# Elections Updates

# AFF

# Uniqueness

## Romney Win

### Empirics

#### Empirics prove Romney will win.

Tracinski 7/19 [Robert Tracinski](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/authors/?author=Robert+Tracinski&id=14578)(Robert Tracinski writes daily commentary at [TIADaily.com](http://www.tiadaily.com/). He is the editor of The Intellectual Activist and a contributor to [RealClearMarkets](http://www.realclearmarkets.com/)),“How the Election Will Play Out (and Why Romney Will Win)”,realclearpolitics.com,7/19/2012, <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2012/07/19/how_the_election_will_play_out_and_why_romney_will_win_114848.html>

When a president is running for re-election, it is inherently a referendum on the incumbent, so if his approval ratings are below 50%, he's in trouble. If a majority disapproves of his performance, that means they are going to be likely to cast their votes for the challenger. Obama is below 50% now. He's been around 47% in the RealClearPolitics average for a long time now, and since some of the polls tend to overestimate support for Democrats, the real number is probably a few points lower.¶ But this just means that voters are willing to consider the challenger, and you can still convince them to stop considering him. Which means that an embattled incumbent has only one way to win: convince voters that the challenger is not an acceptable alternative.¶ Hence the negative campaign against Romney. He needs to be made out as a corporate Snidely Whiplash who lays off workers, outsources their jobs to China, hides his profits in Swiss bank accounts, and lies about it to cover it all up.

### Obama Ads Fail

#### Obama’s wasting money on the election.

Tracinski 7/19 [Robert Tracinski](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/authors/?author=Robert+Tracinski&id=14578)(Robert Tracinski writes daily commentary at [TIADaily.com](http://www.tiadaily.com/). He is the editor of The Intellectual Activist and a contributor to [RealClearMarkets](http://www.realclearmarkets.com/)),“How the Election Will Play Out (and Why Romney Will Win)”,realclearpolitics.com,7/19/2012, <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2012/07/19/how_the_election_will_play_out_and_why_romney_will_win_114848.html>

The question in November is how many voters will accept Obama's warped message of resignation and resentment—how many will be like [Ron Brownstein's swing voters](http://nationaljournal.com/columns/political-connections/why-reagan-s-question-isn-t-relevant-anymore-20120712)—and how many will be repulsed by it. That, in turn, will depend on what Mitt Romney does to fight back, not just against the details of the negative attacks on him, but against the world view behind them.¶ When it comes to his record and his biography, I suspect that Mitt Romney has not yet begun to fight, and that is the other big development I'm predicting for the final months of the general election. I have been speculating for some time—and others have begun to [say the same thing](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2012/07/09/hume_on_romney_campaign_you_might_call_it_the_rope-a-dope_strategy.html)—that Romney's election strategy can be described as "rope-a-dope." This was a sports reporter's coinage for Muhammad Ali's strategy in the famous 1974 "Rumble in the Jungle" against George Foreman. Foreman was a large man known as a hard hitter, so Ali's strategy was to goad Foreman into throwing a frenzy of punches while Ali adopted a protective position and leaned against the ropes so they would help absorb the energy of the blows. Foreman fell for it and punched away in a fury, tiring himself out in the early rounds only to find himself fatigued while Ali was still fresh. Ali dominated the later rounds and knocked Foreman down long enough for the referee to call him out.¶ The analogy here is that Romney is letting the Obama campaign punch itself out, spending like crazy on a blitz of negative advertising early on, before swing voters have made up their minds or even paid much attention to the race. Meanwhile, Romney has been holding his fire and money, saving it for when it will really count.¶ Why is the Obama campaign falling for this? Because they have no other option. Here we have to refer back to the established rules of the horse-race analysis.

#### Romney will win, money and timing

Tracinski 7/19 [Robert Tracinski](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/authors/?author=Robert+Tracinski&id=14578)(Robert Tracinski writes daily commentary at [TIADaily.com](http://www.tiadaily.com/). He is the editor of The Intellectual Activist and a contributor to [RealClearMarkets](http://www.realclearmarkets.com/)),“How the Election Will Play Out (and Why Romney Will Win)”,realclearpolitics.com,7/19/2012, <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2012/07/19/how_the_election_will_play_out_and_why_romney_will_win_114848.html>

The Associated Press reports: 'President Barack Obama’s campaign has spent nearly $100 million on television commercials in selected battleground states so far, unleashing a sustained early barrage designed to create lasting, negative impressions of Republican Mitt Romney before he and his allies ramp up for the fall.' Think of it like the Confederacy’s artillery barrage on the third day of Gettysburg before Pickett’s Charge—you have to in essence disable the other side before the charge begins, or it's curtains."¶ For those not versed in Civil War history, Pickett's Charge ends badly. I'll refer you to [this scene](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGv1VKAybcI&feature=related) from the magisterial 1993 film Gettysburg, which captures the point at which General Lee realizes the full scope of the debacle.¶ It's worth looking at why specifically the Obama campaign is running out of time. It has to do with money and with the calendar.¶ Obama started out with a distinct money advantage, since he could start raising money for the general election while Romney was still spending money on the primaries. But he is rapidly blowing his money advantage. In recent months, he has raised less than Romney and spent a lot more, particularly on his huge spree of negative ads.¶ Jack Wakeland first pointed this pattern out to me and speculated that Obama is running his campaign finances about as well as he has been running the nation's finances. The result is that it now looks as if Romney and his supporters will be able to outspend Obama by a significant margin in the final months of the race. And if there's one thing we learned from the primaries, it is that Romney can win when he's able to outspend his rivals.¶ Then there is the calendar. Outside of Washington and the media, most voters are not paying much attention to the race yet. And in exactly eight days, the Olympics begin.¶ The Olympics are the crucial dividing point, because they will dominate the airwaves and the news, sucking away whatever attention anyone is now paying to the election. So Obama's negative campaign blitz has to have whatever effect it's going to have in those eight days. But what happens when the Olympics start? To begin with, the Olympics provide an opportunity for Mitt Romney to highlight the best part of his record, his successful turnaround of the 2002 Winter Olympics. And he can do so without having to do very much or spend much money. It will be natural, after all, for the sports reporters covering the Olympics to mention Romney's history with the movement.¶ Obama can still be in the news during the Olympics just by showing up in London or doing something to root on the U.S. teams, but that's just a marginal bit of extra public exposure, not a message about his leadership. For Romney, by contrast, the Olympics are a leadership message. He can claim that his competence helped save a beloved institution whose appeal cuts across partisan lines. Remember that it was not his business success that launched Romney's political career. It was the Olympics: he ran for governor of Massachusetts in the afterglow of the 2002 games. Yet Romney's history with the Olympics has barely been mentioned yet, precisely because the Obama campaign can't find anything negative to say about it. Well, now it's going to be mentioned.¶

#### Obama’s negative ad strategy is failing.

Tracinski 7/19 [Robert Tracinski](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/authors/?author=Robert+Tracinski&id=14578)(Robert Tracinski writes daily commentary at [TIADaily.com](http://www.tiadaily.com/). He is the editor of The Intellectual Activist and a contributor to [RealClearMarkets](http://www.realclearmarkets.com/)),“How the Election Will Play Out (and Why Romney Will Win)”,realclearpolitics.com,7/19/2012, <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2012/07/19/how_the_election_will_play_out_and_why_romney_will_win_114848.html>

