win re-election, the treaty seems unlikely to be ratified for a long time, if ever. It is not hard to read the tea leaves on this important issue. Despite the apparent hesitancy, the State Department has begun a conversation on the CTBT as part of its discussion about the administration’s arms control agenda with members and staff on the hill. Assistant Secretary of the State for Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, Rose Gottemoeller described the exchange of information to the Arms Control Wonk, “So it’s really like an information campaign and a discussion,” said Gottemoeller. “The reason I emphasize the discussion aspect of it is that clearly this is a debate, and it’s not like one side telling the other, and the other side is just in the ‘receive’ mode. But it is more like a true discussion and debate, and I think that’s the way people are going to come to their decisions about the treaty, through that process of very serious discussion and debate, and seeing the facts, and coming to understand them.” Gottemoeller indicated there was no deadline for ratification. The State Department has laid out the case for ratification in four points. The CTBT helps restrain further nuclear weapons proliferation, ratification of the CTBT is part of an integrated nuclear security strategy, the CTBT can be verified and the United States does not need to conduct nuclear tests. A simple and straightforward list, but for those of us advocating for ratification of CTBT, it is the same list we had when Democrats held 60 senate seats and ratification seemed assured. The trouble with time is it wears on a person and priorities change. If we take President Obama and the State Department at their word, ratification of the CTBT remains a priority on the administration’s arms control agenda.

### CTBT Good – Disarm

#### Ratifying CTBT is critical to the global nuclear disarmament movement

Jofi Joseph, senior Democratic foreign policy staffer in the Senate, April2009, Renew the Drive for CTBT Ratification, Washington Quarterly, p. 83

As Obama himself recognizes, the road to a world free of nuclear weapons must include the entry into force of the nuclear test ban treaty. A global ban on nuclear weapons tests is an essential step to halting the entry of new states into the nuclear club: without the ability to demonstrate its mastery of nuclear weapons by detonating one, no proliferator can lay claim to a credible nuclear arsenal. Likewise, a test ban promises to halt destabilizing nuclear arms races between existing weapons states by ceasing the development and deployment of new types of nuclear weapons. Without the option of tests to verify their effectiveness and reliability, a nuclear power will be hard pressed to introduce new advanced weapons into their deterrent. Instead, an effective nuclear test ban will more or less freeze existing nuclear arsenals at their current levels and prevent future improvements to their explosive power or miniaturization of warheads for missile deployment. For that reason alone, the United States, which possesses the most advanced nuclear arsenal in the world, should be a strong supporter of a treaty that promises to lock in the nuclear weapons status quo. Furthermore, the CTBT entry into force would prevent China from further advances in fielding multiple warhead ballistic missiles. 10 It is no accident that the very first measure in the thirteen-step action plan adopted by the 2000 NPT Review Conference referenced the need for early entry into force of the CTBT. A nuclear free world cannot come into existence unless the international community first agrees to end the nuclear arms race and prohibit any further advances to existing nuclear arsenals. Obama, therefore, can best demonstrate the genuineness of his pledge to work toward a nuclear-free world by working toward CTBT ratification during his first term in office.

#### Lack of nuclear disarmament makes nuclear war inevitable

Johann Hari, columnist for the Independent, regular writer for the Times, commentator on CNN, NBC's Today Program, winner of the young journalist of the year by Press Gazette Awards, 10/20/2004, Will We Wake From Our Nuclear Coma?, The Independent, p. lexis