So that is exactly the story Obama's negative ads have been trying to tell. The attack ad in which Romney ties the girl to the railroad tracks is coming next.¶ There is no evidence that these negative ads have worked so far—the variation in the candidates' RCP poll averages has been within the range of static for at least a month—so the Obama campaign is turning the volume up to eleven. They have poured $100 million into advertising in swing states over the past month, three-quarters of which has gone into negative ads. And they have increased the seriousness of the accusations, to the point of hinting that Romney might be a felon.¶ But there is a big problem with dumping all these negative ads so early. If you bring up a charge in May or June, the Romney campaign and dozens of commentators and bloggers will have time to refute the attacks, or at least come up with convincing attempts to explain them away. You also run the risk of over-reaching—as in the Romney felony charge—and creating a story, not about Romney's wrongdoing, but about your campaign's unfair attacks. But most of all, these charges become "old news," so when the Obama campaign tries to bring them up again in October, once everyone is finally paying attention, the charges lose their impact because the press and the pundits have already heard it before. This business is called "news" for a reason, because it moves forward on things that are new.¶ So why has the Obama campaign launched their attack on Romney so early and allowed it to become so vicious? I think they realize that they are running out of time. If they don't "define" Romney in hopelessly negative terms now—and by "now," I mean now—the game is over. While I've been using the rope-a-dope analogy, Washington Post blogger Jennifer Rubin has [come up with](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/right-turn/post/july-panic-for-obama--for-good-reason/2012/07/15/gJQARQFXmW_blog.html) a somewhat grander analogy. Here is her description of Obama's strategy.¶ "Extend the Republican primary by running ads hitting Romney and encouraging Democrats to vote against Romney in Michigan and elsewhere. Then, before Romney could fully get his bearings, unload a barrage of negative attacks, scare-mongering, and thinly disguised oppo attacks through the mainstream media, taking advantage of many political reporters’ relative ignorance about the private equity field and their inclination to accept whole-hog President Obama’s version of 'facts.'¶ "The extent of that effort is only now becoming clear.

#### Obamas campaign is at full tide and falling out, numbers aren’t in his favor

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The big picture is that the Obama campaign is reaching its full tide. This is its moment of maximum impact, and everything after this is a pushback from the Romney campaign. So the fact that Obama is still just even in the polls, at the full extent of his effort, means that we can expect that everything from here on out will be a loss. From now on, the campaign will be about Romney making his own positive case, building back his image, setting his own message, firing back in the debates, and sending it all of home with giant advertising buys that Obama won't be able to match.¶ Jennifer Rubin's reference to Pickett's Charge reminded me of another scene from Gettysburg. An actor who has been serving as a spy for the Confederacy asks General Longstreet for a musket so that he can, for once, fight honorably as a regular soldier. Longstreet then [explains to him](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3myVtAjpkFo) why he thinks Pickett's Charge—which he hasn't been able to talk Lee out of—will fail. It is, he explains, like a mathematical equation, as he ticks off the casualties Pickett's division will take at each stage of the assault. He briefly entertains hope that the artillery barrage will cause the Yankees to panic and break, then he concludes that they won't, so "it's mathematical after all."¶ In much the same way, the numbers are against Obama. In political science, unemployment above 8%, economic growth below 2%, and approval ratings below 50%—all of it adds up to defeat. But the Obama campaign will entertain the hope that maybe, just maybe, they can vilify their opponent and create a negative impression of him in the minds of voters, or dredge up some scandal that knocks him out of the race before we even get to the conventions. They can hold on to that hope. And they're right: maybe it will happen. This has been a very unpredictable election from the beginning. But if something doesn't happen, and happen soon, the numbers kick in, and it's mathematical after all.¶ So far, the polls show that the negative ads haven't broken Romney's campaign. But there is a deeper ideological reason why this campaign is not likely to succeed. Remember that this is not just a negative campaign against Romney. It is a negative campaign against capitalism and against success. And it's not just that the Obama campaign overreaching with their negative attacks on Romney. They are also overreaching with their negative attacks on success.

### Obama No Voting Base

**Romney win now – Obama’s base crumbling**

**Root** **5/30/12** [Wayne Allyn Root Political commentator and senior Economic Advisor to a global financial services company, “Why Obama Will Lose in a Landslide”, <http://townhall.com/columnists/wayneallynroot/2012/05/30/why_obama_will_lose_in_a_landslide>, S.O.]

**Most political predictions are made by biased pollsters, pundits, or prognosticators who are either rooting for Republicans or Democrats. I am neither. I am a former Libertarian Vice Presidential nominee, and a well-known Vegas oddsmaker with one of the most accurate records of predicting political races. Neither Obama nor Romney are my horses in the race. I believe both Republicans and Democrats have destroyed the U.S. economy and brought us to the edge of economic disaster. My vote will go to Libertarian Presidential candidate Gary Johnson in November, whom I believe has the most fiscally conservative track record of any Governor in modern U.S. political history. Without the bold spending cuts of a Gary Johnson or Ron Paul, I don’t believe it’s possible to turnaround America. But as an oddsmaker with a pretty remarkable track record of picking political races, I play no favorites. I simply use common sense to call them as I see them. Back in late December I released my New Years Predictions. I predicted back then- before a single GOP primary had been held, with Romney trailing for months to almost every GOP competitor from Rick Perry to Herman Cain to Newt- that Romney would easily rout his competition to win the GOP nomination by a landslide.** I also predicted that **the Presidential race between** Obama and Romney **would be very close until election day. But** that on election day **Romney would win** by a landslide similar to Reagan-Carter in 1980. **Understanding history**, today **I am even more convinced of a resounding Romney victory. 32 years ago at this moment in time, Reagan was losing by 9 points to Carter. Romney is right now running even in polls. So why do most pollsters give Obama the edge? First, most pollsters are missing one ingredient- common sense. Here is my gut instinct. Not one American who voted for McCain 4 years ago will switch to Obama. Not one in all the land. But many millions of people who voted for an unknown Obama 4 years ago are angry, disillusioned, turned off, or scared about the future. Voters know Obama now- and that is a bad harbinger. Now to an analysis of the voting blocks that matter in U.S. politics: \*Black voters. Obama has nowhere to go but down** among this group. His endorsement of gay marriage has alienated many black church-going Christians. **He may get 88% of their vote instead of the 96% he got in 2008. This is not good news for Obama. \*Hispanic voters. Obama has nowhere to go but down among this group.** If Romney picks Rubio as his VP running-mate the GOP may pick up an extra 10% to 15% of Hispanic voters (plus lock down Florida). **This is not good news for Obama. \*Jewish voters. Obama has been weak in his support of Israel. Many Jewish voters and big donors are angry and disappointed. I predict Obama's Jewish support drops from 78% in 2008 to the low 60’s. This is not good news for Obama. \*Youth voters. Obama’s biggest and most enthusiastic believers from 4 years ago have graduated into a job market from hell. Young people are disillusioned, frightened, and broke- a bad combination. The enthusiasm is** long **gone. Turnout will be much lower among young voters, as will actual voting percentages. This not good news for Obama. \*Catholic voters. Obama won a majority of Catholics in 2008. That won’t happen again. Out of desperation to please women, Obama went to war with the Catholic Church over contraception. Now he is being sued by the Catholic Church. Majority lost. This is not good news for Obama. \*Small Business owners. Because I ran for Vice President last time around, and I'm a small businessman myself, I know literally thousands of small business owners. At least 40% of them in my circle of friends, fans and supporters voted for Obama 4 years ago to “give someone different a chance.” I warned them that he would pursue a war on capitalism and demonize anyone who owned a business...that he’d support unions over the private sector in a big way...that he'd overwhelm the economy with spending and debt. My friends didn’t listen. Four years later, I can't find one person in my circle of small business owner friends voting for Obama. Not one. This is not good news for Obama. \*Blue collar working class whites. Do I need to say a thing? White working class voters are about as happy with Obama as Boston Red Sox fans feel about the New York Yankees. This is not good news for Obama. \*Suburban moms. The issue isn’t contraception…it’s having a job to pay for contraception. Obama’s economy frightens these moms. They are worried about putting food on the table. They fear for their children’s future. This is not good news for Obama. \*Military Veterans. McCain won this group by 10 points. Romney is winning by 24 points. The more our military vets got to see of Obama, the more they disliked him. This is not good news for Obama.** Add it up. **Is there one major group where Obama has gained since 2008? Will anyone in America wake up on election day saying “I didn’t vote for Obama 4 years ago. But he’s done such a fantastic job, I can’t wait to vote for him today.” Does anyone feel that a vote for Obama makes their job more secure? Forget the polls.** My gut instinctsas a Vegas oddsmaker and common sense small businessmantell me **this will be a** historic **landslide and a** world-class **repudiation of Obama’s** radical and risky socialist **agenda. It's Reagan-Carter all over again. But I’ll give Obama credit for one thing- he is living proof that familiarity breeds**

#### Obama’s campaign spending disconnects him from the majority of Americans.

Campion 7/22 Patricia Campion(Political Examiner for the Examiner),”Deficit spending: Obama runs reelection campaign just like federal budget”,examiner.com,7/22/2012, <http://www.examiner.com/article/deficit-spending-obama-runs-reelection-campaign-just-like-federal-budget>

“Competing fiercely to keep the presidency, Obama reported more than $46 million in June and total spending of $58 million.”¶ That’s a deficit of $12 million.¶ Clearly, when it comes to managing a budget, Obama is absolutely clueless.¶ Even with a cursory view of his spending habits – as president, and as an incumbent running for reelection -- a consistent pattern of horrific waste emerges.¶ In March, [The Heritage Foundation revealed](http://www.heritage.org/federalbudget/growth-federal-spending-revenue) that the United States government had taken in $2.25 trillion in tax revenue for 2012. They spent $3.6 trillion.¶ The estimated spending deficit for 2012 now stands at $1.8 trillion.¶ “While federal revenues are recovering from the recent recession, spending is growing sharply, resulting in four consecutive years of deficits exceeding $1 trillion.”¶ That same month, [CBS News reported](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-57400369-503544/national-debt-has-increased-more-under-obama-than-under-bush/) that the National Debt increased more during the first three years and two months of Obama’s first term in office than it did during the entire eight years of the George W. Bush presidency.¶ [As reported Wednesday by Examiner.com](http://www.examiner.com/article/obama-government-motors-and-the-very-ugly-truth), Obama wasted billions of taxpayer dollars in the bailout of failing energy companies and the auto industry. His administration also spent much of the $831 billion stimulus [to fund projects and jobs overseas](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUOZs33XAnI).¶ For his reelection, The Denver Post revealed that [Obama has spent $100 million on television ads](http://www.denverpost.com/nationworld/ci_21077774/obama-campaign-spends-100-million-ads-most-critical), three quarters of which were wasted on attacks against his challenger, Mitt Romney.¶ [Also reported Tuesday by Examiner.com](http://www.examiner.com/article/obama-s-smear-campaign-they-just-keep-making-it-up-as-they-go-along), not only have these attack ads been repeatedly debunked by numerous news outlets and fact checkers, polling shows the ads aren’t working.¶ Obama has also wasted millions on public opinion polling.¶ [The Weekly Standard reported](http://www.weeklystandard.com/blogs/obama-campaign-spends-more-26-million-polling-june_648846.html) Saturday that disclosure forms -- filed by Obama for America -- show that the president's reelection team spent a whopping $2,639,265.72 on polling in the month of June alone. That doesn’t include money contributed for polling by the Democratic Party.¶ However, consistent with Obama’s 2008 statement that “[when you spread the wealth around, it’s good for everybody](http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2008/10/spread-the-weal/),” previous polling expenditures hint that most of the money spent on polling in June came from the Democratic National Committee (DNC) – not from the president's own Obama for America (OFA) campaign coffers.¶ For the month of May, the DNC and OFA spent a combined total of $2,105,107.93 on polling. Most of that -- $1,627,107.93 -- came from the Democratic Party. The Obama campaign only chipped in $478,000.¶ In April, the DNC and OFA spent $456,083.01 on polling. Again, while the DNC coughed up the majority of the cash -- $438,083.01 – Obama's reelection campaign tossed in a paltry $18,000.¶ In the end, after shooting a staggering $5,200,456.76 worth of polling arrows in three months -- “to make sure the candidate's message is in sync with what the voters want to hear” -- Team Obama seems to have seriously missed the mark.¶ [As reported Thursday by Examiner.com](http://www.examiner.com/article/new-polls-show-complete-disconnect-between-obama-s-agenda-and-american-values) -- when it comes to sentiments on job creation, the economy, bailouts and his administration’s decision to issue waivers for the federal work requirement of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program -- the results of several national polls show a complete disconnect between Obama and an overwhelming majority of Americans.¶ Obama also spent more money than he brought in during the month of May.¶ [As reported by USA Today](http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/story/2012-06-20/obama-spends-more-than-raises-in-may/55724018/1), Obama's raised $39.1 million in May.¶ As [confirmed Saturday by The Los Angeles Times](http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jul/21/nation/la-na-campaign-money-20120721), Obama’s reelection committee spent $45 million.¶ That’s a deficit of $6 million.¶ But that total doesn’t even include the $92,751.50 Team Obama spent for the president to deliver his “[official](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2140055/Obama-kicks-official-election-campaign-Ohio--did-speech-half-stadium.html)” May 5 campaign kick-off speech to [14,000 people -- and 6,000 empty seats](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2140055/Obama-kicks-official-election-campaign-Ohio--did-speech-half-stadium.html) -- at the Ohio State University's Jerome Schottenstein Center, and that total doesn’t include other costs associated with the event; only the cost of renting the arena.¶ Curiously, [as exposed Saturday by The Weekly Standard](http://www.weeklystandard.com/blogs/obama-paid-93k-half-empty-stadium-kick-event_648848.html), the disclosure for the May Schottenstein Center rental appears on records for the campaign's June spending.¶ Evidently, that Team Obama waited to report the $92,751.50 spent in May until June – touted by his campaign as being their “[best fundraising month yet](http://www.barackobama.com/news/entry/we-crunched-the-numbers/)” -- the president also likes to “spread” disclosure of his deficit spending around too.¶ "[We can’t afford to spend the next four years going back](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/05/05/remarks-president-and-first-lady-campaign-event)," Obama said during his speech at the Schottenstein Center. "We have come too far to abandon the change we fought for these last few years."¶ Considering Obama’s consistently reckless spending habits over the last four years, we clearly can’t afford to go “[forward](http://www.washingtontimes.com/blog/inside-politics/2012/apr/30/new-obama-slogan-has-long-ties-marxism-socialism/)” with his expensive agenda either.