Dig out your old nuclear holocaust movies. Dust down your ancient CND banners. Get ready for the return of the mushroom-cloud nightmares you consigned to your subconscious back when the Berlin Wall fell - 2005 is going to be the year nuclear weapons come back. Let's take a tour of all the people who are about to force nukes back onto the political agenda - and into your dreams. Iran's mullahs are about to get a nuclear bomb. This isn't a scaremongering Saddam-will-get-you- in-45-minutes piece of nonsense. Everybody - from France to Germany to the Arab countries - agrees. Iran has been noisily testing its shiny new Shahab ballistic missile, and simultaneously enriching uranium. Israel is preparing for a pre-emptive strike, but doesn't know how to judge the timing. What if they misjudge and attack after the Iranians have a weapon ready for use? In the next year, there will be a pre-emptive war, a nuclear stand-off or even a nuclear exchange in the most volatile region of the world. Back at the ranch, the United States is building a "new generation" of nukes. They are smaller, quicker and - as the US right describes them - "more useable". Margaret Thatcher, on the basis of her impeccable links to the Bush administration, predicts they will be used as battlefield weapons within the next 20 years. Ah, but don't worry, the Bushies say: the US will be safe from retaliation because of the National Missile Defence shield they are building. Remember that? It's Ronald Reagan's baby, the Star Wars system that will somehow shoot any incoming nukes off into space. Here's where Britain comes in. This nuclear shield would need a smattering of interceptor missiles across the world. Tony Blair has already privately agreed to allow RAF Fylingdales in North Yorkshire to be used as one of the bases. Britain will be essential to the US defence shield, but not covered by it - making us the first target for any attempt to blast a hole in US defences. And as if all that isn't enough, the next Parliament will have to decide whether to replace Trident, the British nuclear submarine carrying 48 nuclear warheads, each eight times more powerful than the Hiroshima blast. Does all that sound complicated - and terrifying - enough? We're not through yet. India and Pakistan are still in a nuclear stand-off over Kashmir. They've already had two Cuban Missile Crises in the past decade. (Remember when Britain strongly advised its citizens to leave both countries two summers ago because they might be about to be evaporated?) There is still no hotline between the two countries' leaders, even though they threatened nuclear strikes against each other 13 times in 1999 alone. Pakistan's leadership is making peaceful noises at last - but it is very vulnerable to an Islamic fundamentalist coup. And we're still not through. Now that North Korea's psychopathic regime has nukes, countries across Asia are considering acquiring a nuclear arsenal of their own, with South Korea and Japan at the front of the queue. More stand-offs. More risk. And did I mention the hundreds of "loose nukes" still barely protected in the former Soviet Union? The truth emerging from this scattered picture of nuclear proliferation is simple: there is a stronger chance of a nuclear bomb being used now than at almost any point in the Cold War. No, the old fears won't come back. A nuclear attack on London is phenomenally unlikely (for now). But there is no such thing as a regional nuclear war. An exchange between India and Pakistan, or between Israel and Iran, would - quite apart from killing millions of people - risk irreparable ecological damage to the planet. Today, along with man-made climate change, nuclear weapons are the biggest threat to human life as we know it. So why is hardly anybody talking about it? Partly, it's because nobody seems to have any good answers. We all know that during the Cold War, nuclear weapons were regulated by a simple doctrine: Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD). If you used a nuke, you were guaranteed to be nuked in return. What doctrine now regulates the use of these weapons? Some people believe that MAD is still a working principle. The conservative commentator Matthew Parris, for example, speaks for many on the right when he says that India and Pakistan are more stable because of nuclear weapons. "If India and Pakistan did not have nuclear weapons, they would have gone to war in 2002 ... the threat alone defused the situation. No lives were lost. This was the classic case for nuclear weapons, and it was demonstrated there ." So MAD got us through the Cold War; it will get smaller powers through their own conflicts with less bloodshed. Proliferation is a good thing. This argument is flawed for several reasons. Even when MAD was practised by two relatively stable super- power blocs for just 40 years, it nearly broke down and led to "rational suicide" on several occasions. Does anybody really think that if this is replicated across the world - in the most tense, dangerous and often fanatical regions - it will not break down sooner or later? Just one lapse, just one crazy leader testing the doctrine, condemns tens of millions of people to death. It requires delirious, wild optimism to believe MADness on every continent will keep us safe indefinitely. But more importantly, all over the world, even the strained logic of MAD is evaporating. The US government believes it will, within a generation, be safe from retaliation because of its missile shield, so MAD will no longer apply to them. Many ultra-nationalists in the Indian government in 2002 seemed to have a worrying lack of knowledge about the effects of a nuclear war, claiming that it would have "a limited effect" and "we could take it". MAD doesn't work if people don't understand the consequences. And Islamic fundamentalists who believe that death can be more glorious than life, who welcome "martyrdom", are obviously not going to be put off by retaliation. So, against our biggest security threat - al-Qa'ida - MAD is useless. I can only think of one long-term answer to the danger: phased, tightly monitored multilateral disarmament, reducing all the world's nuclear arsenals one step at a time. Right now, this is so far off the political map it sounds crazy. But what is the alternative? There is Parris-style faith in MAD. Or there is the neoconservative solution, which is to keep thousands of nukes ourselves but deny them to everybody else through raw force. This is not a tenable long-term solution. Perhaps an Israeli bombing raid on Iran's reactors will work this year - but can proliferation be dealt with that way indefinitely? How can we sustain such hypocrisy without making more countries eager to get nukes to spite us? Multilateral disarmament is deeply flawed, but the alternatives - endless proliferation or a neoconservative resort to force against any potential nuclear powers - are more dangerous still. Even if slow, careful nuclear disarmament didn't seem the best option to you at the height of the Cold War, it should now. Yet the people who should be making this case - groups like the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament - have gone off on a Trotskyite tangent, campaigning on causes that have nothing to do with nukes. (Their current crusade is to put Tony Blair on trial.)

### CTBT Good – NPT Cred

#### Ratification will strengthen the NPT review in 2010 – sustains the system

Jofi Joseph, senior Democratic foreign policy staffer in the Senate, April2009, Renew the Drive for CTBT Ratification, Washington Quarterly, p. 82

The commitment will also position the United States particularly well for the NPT Review Conference scheduled for 2010. These review conferences, held every five years, offer an opportunity for NPT signatories to gather and assess the overall health of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. In the 2000 conference, the United States agreed to seek early entry into force of the CTBT and committed to twelve other specific steps to promote nonproliferation and disarmament. Upon taking office the next year, the Bush administration swiftly renounced these commitments, setting the stage for a 2005 conference viewed by all parties involved as an unmitigated disaster. A concrete pledge by the United States to seek CTBT ratification will therefore energize the 2010 conference, and offer Washington greater leverage to push through potential reforms it may seek regarding the export of reprocessing and enrichment technology or automatic sanctions against states that violate their IAEA obligations.

#### Obama has broad support for the CTBT which will restore U.S. credibility on proliferation

Jofi Joseph, senior Democratic foreign policy staffer in the Senate, April2009, Renew the Drive for CTBT Ratification, Washington Quarterly, p. 89

Obama won the presidency in part on his pledge to bring a new tone to U.S. relations with the world through enhanced multilateral cooperation and a pragmatic approach to international institutions and treaties. Substantively, Obama has identified the specter of nuclear terrorism as the gravest challenge to our national security and linked that threat to the breakdown of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. Accordingly, he concluded that only a renewed effort, led by the United States, toward a world of zero nuclear weapons can make real headway in reducing the threat of proliferation and nuclear terrorism. Senate ratification of the CTBT and its resulting entry into force would set a new tone for U.S. diplomacy while revitalizing the nuclear nonproliferation regime. It would restore U.S. credibility on this issue after years of moving in the opposite direction. Obama enjoys a broad mandate and the strong support of almost 60 Senate Democrats. Now is the time for a renewed push for CTBT ratification that can serve as a landmark national security accomplishment for the United States and for international peace and stability.

#### Ratifying the CTBT restores confidence in the NPT

Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, 8/22/2008, The Enduring Value of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Prospects for Its Entry Into Force, p. http://www.armscontrol.org/node/3300

Today, the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remains a vital disarmament and nonproliferation instrument. By prohibiting all nuclear test explosions it impedes the ability of states possessing nuclear weapons to field new and more deadly types of warheads, while also helping to prevent the emergence of new nuclear-armed states. Moving forward quickly on the CTBT is also an essential step towards restoring confidence in the beleaguered Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) regime. The nuclear-weapon states’ commitment to achieve the CTBT was a crucial part of the bargain that won the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 and the 2000 NPT Review Conference document.

### Ext – CTBT Solves Prolif

#### Ratifying the CTBT restores U.S. non-proliferation leadership and builds coalitions against prolif

Jonathan Medalia, specialist of National Defense for the Congressional Research Service, 3/12/2008, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments, p. 53-54

Gen. John Shalikashvili, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, argued that the CTBT and nuclear nonproliferation were closely linked: Non-ratification [of the CTBT] has also complicated U.S. efforts to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards that non-nuclear weapon state parties to the NPT must have on their civilian nuclear programs. Many countries are reluctant to accept new obligations while the United States is unwilling to approve the Test Ban Treaty.... Once we ratify the Test Ban Treaty, which the rest of the world views as vital for non-proliferation, we will be better able to enlist cooperation on export controls, economic sanctions, and other coordinated responses to specific problems.192 Former Secretary of State George Shultz, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and former Senator Sam Nunn argued the need to link the goal of disarmament and specific steps to achieve it: Reassertion of the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and practical measures toward achieving that goal would be, and would be perceived as, a bold initiative consistent with America’s moral heritage.... Without the bold vision, the actions will not be perceived as fair or urgent. Without the actions, the vision will not be perceived as realistic or possible. One of the eight steps they recommend is “Initiating a bipartisan process with the Senate, including understandings to increase confidence and provide for periodic review, to achieve ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, taking advantage of recent technical advances, and working to secure ratification by other key states.”193 By the same token, some CTBT supporters contend that U.S. failure to observe the disarmament end of the bargain will inevitably undermine the willingness of other nations to cooperate on nonproliferation. Margaret Beckett, former U.K. Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, said, our efforts on non-proliferation will be dangerously undermined if others believe, however unfairly, that the terms of the grand bargain have changed, that the nuclear weapon states have abandoned any commitment to disarmament. The point of doing more on disarmament, then, is not to convince the Iranians or the North Koreans. I don’t believe for a second that further reductions in our nuclear weapons would have a material effect on their nuclear ambitions. Rather the point of doing more is this: because the moderate majority of states, our natural and vital allies on non-proliferation, want us to do more. And if we do not, we risk helping Iran and North Korea in their efforts to muddy the water, to turn the blame for their own nuclear intransigence back onto us. They can undermine our arguments for strong international action in support of the NPT by painting us as doing too little too late to fulfill our own obligations.194

### U.S. Ratification Spills Over

#### U.S. ratification is critical to get others on-board

Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, 8/22/2008, The Enduring Value of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Prospects for Its Entry Into Force, p. http://www.armscontrol.org/node/3300

Partially in response to U.S policy on the CTBT, some countries that have signed the CTBT, such as China and Israel, have delayed their ratification processes. Others, including India and Pakistan, have yet to sign the Treaty and are unlikely to do so unless the United States, China, and perhaps other hold-outs, finally ratify.

Ratifying the CTBT gets other nations on-board – comparatively better than the moritorium

Jonathan Medalia, specialist of National Defense for the Congressional Research Service, 3/12/2008, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments, p. 58-59

Supporters reply that the moratorium is insufficient. The WMD Commission, an independent organization funded by the Swedish government that seeks proposals to reduce the dangers of WMD, stated in a report of 2006: The Commission believes that a US decision to ratify the CTBT would strongly influence other countries to follow suit. It would decisively improve the chances for entry into force of the treaty and would have more positive ramifications for arms control and disarmament than any other single measure. While no nuclear-weapon tests have been carried out for many years, leaving the treaty in limbo is a risk to the whole international community. The United States should reconsider its position and proceed to ratify the treaty. Only the CTBT offers the prospect of a permanent and legally binding commitment to end nuclear testing.205 Similarly, the final declaration of the 2007 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty stated, “Continuing and sustained voluntary adherence to a moratorium is of the highest importance, but does not have the same effect as the entry into force of the Treaty, which offers the global community the prospect of a permanent and legally binding commitment to end nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions.”206 Supporters note that the treaty’s entry into force would bring into operation the treaty’s on-site inspection provisions, as inspections can only occur pursuant to the treaty, not the moratorium. They believe that the CTBT would provide a visible barrier between nuclear power and nuclear weapons programs that some would be unwilling to cross, and this barrier, by reducing confidence in a weapons program, might dissuade some nations from undertaking such a program.