### Florida Jewish Vote

#### Obamas missing the crucial Florida Jewish vote

Beamon 7/25 Todd Beamon(Journalist for NewsMax),”Obama Lacks Florida Jewish Vote Needed to Win Election”,newsmax.com,7/25/2012, <http://www.newsmax.com/Headline/schoen-obama-romney-tied/2012/07/25/id/446491>

President Barack Obama and Mitt Romney are “in a 50-50 election right now,” political analyst and Democratic pollster Doug Schoen tells Newsmax.TV, adding that the president is lacking the crucial Jewish vote in Florida needed to win the election. “I could make a compelling argument why either side is going to win,” Schoen tells Newsmax in an exclusive interview. “But I will say this: There’s never been as much at stake in an election in recent memory as there is in this one. “Two competing views, two competing visions, and – from where I sit – this is a fight and a contest that has transcended importance for ourselves and for our children.” One of Obama's biggest hurdles: capturing Florida's Jewish voters. The president, polls show, has about 60-65 percent of the Jewish vote, but, says Schoen, if Obama does not win “a full 75 percent...it could, in fact, be decisive.” The state is “effectively deadlocked,” said Schoen, the author [of “Hopelessly Divided: The New Crisis in American Politics and What It Means for 2012 and Beyond.”](http://www.amazon.com/Hopelessly-Divided-Crisis-American-Politics/dp/1442215232/ref%3Dsr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1343225942&sr=8-1&keywords=doug+schoen/?=newsmaxcom08-20) “Jews are necessarily torn, because they see the president as somebody who, aspirationally, has committed himself to Israel,” he said. “At the same time, there have been concerns about the settlement policy and also about the nature of his commitment to do whatever it takes in Iran. “Now I would tell you he has provided probably more advanced weapons systems to Israel than any president before, but – nonetheless – there are these nagging concerns in the Jewish community that just haven’t gone away.”

Dennis, 7/19 (JACK DENNIS “Romney will be the next president because Obama's support is not expanding” JULY 19, 2012 <http://www.examiner.com/article/romney-will-be-the-next-president-because-obama-s-support-is-not-expanding>)

National polls will continue to show a close Presidential race and many in the media will linger along allowing Barack [Obama](http://www.examiner.com/topic/obama) a free pass on his unreliable leadership. Despite this, Americans will elect Mitt [Romney](http://www.examiner.com/topic/romney) in November.¶ How can one be so bold to make this prediction with such certainty?¶ It’s not that difficult. The only significant group that still supports Obama during his presidency are partisan loyalists who are not about to change their minds.¶ Uncommitted Voters¶ The first big hint was in May. Not many reported this, but during the recent Democratic presidential primary elections, the “Uncommitted” votes were extremely high. For instance, in Kentucky Obama received 57.9 percent of the Democratic vote, while “Uncommitted” delivered a whopping 42.1 percent.¶ Romney, who at the time had Ron Paul, Rick Santorum, and Newt Gingrich to deal with, brought in 66.85 percent of his party’s vote. Only 5.87 percent were “Uncommitted.” The story is the same in other state elections as well.¶ So, what other major groups has Obama expanded?¶ "Don't count on all gays voting for him..."¶ One of my best friends, openly gay, says "Don't count on all gays voting for him just because he is pandering to us. Being gay is not the only thing that matters to us. I will vote for anyone other than Obama."¶ "Who can truly say Obama has done such an outstanding job and that they feel better about their job, the economy and integrity in politics?" he added. "Not me."¶ Although most Unions will continue to support him, Obama’s record of giving millions of dollars’ worth of jobs to the Chinese to rebuild bridges and infrastructure (remember “shovel ready jobs for Americans?” has ticked off many individual voters.¶ At this point in time during the Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan [election](http://www.examiner.com/topic/election) era, Reagan was 9 points behind Carter. Most polls show Romney currently running very close, if not even with Obama. Remember what the newspapers and polls were predicting? Reagan proved them wrong and won by a large margin.¶ McCain voters moving over to Obama's corner?¶ How many people who voted for McCain in 2008 have moved over to Obama’s corner? We can count on Romney retaining at least all of those voters.¶ How many people who voted for an unfamiliar Obama back then are now angry or not buying into to a second round of his lackluster hope hype? It could be in the millions.¶ We don’t even know who Romney’s Vice [President](http://www.examiner.com/topic/president) pick is yet, but what we do know is Obama received 96% of the Black vote in 2008. How can he get more than 96% after so many of these voters have expressed their anger at so many of his failed policies and Solyndra type tactics? He has nowhere to go but down in this voting category.¶ Hispanic vote and Florida opportunity¶ The United States is seeing more rallies, the type usually associated with less conservative types, popping up against Eric Holder’s Fast and Furious debacle, Obamacare, Constitutional rights, Solyndra styled payoffs, and lack of jobs. The moderate and right minded are beginning to speak up more.¶ It will be interesting to see what happens with the Hispanic votes if Romney selects Marco Rubio as his running-mate. Some predict up to 15% of this group would vote against Obama. It would be nice for Romney to solidify Florida’s votes as well.¶ Although Obama won most of the Catholic vote back then, being sued by the Church because of his confrontation with their religious beliefs and contraception is not earning him more of these voters. It’s unlikely he can get over half of them to vote his way this time.¶ Military veterans votes swinging back to Romney¶ Romney is winning the military veteran votes by almost 25 percentage points. Compared to John McCain’s win by just 10 points last time around, it a sure thing that Romney is gaining ground here.¶ Obama has been pathetic on his support of Israel. Many of the 78% of Jewish voters who voted for his last time around may change their minds on Election Day.¶ With 17 percent of the youngest working age Americans unemployed, even college campuses have seen an upsurge in those disillusioned with Obama. It’s not likely he will garner the type of support he had 4 years ago.¶ How many small business owners are moving over to the Obama side of politics? Obama’s war on capitalism, attacks on business, and extreme favoritism to unions is not good news for the President in that arena.¶ John [Cornyn](http://www.examiner.com/topic/cornyn) on Obama: "Heading in the wrong direction."¶ Texas Senator John Cornyn said it best about Obama’s tax plan. It’s “heading in the wrong direction,” and added we “ought to be looking for ways to lighten that load.”¶ To think American business brands like Woolworths, Chess King, Diners Club Card, Amiga are fading fast means something.¶ Whatever happened to TWA, Braniff and Pan Am? Even McCall’s magazine, after changing its name to Rosie because Rosie O’Donnell came aboard, is gone.¶ Moms are paying attention¶ Many mothers gave Obama a chance last time around. During his term, Obama has spent 41% more in his outlays than George W. Bush did. If he gets a second term it will average 51%.¶ Moms are paying more attention to this because they have to feed our children. More government spending isn’t helping their cause.¶ Their perception of blatant vices within Obama’s special interests circles is not good. When moms were hit with the uncertainty of Obamacare, unemployment, rising costs and worsening education trends, then all bets are off that he is gaining in this group.¶ By ticking off America’s mothers, even Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid need to start worrying.

## U overwhelms the L

#### Obama will win regardless of new policies

Williams 2012 Dr. Walter Williams(Dr. Williams is a well known professor (Conservative)at George Mason University),“Obama will win 2012 Probably by a landslide, "WHY"?”,allvoices.com,1/31/2012, <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/11417349-obama-will-win-2012-probably-by-a-landslide-why>

Can President Obama be defeated in 2012? No. He can't.. I am going on record as saying that President Barack Obama will win a second term. The media won't tell you this because a good election campaign means hundreds of millions (or in Obama's case billions) of dollars to them in advertising. But the truth is, there simply are no conditions under which Barack Obama can be defeated in 2012. The quality of the Republican candidate doesn't matter. Obama gets reelected. Nine percent unemployment? No problem. Obama will win. Gas prices moving toward five dollars a gallon? He still wins. The economy soars or goes into the gutter. Obama wins. War in the Middle East ? He wins a second term. America's role as the leading Superpower disappears? Hurrah for Barak Obama! The U.S. government rushes toward bankruptcy, the dollar continues to sink on world markets and the price of daily goods and services soars due to inflation fueled by Obama's extraordinary deficit spending? Obama wins handily.¶ You are crazy Williams. Don't you understand how volatile politics can be when overall economic, government, and world conditions are declining? Sure I do. And that's why I know Obama will win. The American people are notoriously ignorant of economics. And economics is the key to why Obama should be defeated. Even when Obama's policies lead the nation to final ruin, the majority of the American people are going to believe the bait-and-switch tactics Obama and his supporters in the media will use to explain why it isn't his fault. After all, things were much worse than understood when he took office. Obama's reelection is really a very, very simple math problem. Consider the following: 1) Blacks will vote for Obama blindly. Period. Doesn't matter what he does. It's a race thing. He's one of us, 2) College educated women will vote for Obama. Though they will be offended by this, they swoon at his oratory. It's really not more complex than that, 3) Liberals will vote for Obama. He is their great hope, 4) Democrats will vote for Obama. He is the leader of their party and his coat tails will carry them to victory nationwide, 5) Hispanics will vote for Obama. He is the path to citizenship for those who are illegal and Hispanic leaders recognize the political clout they carry in the Democratic Party, 6) Union members will vote overwhelmingly for Obama. He is their key to money and power in business, state and local politics, 7) Big Business will support Obama. They already have. He has almost $1 Billion dollars in his reelection purse gained largely from his connections with Big Business and is gaining more every day. Big Business loves Obama because he gives them access to taxpayer money so long as they support his social and political agenda, 8) The media love him. They may attack the people who work for him, but they love him. After all, to not love him would be racist, 9) Most other minorities and special interest groups will vote for him. Oddly, the overwhelming majority of Jews and Muslims will support him because they won't vote Republican. American Indians will support him. Obviously homosexuals tend to vote Democratic. And lastly, 10) Approximately half of independents will vote for Obama. And he doesn't need anywhere near that number because he has all of the groups previously mentioned. The President will win an overwhelming victory in 2012.

# Link

## No Link Uniqueness

#### Highway transportation bill non-uniques the link

TTN 7/16 Transport Topic News(Specific News for Transportation),“Obama Signs Highway Bill”,ttnnews.com,7/16/2012, <http://www.ttnews.com/articles/lmtbase.aspx?storyid=1949&t=Obama-Signs-Highway-Bill->

President Obama signed a new transportation reauthorization law on July 6 that authorizes $105 billion in spending for highways and public transit over two years.¶ The measure provides $52.2 billion in funding for fiscal 2013 and $52.95 billion in fiscal 2014, and is the first long-term transportation bill to make its way through Congress since a four-year bill was passed in 2005. Since that bill’s expiration in 2009, Congress has approved nine temporary funding extensions bill while wrangling over a new multi-year bill.¶ Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, which drafted the highway funding section of the bill, said that, “with a stroke of the president’s pen, nearly . . . 3 million American jobs will be saved and created nationwide.”¶ American Trucking Associations President Bill Graves said that while the bill contains many positives, the measure does not provide “adequate” funding to improve the nation’s infrastructure network.¶ “If America is to maintain its place as the world’s pre-eminent economy, then we must do more to maintain and improve our . . . roads and bridges to ensure that goods move freely and efficiently from factories to ports and from farms to markets,” Graves said in a statement.¶ ATA and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce have urged Congress to raise the 24.4-cent diesel tax and the 18.4-cent gasoline tax to generate more money with which to support the Highway Trust Fund, which pays for construction and maintenance of the highway system.

#### Transportation funding just passed.

O’Keefe 6/29 Ed O’Keefe(Congressional Reporter for Washington Post),“Congress passes two-year transportation bill”,washingtonpost.com,6/29/2012, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/2chambers/post/congress-passes-two-year-transportation-bill/2012/06/29/gJQApmDtBW_blog.html>

On the eve of the Fourth of July travel rush, Congress agreed Friday to a two-year plan to fund the nation’s transportation projects, as part of a broader package that included resolution of other long-simmering issues.¶ The package passed the House 373 to 52 and later cleared the Senate 74 to 19, with one member voting present. Under the agreement, federal transportation funding will continue at roughly $54 billion a year, averting a crisis for the nation’s highway construction projects that could have occurred if Congress not agreed on the money before the expiration of a short-term measure Saturday night.¶ The agreement does not include a provision launching construction of the Keystone XL oil pipeline, which Republicans had sought. But it also omits a $1.4 billion for conservation that Democrats favored, and dropped restrictions on how states use money once mandated for aesthetic transportation improvements.¶ The measure marks the first time since 2005 that Congress has agreed to a long-term transportation bill.¶ “I think everybody realized that tomorrow [Saturday], if we hadn’t acted, thousands of transportation projects across the nation would come to a halt and the potential for millions of people being laid off as opposed to the opposite,” said [Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.)](http://projects.washingtonpost.com/congress/members/M000689), who chairs the [House Transportation Committee](http://transportation.house.gov/).¶ After weeks of debate, the House and Senate quickly passed a package that approved new federal transportation dollars and and agreement to freeze federally subsidized student loan rates at 3.4 percent, rather than allowing them to rise Saturday night to 6.8 percent — a cost increase that would have affected more than 7 million students. The package is now headed to the White House for President Obama’s signature.¶ “This is a bill that everyone can be proud of — whether they’re Republican or Democrat,” said [Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.)](http://projects.washingtonpost.com/congress/members/B000711), chairwoman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, who led negotiations with Mica over the final package.¶ Throughout the negotiations, Boxer, Mica and other supporters that the transportation dollars would ultimately help save more than 2 million jobs — making the bill one of the most significant pieces of jobs legislation passed by lawmakers this year.