#### Ratification provides outside leverage

Jonathan Medalia, specialist of National Defense for the Congressional Research Service, 3/12/2008, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments, p. 60

Even if not all 44 Annex 2 states do not ratify the treaty, supporters see value in U.S. ratification. It would give the United States leverage to press others to join the treaty. Senator Carl Levin said, “If we are not willing to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, what standing do we have to urge India, Pakistan, or any country to stop testing?”208 Some supporters hold that U.S. ratification would help secure international cooperation with the United States by symbolizing a U.S. turn toward multilateralism. Randy Rydell of the U.N. Office for Disarmament Affairs said, “I believe the CTBT does have enormous symbolic importance, regardless of the limits of its ability — alone — to ‘stop’ proliferation or ‘prevent’ the improvement of existing arsenals. It stands for the rule of law in disarmament, for the need for binding commitments, for multilateralism, for verification, and for transparency.”209 Even if a few of the 44 Annex 2 states do not ratify the treaty, the international community could press non-members of CTBT not to test, and could impose sanctions if they test. According to Richard Garwin, “U.S. ratification of the treaty would legitimize and mobilize support for U.S. and international action against nations that test, whether or not they are party to the treaty; indeed, the prospect of such support might deter nations from testing.”210 It might be possible to find a way to bring the treaty into force without all 44 Annex 2 states, but not, in the view of the treaty’s supporters, without the United States.

### A2: CTBT Hurts Deterrence

No impact – conventional deterrence and current weapons are enough to solve

Jonathan Medalia, specialist of National Defense for the Congressional Research Service, 3/12/2008, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments, p. 16

CTBT supporters hold that current nuclear weapons suffice for deterrence; no adversary leader would gamble that they would not work, or that the United States would not use them if severely provoked. At the same time, supporters see nuclear weapons as most unlikely to be used, regardless of their characteristics or yield, because of the norm that has built up since 1945 against their use. Current nuclear weapons deterred a Russian or Chinese nuclear attack during the Cold War, it is argued, and will continue to do so, especially as the probability of such attack must be judged as remote. U.S. conventional forces, the treaty’s supporters claim, deter threats from other nations. Use of these forces is credible, they can be precisely targeted, and they would create very much less collateral damage than nuclear weapons. Further, it is argued, adversaries could readily counter new U.S. nuclear capabilities. Nuclear weapons to destroy chemical or biological weapons could be defeated by placing the weapons deep underground; even earth penetrator weapons could not destroy them because the heat and radiation of the blast would not reach down that far. More simply, the weapons could be moved to nondescript buildings in cities or to caves in rural areas; U.S. intelligence, in this view, could locate few if any sites. Earth penetrators could be defeated by deeper burial, greater hardening, tunneling under a mountain, or dispersing assets to secret aboveground locations.

#### The SSP will maintain the U.S. nuclear arsenal – all evidence flows our way

Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, 8/22/2008, The Enduring Value of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Prospects for Its Entry Into Force, p. http://www.armscontrol.org/node/3300

The other key issue is whether the United States can continue to rely on its stockpile stewardship program to maintain its arsenal under a permanent CTBT? The short answer is: yes. As the U.S. National Academy of Sciences reported in July 2002, the United States "has the technical capabilities to maintain confidence in the safety and reliability of its existing nuclear-weapon stockpile under [a test ban], provided that adequate resources are made available to the Department of Energy's nuclear-weapons complex and are properly focused on this task." Though the Energy Department has determined each year for the last decade that the U.S. nuclear arsenal remains safe and reliable without nuclear testing, some claim—as they did in 1999—that as time goes on there may be age-related problems in the nuclear stockpile. (3) The good news is that all of the technical evidence available shows that such concerns are greatly overstated. New government studies on plutonium longevity completed in 2006 have found that the plutonium primaries of most U.S. nuclear weapons have a minimum lifetime of 85 years, which is twice as long as previous estimates. According to the National Academy panel, which included three former lab directors, age-related defects mainly related to non-nuclear components can be expected, but nuclear test explosions “are not needed to discover these problems and is not likely to be needed to address them.” Rather, the panel says, the key to the stewardship of the arsenal is a rigorous stockpile surveillance program, the ability to remanufacture nuclear components to original specifications, minimizing changes to existing warheads, and non-explosive testing and repair of non-nuclear components. Thomas D’Agostino, acting National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) administrator said in March 2007 that “stockpile stewardship is working. This program has proven its ability to successfully sustain the safety, security and reliability of the stockpile without the need to conduct an underground test for well over a decade.”

### CTBT Good – A2: RRW Turn

#### No support for RRW – it will remain separate from the CTBT

Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, 8/22/2008, The Enduring Value of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Prospects for Its Entry Into Force, p. http://www.armscontrol.org/node/3300

It is doubtful that new warheads would be enough to convince the skeptics and may be more risky for the CTBT. Given that the new replacement warheads are years and billions of dollars away from reality, many CTBT skeptics might argue, as they did in 1999, that it is too early to tell whether the new warheads will work reliably and without proof testing. Furthermore, if Congress once again acts to cut or eliminate the Bush administration’s request for funding the RRW program (which is highly likely), RRW may be a non-factor in any future discussion about the CTBT.