#### Congress has passed bipartisan transportation bills in the past – it is popular

Rahall 12 (Ranking Member of the House committee on Transportation and Infrastructure) <http://democrats.transportation.house.gov/press-release/senior-house-transportation-leaders-introduce-senate-transportation-bill-urge> Senior House Transportation Leaders Introduce Senate Transportation Bill, Urge Immediate Consideration

MAR 21, 2012 Washington, D.C. – Senior Members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee today joined with more than 80 Members of the House of Representatives to introduce the bipartisan job-creating Senate transportation bill that passed last week by a vote of 74 to 22 and called on House Republicans to abandon their partisan transportation bill and bring the Senate bill up for immediate consideration. “With more than 2.7 million construction and manufacturing workers out of work, enough with the political games.  With tens of millions more seeking a better life, it is far past the time to stop the brinkmanship,” said U.S. Representative Nick J. Rahall (D-WV), top Democrat on the Committee and cosponsor of the bill.  “If Congress does not act, the highway, transit, and safety programs will shut down a week from Saturday, on March 31.  Let us seize the moment to move forward, without procedural gimmicks, without partisan political posturing, and do what is right for America.  Let us do our jobs so that the American people can go back to theirs.  Let us send the Senate bill to the President.” The Members introduced the Senate’s bipartisan *“Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)” (H.R 14)*, to move our Nation forward and create desperately needed jobs.  The surface transportation authorization bill is by far the biggest jobs legislation Congress will consider this year. If House Republican leaders prevent the Senate bill from reaching the President before the March 31st expiration of highway program funding, Republicans will be responsible for devastating job losses across the Nation. "Once again, the partisan agenda of the GOP leadership has brought the nation to the brink, this time regarding necessary investments in upgrading America's infrastructure for the 21st century," said U.S. Representative Tim Bishop (D-NY), lead sponsor of the legislation.  "MAP-21 received overwhelming bipartisan support in the Senate due to its huge potential for job creation.  I have introduced the bill in the House to allow a bipartisan majority in this chamber to pass it as well and move our nation forward. More delay is unacceptable, and would be the latest example--and most literal--of the House leadership's 'my-way-or-the highway' approach to governing.  Putting Americans back to work is clearly not a priority for House Republicans." Unlike the House bill, which slashes funding and destroys 550,000 jobs, MAP-21 continues current funding levels, sustaining approximately 1.9 million family-wage American jobs.  Under the Senate bill, the States will receive $3.8 billion more in highway construction funding than the House bill over the course of the next two years. “The Senate passed a bipartisan transportation bill by an overwhelming majority. Instead of taking it up immediately, the House Republican leadership is using it as a bargaining chip to get the fanatical transportation devolutionists in line to support their job-killing transportation bill H.R. 7,” said U.S. Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR), top Democrat on the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit.  “The Senate bill isn’t perfect, but it is vastly superior to their House alternative. House leaders must stop with the pointless short term political posturing, pass the bipartisan Senate transportation bill, put millions of Americans back to work, rebuild the crumbling infrastructure in this country, and improve our nation’s economic competitiveness.” At a time when 50 percent of our roads are in disrepair, 70,000 bridges are structurally deficient, and transit ridership was up a staggering 235 million trips last year, the Senate bill provides critical infrastructure upgrades in all 50 States.  The Senate transportation bill maintains investments for highways and public transportation, consolidates and streamlines highway programs, strengthens safety, establishes a national freight program, and institutes performance measures and improves accountability for transportation infrastructure investments. “As we approach the start of construction season, we need to come together to pass a highway bill that will improve our infrastructure and, most importantly, create jobs.  Instead, Republicans in the House continue their ‘my way or the highway’ approach that is now leading to a ‘kick the can down the road’ extension,” said Rahall.  “The Senate bill is a fair bipartisan compromise. It will provide the certainty that States need to invest and proceed with their plans long on the books.  It will provide the certainty that highway and transit contractors desperately need to give them the confidence to hire that one more worker.” The Senate bill eliminates many of the gaping loopholes in current law “Buy America” requirements – loopholes that are being exploited by foreign competitors, like China, who are stealing American jobs.  MAP-21 includes critical elements of Rahall’s *“Invest in American Jobs Act of 2011” (H.R. 3533)*, and eliminates these loopholes to give American workers a fair shot.

## AT: Econ Only Issue

#### Economy isn’t the determining factor in the election, smaller issues will decide

Kuhnhenn 7/14 Jim Kuhnhenn(Associated Press Writer),“Sluggish economy won’t be the only issue this election”,mdjonline.com,7/14/2012, <http://mdjonline.com/view/full_story/19323720/article-Sluggish-economy-won%E2%80%99t-be-the-only-issue-this-election?instance=secondary_story_left_column>

As the economy colors and polarizes voters’ attitudes, the Election Day outcome for President Barack Obama and Republican challenger Mitt Romney may be decided on the margins by narrower issues that energize small but crucial slivers of the population. For three months, the economy by most measures has faltered. Yet the White House contest has remained locked in place, with the incumbent holding on to a slight national lead or in a virtual tie with his rival. Analysts from both parties have no doubt that absent a defining, unpredictable moment, the race will remain neck and neck until November. That, several strategists say, means secondary issues such as health care, immigration, education, even little mentioned social issues such as abortion, guns or gay rights could make a difference when targeted to the right audiences. Under those conditions, the advantage, these strategists say, rests with Obama. “Part of the power of the presidency, part of the power of incumbency, is having the ability with an executive order to make rules, make effective law that is deeply satisfying to a large group of supporters,” said Steve Schmidt, Republican John McCain’s presidential campaign manager in 2008 and top aide in President George W. Bush’s re-election operation. “Being able to deliver if you’re an incumbent president for really important parts of the Democratic party coalition, that’s an enormously important thing.” Obama already has moved to shore up his support with certain voting blocs, with directives on birth control and immigration. He’s given his backing to gay marriage and brawled with congressional Republicans on behalf of lower student loan rates. Each issue won praise from disparate groups of voters, many of whom had voiced frustration with the president or whose enthusiasm for Obama had been waning. “In every single state there will be micro-targeted advertisement, direct mail, or online campaign to get voters out there to kind of hit them on those personal issues that are important to them,” said Rodell Mollineau, president of a pro-Obama political organization, American Bridge. “Whether you’re pro-choice or anti-choice, pro-immigration or anti-immigration, you will be touched one way or the other.” The role of these secondary issues is similar to the part that gay marriage ballot initiatives played in the 2004 contest between President George W. Bush and Democratic nominee John Kerry. That election was dominated by the war in Iraq and national security issues. Though the extent to which 11 ballot issues, especially ones in Michigan and Ohio, helped turn out Bush voters eight years ago is a matter of debate, many analysts believe the initiatives at least primed the vote for the incumbent. As for Romney and Obama, “neither of them seems to be delivering a knockout blow on the economy, and that’s what does raise these issues and their salience,” said Daniel Smith, a political scientist at the University of Florida who researched the role ballot initiatives played in the 2004 election. For three months, the economy has created jobs at a snail’s pace and the unemployment rate has inched up from 8.1 percent to 8.2 percent. Economic growth has slowed, consumer confidence is down, and a strong majority of the public views the country heading in the wrong track. For all that, an Associated Press/GfK poll last month had Romney and Obama in a statistical tie and a Washington Post-ABC poll this week had them even at 47 percent each. More remarkable, a majority in both polls — 56 percent in the AP poll and 58 percent in the Post-ABC survey — said they believed Obama would win re-election. The Romney camp says the contest is still taking shape and Romney is just now beginning to garner a national profile.