Turn – RRW is consistent with non-proliferation goals

--Doesn’t Require Testing --Solves Allied Prolif --Spurs Reductions --Avoids Theft

Linton Brooks, START I negotiator and the former administrator at the National Nuclear Security Administration, 8/29/2007, Wall Street Journal, p. lexis

Are the plans to upgrade our nuclear arsenal with a Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) consistent with America's interests in opposing the proliferation of nuclear weapons? Some reasonable critics of the program have expressed doubts. They are wrong: The RRW is fully consistent with U.S. nuclear nonproliferation objectives. When judging this issue, consider the first and most basic question: Should the U.S. even have a nuclear deterrent? For the past 60 years, U.S. nuclear forces have strengthened our security as well as the security and stability of the international community. They have also helped prevent nuclear proliferation by extending our deterrent to protect allies, who therefore don't need to seek their own nuclear weapons. Japan's deep concern in the wake of North Korea's nuclear test shows that the need for extended deterrence remains strong. But what about the size and shape of our deterrent? The RRW will replace many of the current, aging warheads deployed on Trident D-5 submarine-launched ballistic missiles. It provides no new military capability, nor increases the arsenal's size or power. Three further questions need to be considered regarding nonproliferation. Will the RRW make future nuclear testing more or less likely? Will it advance or hinder efforts to reduce the size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal? Will it make the weapons we deploy safer and more secure? Both the administration and Congress have made it clear the RRW is being pursued under the requirement that it will not need to be tested before being certified to become part of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. This reinforces our commitment to maintaining our moratorium on underground nuclear testing. No one can, however, guarantee that as the older weapons in our current stockpile age further, they will not need to be tested to maintain confidence in their safety and reliability. The RRW will also facilitate further reductions in the U.S. nuclear stockpile. U.S. accomplishments in this area have already been substantial, if largely overlooked. Whole classes of nuclear weapons delivery vehicles -- short-range and intermediate range nuclear missiles -- have been eliminated. The number of nuclear weapons dismantled this year will increase by over 50% compared to last year. The number of deployed strategic nuclear weapons will go from over 10,000 at the peak of the Cold War, to between 1,700 and 2,200 by 2012. Because of decisions by the Bush administration, within five years, our nuclear arsenal will be at its lowest since the 1950s. Moreover, the RRW will give us greater confidence in the reliability of our weapons. This increased confidence will reduce the need for large numbers of spare warheads and allow us to take the U.S. stockpile to still lower levels, consistent with our international obligations under the Nonproliferation Treaty. Finally, the RRW will allow us to deploy weapons that are safer to make and to store for people and the environment and also less susceptible to theft or misuse by terrorists. For example, the new warhead will not use beryllium, a poisonous metal used in the current weapons. Moreover, anti-theft measures have improved dramatically over the decades and will be implemented in the new warhead, preventing unauthorized use. In sum, the new warhead will make nuclear testing less likely, facilitate further reductions in our arsenal, and help to ensure that the weapons we do deploy are as safe and secure as possible. The RRW is thus entirely consistent with U.S. nonproliferation objectives. It deserves the support of the nonproliferation community, the national-security community and all Americans.

#### RRW decreases the need for testing

Jonathan **Medalia**, specialist of National Defense for the Congressional Research Service, 3/12/**2008**, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments, p. 12

NNSA claims that RRW will make the need for testing unlikely because of steps to increase confidence. For example, RRW designers used high margins, basically building in more performance than is needed, to make material deterioration or design or manufacturing defects less likely to degrade warhead performance below the minimum required. They argued that they could do so because the design was unconstrained by technologies and design choices made decades ago. They view added margin as the single most important goal of the design. Another basis for confidence is that the design stayed close to past experience. Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, which designed the nuclear components of WR1, states that components very similar to those of the WR1 were nuclear tested in the past. For this and other reasons, “there is direct nuclear test proof that the [WR1] design will perform properly.”44

### CTBT Good – A2: Cheating

#### Verification mechanism is proven and effective – no cheating possible

Daryl G. **Kimball**, executive director of the Arms Control Association, 8/22/**2008**, The Enduring Value of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Prospects for Its Entry Into Force, p. http://www.armscontrol.org/node/3300

On verification, the 2002 National Academy of Sciences report stated: “The capabilities to detect and identify nuclear explosions without special efforts at evasion are considerably better than the “one kiloton worldwide” characterization that has often been stated for the IMS. If deemed necessary, these capabilities could be further improved by increasing the number of stations in networks whose data streams are continuously searched for signals. Underground explosions can be reliably detected and can be identified as explosions, using IMS data, down to a yield of 0.1 kt (100 tons) in hard rock if conducted anywhere in Europe, Asia, North Africa, and North America. In some locations of interest such as Novaya Zemlya, this capability extends down to 0.01 kt (10 tons) or less.” Since the 1999 Senate vote and the 2002 National Academy of Sciences report, the International Monitoring System has only grown in size and sophistication. For example, more than 10 of the IMS primary seismic stations detected the ground tremors produced by the relatively small yield, Oct. 9, 2006 North Korean underground nuclear test explosion near P’unggye, according to the January 2007 newsletter of the CTBTO, Spectrum. The North Korean test blast was estimated by various national, international, and scientific monitors to be less than 1 kiloton (TNT equivalent) in yield. More significantly, one of 10 experimental “noble gas” monitoring stations that are to be part of the IMS detected trace amounts of unique radioactive material that confirmed the explosion was nuclear. The station, which is located near Yellowknife in Canada’s Northwest Territories, detected two spikes in xenon gas readings, on Oct. 22 and 25, which, on the basis of atmospheric modeling, were consistent with the North Korean test. When the combination of existing national means of intelligence, as well as world’s network of tens of thousands of civilian seismic monitoring stations, plus the option of on-site inspections are taken into account, no would-be cheater could conduct a nuclear weapon test explosion in underground, underwater, or in the atmosphere without a very high risk of detection.

#### Prefer our ev – recent evidence is trending towards verification

Jonathan Medalia, specialist of National Defense for the Congressional Research Service, 3/12/2008, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments, p. 20

The public 1999 debate on ratification did not go into detail on the technical ability to monitor the CTBT. For example, no scientists with primary expertise in a monitoring technology testified in Senate hearings on the treaty. However, members and staff received extensive classified briefings from scientists from the national laboratories and from the intelligence community.70 Since 1999, scientists have made many advances in detection capability that have been widely published. The most important technical report on monitoring was prepared in 2002 by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS).71 **I**t is generally favorable to the treaty. Two other overviews of technical progress prepared in 2007 also favor the treaty.72 Many journal articles discuss specific technical advances. In contrast, few if any unclassified technical reports rebut claims of progress in monitoring. Nevertheless, CTBT opponents have developed many arguments, so any future debate on monitoring is likely to be less lopsided than one might infer from the imbalance in writing.

No impact – cheating will not produce weapon material

Jonathan Medalia, specialist of National Defense for the Congressional Research Service, 3/12/2008, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments, p. 45

Supporters argue that nations could not develop thermonuclear weapons under a CTBT, and see very low yield tests as of little value for weapons development. According to Richard Garwin, hydronuclear tests “will provide little useful knowledge,” and tests of 0.1 kiloton “would have little value in the development of nuclear weapons.”160 According to the NAS report, tests up to 1 to 2 kilotons are concealable in some circumstances, and could be used to improve unboosted fission weapons or, with difficulty, for proof tests of weapons of 1 to 2 kilotons Tests up to 20 kilotons are unlikely to be concealable; they could be used to proof-test 20-kiloton fission weapons, or for “eventual development & full testing of some primaries & low-yield thermonuclear weapons.” Finally, tests above 20 kilotons could not be concealed; they could be used to develop and test boosted fission weapons and thermonuclear weapons.161.

#### Evasion is close to impossible – the IMS can only improve our detection

Jonathan Medalia, specialist of National Defense for the Congressional Research Service, 3/12/2008, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments, p. 42

CTBT supporters see evasion as difficult. Containment, while harder for a nation with no test experience, can fail nonetheless because of unknown aspects of test site geology, as the U.S. “Baneberry” test showed.147 Satellite photography might reveal suspicious human activity. An evader would not know capabilities of U.S. monitoring systems. Technical progress in monitoring and a growing archive of background noise, it is argued, reduce the threshold below which an evader could feel confident of success. An evader with little nuclear test experience would not have a precise estimate of weapon yield, forcing it to lower the yield, and value, of a test. Human intelligence might reveal a test. Supporters assert that the treaty would make evasion harder. Secretary Albright argued that, while the United States cannot be absolutely certain to detect very low yield tests with or without the treaty, “by improving our capacity to monitor, we are much more likely under the treaty to detect such tests and consequently to deter them.”148

#### The IMS improves the credibility of U.S. verification – allowing the U.S. to rally support

Jonathan Medalia, specialist of National Defense for the Congressional Research Service, 3/12/2008, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: Issues and Arguments, p. 23-25

The United States has operated its own system to detect nuclear tests since the 1940s. The present system, the U.S. Atomic Energy Detection System (USAEDS), is operated by the Air Force Technical Applications Center (AFTAC). AFTAC states that USAEDS is a “global network of nuclear event detection sensors” including underground, underwater, atmospheric, and space sensors.81 NNSA provides technical support for satellite- and ground-based nuclear explosion monitoring. Other organizations are conducting research on nuclear explosion monitoring as well.82 While 21 USAEDS seismic stations were part of IMS as of August 200783 (i.e., they provide data to IDC), USAEDS also has other capabilities, such as detectors on satellites, that are not part of IMS. USAEDS and IMS are to some extent complementary. USAEDS, as a national system, focuses on areas of concern to the United States; IMS, as an entity of an international treaty, maintains a worldwide detection network so no nation feels singled out for special monitoring attention. IMS makes available to all states signatories, including the United States, data from its network; some data are from sites that the United States could not access. Further, IMS data may be more credible to some of those nations than data from USAEDS. The former come from a transparent, internationally-controlled system, while USAEDS data might be less convincing to Executive Council members if they suspected that the United States was releasing information selectively or if the sensors and resulting data were unfamiliar and thus difficult for some council members to interpret. As the State Department said, “In the case of the DPRK [North Korean] test, several countries have noted that the combination of IMS and IDC data and analysis with U.S. national data and analysis provided them with greater confidence in assessing the event than would have been the case with the U.S. data and analysis alone.”84 In addition to IMS and USAEDS, academic institutions and national governments operate thousands of other seismic stations worldwide.85 Some of these stations may feed information to IDC on an ad hoc basis.