## Roads Politically Popular

#### People want road funding, helps Obama’s reelection chances

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

 In 2005, the Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) Commission put forward recommendations to Congress that included moving more than 22,000 Department of Defense (DoD) personnel to Fort Belvoir by September 2011. Congressman Moran voted against this decision because it moves people from Metro accessible offices, forcing thousands of more cars onto our already congested roadways. Opposing BRAC from the beginning, Moran has fought tirelessly to reduce its impact on the communities connected to Ft. Belvoir and the Mark Center in Alexandria. He has secured $200 million in federal funds for BRAC-related transportation improvements across the region including the widening of Route 1, lane widening and new exit ramps at the Mark Center, while preserving community spaces like the Winkler Preserve. Moran, working with Senators Warner and Webb instilled a parking cap of 2,000 spots at the Mark Center facility until congestion around the site can be mitigated.¶ BRAC #133: Mark Center, Alexandria Virginia¶ In 2008, after recognizing that relocating so many personnel to Ft. Belvoir would create a three to four hour backup on major roadways near the base as well as a 2 hour delay on I-95 every morning, the DoD decided to seek an alternate location for 6,400 employees. Former Congressman Tom Davis (R-VA) and Congressman Moran advocated strenuously for the location to be at the current GSA warehouse in Springfield (which sits next to the Springfield Metro Station). The lawmakers even succeeded in passing authorizing language allowing GSA to transfer ownership of the property to the DoD. Regrettably, in the final outcome, the Army made their decision on cost consideration alone, selecting the Mark Center. The Mark Center site, while lacking public transit and sufficient transportation infrastructure to handle this new workforce, was the low bidder, also beating out the Victory Center on Eisenhower Ave. Rep. Moran immediately criticized the decision. By September 2012, all 6,400 personnel will have moved to the Mark Center facility located off I-395 and Seminary Road in Alexandria. According to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the complete relocation will cause traffic congestion at surrounding intersections to a point designated as “failure”, adding significant delays to the daily commutes of hundreds of thousands of Northern Virginia residents. Working with members of the Alexandria community, the Department of Defense, and colleagues in the House and Senate, Congressman Moran has made repeated efforts to mitigate the effect of this impending gridlock.¶ Transportation Infrastructure Funding: Congressman Moran believes that the DoD should fund their fair share of necessary transportation infrastructure improvements to implement the BRAC relocation. To that end, in January 2011 the DoD announced it would pay for an estimated $20 million in short- and mid-term transportation improvements. Those improvements include an additional lane from Seminary to I-395 South, a widening of I-395, lane restriping, and a pedestrian bridge from Southern Towers to the Mark Center. In February 2011, VDOT announced it would spend $80 million for a direct access ramp from the I-395 HOV ramp to Seminary Road. The proposed HOV ramp is currently being reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration, and if built, would be in place in 2015. For that reason, Moran has repeatedly called for a delay in the full implementation of the BRAC recommendation until there is sufficient road capacity to handle the move.¶ Parking Cap: Included in the FY’12 Omnibus Appropriations Bill signed into law December 23, 2012 was a provision authored by Congressman Moran to limit the number of parking spaces at the Mark Center to 2,000. This provision will ensure that traffic on I-395 and roads surrounding the facility do not grow any worse than current levels. That cap would be in place unless traffic does not reach failing levels of service for 90 consecutive days. Should 90 days without failure occur, the Department would be able to waive the cap in part if they and VDOT agree on the number of additional spaces that could be used.¶ DOD IG Investigation: Congressman Moran requested an investigation by the DOD Inspector General of the entire site selection process. The Inspector General released two reports, in April and November 2011, that detailed a number of problems with the Army’s selection of the Mark Center site, bolstering the argument that the DoD should assist in preventing a traffic calamity of their own design. The parking cap provision included in FY’12 Omnibus Appropriations Bill also requires the Army implement the Inspector General’s recommendations from their most recent report. These recommendations include completion of a new traffic study, with accurate data, and revise and update their transportation management plan.

#### States are begging for federal infrastructure investment, helps Obama’s election

Walters 2012 Patrick Walters(Writer for Huffington Post),“U.S Conference Of Mayors Calls For Infrastructure Investment”,huffingtonpost.com,7/19/2012, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/19/us-conference-of-mayors-infrastructure-investment_n_1687193.html>

The economies of the nation's cities are starting to bounce back from the recession and grow again, but the state and federal governments need to increase their spending on infrastructure to help that growth continue, according to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which released an economic report Thursday.¶ The report, prepared by HIS Global Insight, forecasts that 300 of the country's 363 metropolitan areas will experience real economic growth by the end of the year. The total gross metropolitan product grew by 1.7 percent last year and expanded in 267 metropolitan areas; this year, the report predicts, the average growth of all 363 areas will be just below 1.8 percent.¶ Fifty metropolitan areas are expected to have growth rates of 3 percent or more, led by Austin, Texas, and Houston. More than 100 areas are expected to see growth of 2 percent or more, including Phoenix, Denver, Boston and San Francisco, according to the report.¶ But mayors attending the conference's summer meeting in Philadelphia pleaded with federal and state governments, as well as both presidential candidates, to increase the amount of funding for infrastructure – including roads, bridges, water and sewer systems and other transportation investments. Public spending on infrastructure in the United States has fallen to 2.4 percent of the gross domestic product, the group said, something that needs to be increased in order for growth to continue.¶ Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, president of the conference, noted that infrastructure spending had been at 3 percent of the GDP not long ago. "It's going in the wrong direction," the Democrat said, adding that the change was due to the "ineffectiveness of many members of Congress."¶ Frank C. Ortis, mayor of Pembroke Pines, Fla., and Scott Smith, mayor of Mesa, Ariz., also called on state and federal governments to increase infrastructure spending to help city economies.¶ "Our cities need help," said Ortis, a Democrat. "We want action."¶ Said Smith, a Republican: "We believe we are falling behind."¶ The nonpartisan conference pointed out that metropolitan areas are home to 90.7 percent of the real gross domestic product, 89.9 percent of wage and salary income, 85.8 percent of jobs and 83.7 percent of the population.