## A2: Obama Good – CTBT

### GOP Congress Blocks

#### GOP congress and campaign promises would deadlock Obama’s second term – takes out their turns

Julian Zelizer, CNN staff, 4/23/12, <http://www.cnn.com/2012/04/23/opinion/zelizer-winning-governing/index.html>

If Barack Obama and Mitt Romney are staying up late worrying about whether they can win the election, they should ponder another, ultimately more important, question: Will their campaign rhetoric make it impossible for them to be effective if elected president? The decisions that each man makes in his effort to defeat the other will shape the political environment in January 2013. Although we often consider the campaign phase of a presidency to be entirely separate from governing, the truth is that the two are intimately connected. Whoever takes office in January will face many difficult challenges that will force him to compromise, adjust and move away from campaign promises that no longer fit the reality of the times. The Bush tax cuts expire at the end of the year, along with the payroll tax cut designed to boost the economy. The pressure will be on for the president and Congress to make deep spending cuts and revenue increases. Julian Zelizer The president's health care law will either need to be implemented and funded, or it will have been ruled unconstitutional, thus pushing to the forefront once again the skyrocketing costs of health care. In foreign policy, the Middle East, Iran, North Korea and China all point to hot spots that are volatile and unpredictable. And these are just the known challenges, let alone the crises we can't yet see coming. For Obama, the dangers are significant. To keep Democrats excited about a second term, it appears that he will continue to focus on the rhetoric of economic populism as well as on attacking the do-nothing Congress. Although he has governed like a moderate, his speeches have increasingly stressed the liberal themes of progressive economic policy, criticism of Wall Street and big business and, to some extent, laments about the growing inequality in American life. In his State of the Union Address, Obama castigated Wall Street with populist rhetoric, saying that the problems in the economy had stemmed from the fact that "Wall Street was allowed to play by its own set of rules." He promised that this time around, "It's time to apply the same rules from top to bottom: No bailouts, no handouts and no copouts." The danger for Obama is twofold. One the one hand, if the president veers too far to the left on the campaign trail, he will offer more fodder to his opponents who want to paint his every move as being those of a left-of-center Democrat. This will be even more problematic than it was in 2009 and 2010, when Obama still enjoyed political capital from his election, which allowed him to rebuff some of these charges and push through his legislative agenda. After his re-election, Republicans wouldn't have any fears about retribution and they wouldn't have any reason to compromise. As with every second-term president, he would be a lame duck from day one. Just as important, many moderate Democrats could be leery about supporting him unless they were sure that doing so wouldn't hurt their chances for re-election. At the same time that a rhetorical shift to the left could alienate possible legislative support, it could also create inflated expectations within the Democratic base. Just as many of Obama's supporters have been disappointed in his decisions after a campaign that promised transformation, liberals would be doubly dejected if his populism proved to be pure posturing. He could leave many Democrats deeply disappointed over the dim chance of ever delivering on these core ideas. Finally, in the coming months, Obama will continue to succumb to the lure of big money. With all his talk about change, this election looks awfully familiar. The Obama campaign has embarked on an aggressive fundraising project, including relying on super PACS. The kind of fundraising and interest group mobilization that will occur might very well define Obama by the end of this season as much as any of the bills that Congress has passed. Romney has challenges of his own. Romney's most obvious campaign struggle will be what to do about the right. The tea party Republicans will continue to pressure Romney to play to the base so he can prove he is not the Etch A Sketch candidate his critics present him to be. Romney will face a strong temptation to echo their positions as he looks to the tea party to mobilize supporters to vote in swing states. But if Romney pushes too hard in this direction, trying to overcompensate for his perceived centrism, he would make it difficult to appeal to moderate Democrats in a first term. Without the support of at least a handful of moderates, persuading Congress to pass legislation will be extraordinarily difficult. Romney will also face growing pressure to promise that he will oppose any kind of revenue increase, including an assurance that he would support an extension of the Bush tax cuts for wealthier Americans. Given the size of the deficit, such promises would put him in a difficult bind, setting him up for the kind of challenge with the Republican base that faced George H.W. Bush in 1990 when he had to settle for revenue increases after promising in his campaigning that he wouldn't agree to any new taxes. The enormity of the deficit will require revenue increases in addition to spending cuts. If the next president and Congress decide that they must significantly lower the deficit, these painful choices would be on the table.. He will need to keep bargaining room to raise taxes so that this doesn't haunt him. Some presidents have faced trouble as a result of the way they campaigned. Most famously, President Harry Truman pulled off a stunning upset against Thomas Dewey in 1948 by running against a "Do Nothing Congress." Although Truman's victory is often recounted, what is usually forgotten is that his relationship with Congress was terrible over the succeeding few years. Many of the Republicans who had worked closely with the Democratic Truman in 1947 and 1948 were furious at the campaign theme. Sen. Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, who had been Truman's key ally in the creation of the national security system, complained to one Republican operative that, "Not even Wallace [third party candidate Henry Wallace] is saying things better calculated to split the country into snarling vendettas at a moment when our destiny cannot afford these soap box luxuries." The result was bitter conflict over domestic issues such as civil rights and the war against communism Yet there have been times when campaigning and governance went hand in hand. In 1964, Lyndon Johnson of Texas used his campaign to define his agenda broadly, contrasting himself with right-wing Sen. Barry Goldwater of Arizona and extolling the virtues of liberalism. During the campaign, Johnson took part in staged events extolling programs that Congress had passed. The election increased the Democratic majority in the Congress, giving him needed support for passing bills such as Medicare and federal aid to education, and became a platform to govern. Obama and Romney will have to navigate this difficult path. As they focus on each other and the kinds of tactics that will be needed for victory, they must also consider what happens if they do win and how the campaign will help or hinder their chances as president. The decisions that give Romney or Obama the best chance to win in the Electoral College may make success almost impossible to achieve in the White House.

### CTBT Bad – Deterrence

#### CTBT would collapse deterrence

Monroe, Former Director of the Defense Nuclear Agency, 07

(Robert, *Washington Times*, Nuclear Testing Realities, December 4, Questia)

Reality No. 1 is that U.S. ratification of the CTBT would do unbelievably grave damage to U.S. national security. Nuclear weapons exist - tens of thousands of them. More states now have them than ever before**,** and they're being improved. A whole world of fourth- generation nuclear weapons is just around the corner. More than half the world's population lives in states that have nuclear weapons, and other states and terrorist organizations are striving to acquire them, and use them. The U.S. will continue to face serious nuclear weapon threats for generations to come. Our very lives will depend upon our ability to develop new nuclear weapon strategies and advanced nuclear weapons to deter these threats. Our survival will depend on our nuclear technology being superior to that of anyone else in the world, decade after decade. This will certainly require testing, which the CTBT would deny.

#### Causes multiple scenarios for nuclear war

Baker Spring, FoPo Research Fellow @ Heritage, “Ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: A Bad Idea in 1999, a Worse Idea Today,” June 29 2007, http://www.heritage.org/Research/HomelandDefense/wm1533.cfm

\* 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.\* Nuclear proliferation is creating the need for a modern U.S. nuclear arsenal that is suited to maintaining stability in a multi-polar setting. The U.S. nuclear arsenal is suited for the bipolar setting of the Cold War; it is not designed to address nuclear multi-polarity created by proliferation. Indeed, the Cold War nuclear deterrence policy and the arsenal it created are likely undermining nuclear stability and increasing the prospect for the use of nuclear weapons.[11] A permanent ban on nuclear testing will bar the United States from developing a new nuclear-deterrent posture. The new arsenal should include nuclear weapons, along with conventional and defensive weapons, that support a damage limitation strategy. Such a strategy aims to prevent or limit the damage from attacks by enemies armed with weapons of mass destruction.

### A2: CTBT Good – Disarm

#### Other nations will pursue nuclear weapons even if we disarm—maintaining deterrence key to check back WMD release

Christopher Chyba, Prof of International Affairs @ Princeton, “Time for a Systematic Analysis: U.S. Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Proliferation, December 2008, <http://armscontrol.org/act/2008_12/Chyba#authbio>

Despite this, skeptics have been quick to insist that disarmament advocates have failed to establish a causal connection between the pursuit of disarmament and the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation. In November 2007, The Wall Street Journal published a reply by former Defense Secretary Harold Brown and former Deputy Defense Secretary John Deutch titled "The Nuclear Disarmament Fantasy," in which the authors declared that "[a] nation that wishes to acquire nuclear weapons believes these weapons will improve its security. The declaration by the U.S. that it will move to eliminate nuclear weapons in a distant future will have no direct effect on changing this calculus. Indeed, nothing that the U.S. does to its nuclear posture will directly influence such a nation's (let alone a terrorist group's) calculus." Such steps, they assert, would also not "convince North Korea, Iran, India, Pakistan or Israel to give up their nuclear weapons programs." [8]Brown and Deutch are hardly alone. A 2004 report to Congress by the secretaries of state, defense, and energy argued that "rogue state proliferation...marches forward independently of the U.S. nuclear program" and that "North Korea and Iran appear to seek [weapons of mass destruction (WMD)] in response to their own perceived security needs, in part, to deter the United States from taking steps to protect itself and allies in each of these regions. In this regard, their incentives to acquire WMD may be shaped more by U.S. advanced conventional weapons capabilities and our demonstrated will to employ them to great effect."[9] Former Bush administration Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control Stephen Rademaker agrees that U.S. nuclear weapons policy is irrelevant to Iranian or North Korean nuclear decision-making, which he argues is driven by hunger for power and prestige. Nevertheless, he asserts, "[s]o long as there is one nuclear weapon remaining in the U.S. inventory, [arms control activists] will point to this as the root cause of nuclear proliferation."[10]A group of 11 members of the Bush administration's International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) to the Department of State have argued that a key role of U.S. nuclear weapons policy is to help prevent nuclear proliferation by providing a "nuclear umbrella" to countries-31, by the authors' count-that might otherwise be tempted to develop their own nuclear weapons.[11] Similarly, the full ISAB claims that "[t]here is clear evidence in diplomatic channels that U.S. assurances to include the nuclear umbrella have been, and continue to be, the single most important reason many allies have forsworn nuclear weapons."[12] If this were the most salient nonproliferation role for U.S. nuclear weapons, careless moves toward disarmament might in fact drive proliferation rather than curtail it.