## BRAC

### No Blame on Obama

#### The plan is passed under the Under Secretary of Defense, Obama doesn’t take the heat

DoD 2012 (Department of Defense), DoD Base Realignment and Closure, February 2012, <http://comptroller.defense.gov/defbudget/fy2013/budget_justification/pdfs/05_BRAC/BRAC_Exec_Sum_Book_FY13.pdf>

To properly account for and manage appropriated fund resources, the DoD Base ¶ Closure Accounts were established on the books of the Treasury to aid the DoD Components in ¶ the closure and realignment of certain military installations. Treasury has assigned account ¶ symbol 97-0103 to identify the DoD Base Closure Account - Part I, and 97-0510 to identify DoD ¶ 4Base Closure Account 1990 - Part II, Part III, and Part IV and 97-0512 to identify DoD Base ¶ Closure Account 2005. ¶ Funds made available to the DOD Components are subdivided and distribute to the ¶ activities responsible for base closure actions. Separate allocations are made for each of the ¶ accounts by program year. Each DoD Component distributes the base closure funds in ¶ accordance with its normal fund distribution procedures. The applicable reporting requirements ¶ include: ¶ Military Construction¶ Construction ¶ Planning and Design ¶ Family Housing¶ Construction ¶ Operations ¶ Environmental ¶ Operation and Maintenance (O&M)¶ Civilian Severance Pay¶ ¶ Permanent Change of Station (PCS) costs ¶ Transportation of things ¶ Real Property Maintenance¶ Program Management (civilian work years, TDY travel, and related support dedicated ¶ to implementation efforts)¶ Military Personnel (limited to PCS expenses dedicated to implementation efforts)¶ Other (including procurement-type items)¶ 3. The Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) makes funds available to the DoD ¶ Components based on their official financial plans. Financial plans are prepared by the DoD ¶ Components in cooperation with and at the direction of the program manager, the Deputy Under ¶ Secretary of Defense (Installations & Environment). The DoD Components’ financial plans and ¶ the subsequent allocation of funds are supported by detailed, line-item military and family ¶ housing construction justification. Separate narrative explanations for other planned ¶ expenditures are also submitted to the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) in sufficient ¶ detail to support the DoD Component’s Financial plan. The DoD Components are allowed to ¶ revise planned execution as the situation dictates but must notify the Deputy Under Secretary of ¶ Defense (Installations & Environment) and the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) of all ¶ changes. To keep the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) apprised of these changes, the ¶ DoD Components are required to submit a revised current year financial plan and supporting ¶ documentation on a quarterly basis to reflect the status of the current plan being executed. When ¶ a military construction or family housing construction project is to be executed, but does not ¶ appear on the approved construction project list, the prior approval of the Under Secretary of ¶ Defense (Comptroller), and Congress is required. This will ensure that the Department has ¶ complied with the notification requirements of the House of Representatives Report 101-176, ¶ Military Construction Appropriation Bill, July 26, 1989, prior to the expenditure of DoD Base ¶ 5Closure Account funds. Each DoD Component is allocated funds based upon its official budget ¶ justification and financial plan. ¶ 4. Decision Rule for Determining the Validity of Charging Cost to the DoD Base ¶ Closure Accounts: In addition to being supported by the detailed budget justification, the ¶ general criterion to be applied when deciding whether to charge specific costs to the DoD Base ¶ Closure Account is that the cost in question is a one-time implementation cost directly associated ¶ with the overall base closure effort. For example, the one-time operation and maintenance-type ¶ costs at R&D-funded installations are charged to the appropriate sub-account of “Operation and ¶ Maintenance.” Low-dollar value construction projects budgeted as lump sum under the real ¶ property maintenance category are charged to that sub-account and not the construction subaccount of military construction, which is reserved for projects listed individually on the ¶ financial plan accompanying the fund allocation document. Recurring costs driven by the ¶ transfer of workload from one location to another is budgeted for and charged to the non-base ¶ closure accounts.

### Congestion Kills Election

#### Turn- Controversy from congestion will kill Obama’s election,

Carey 2011 [Julie Carey](http://www.nbcwashington.com/results/?keywords=%22Julie+Carey%22&byline=y&sort=date)(News4 reporter focusing on Virginia issues and politics), “$600K for BRAC Art Upsets Those Worried About Roads”,4/1/2011, <http://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/600K-for-BRAC-Art-Upsets-Those-Worried-About-Roads-119101464.html>

A new Defense Department building in Alexandria, Va., that's been the center of traffic controversy is now stirring up more controversy because of art.¶ A fairy riding a toad is one of four sculptures that are finalists to adorn the massive new building opening in the fall. More than a half million dollars is being spent on public art at the Mark Center.¶ When many are concerned that there isn't enough federal funding for needed road improvements, the $600,000 price tag for art is causing a furor.¶ "The sculpture that they're talking about is of a child's fantasy," U.S. Rep. Jim Moran, D-Va., said. "The problem is it's in the middle of an adult's nightmare, and that's really the issue. Spending $600,000 on sculpture, regardless of whether you like it or not, when that money needs to be spend on transportation improvement."¶ The DOD-funded sculptures would be placed at the transportation center at the complex, where buses and shuttles will come and go each day.¶ Community members on a BRAC advisory committee were surprised by the expense.¶ "The price tag's shocking, you know, $400,000 to $600,000," David Dexter said. "I was hoping that some of the money could be spent on the road improvements. Until we deal with the traffic issue, we're going to have lots of problems. Nobody will come to see the art if we don't get the roads fixed."¶ Local artists who've worked to develop the public art entries defended the process.¶ Matthew Harwood, co-chair of the city's public art committee, said he first notified the advisory group in 2009 that he was hoping to add public art to the site.¶ Public art is often controversial at first, Harwood said, but he hopes it eventually will be embraced.¶ "Over time, when they realize the complexity of the project, what it contributes, it'll be a lasting gift to the city and I think people will grow to appreciate it," Harwood said.¶ The four finalists formally presented their work to a judging panel Friday.

### Virginia Scenario (Military)

#### 1. Military cuts killing Obamas chances in Virginia, DAR funding key

Jamieson 7/12 [Dave Jamieson](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dave-jamieson)(Journalist for Huffingtonpost),”Romney Campaign Attacks Obama On Defense Cuts As President Heads To Virginia”,huffingtonpost.com,7/12/2012, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/12/defense-cuts_n_1668212.html>

As President Barack Obama embarks on several campaign stops in Virginia this week, the Mitt Romney campaign criticized the White House on Thursday for allowing [budget cuts](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/05/obama-defense-strategy-military-cuts_n_1186025.html) to hit the military, saying the belt-tightening would hurt American defense and the economy.¶ The attack, made by Romney surrogates on a call with reporters, is part of the campaign's strategy to make headway in Virginia through looming defense cuts that could hit the swing state hard. Obama won the state by six points in 2008, but the shrinking military budget means [layoff notices could hit thousands of defense contractors](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303292204577515220443609642.html) in the weeks leading up to the November election.¶ "As he comes to Virginia, most Virginians are concerned about the economy and their jobs," Rep. Randy Forbes (R-Va.) said on the call, which was billed as an opportunity to "welcome" Obama to the state. "And what does the president bring with him? He has a huge box of pink slips that he's going to distribute across Virginia."¶ The defense cuts are the result of last year's [debt-ceiling fight](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/09/john-boehner-debt-ceiling_n_893952.html) between House Republicans and the White House. Under the deal, the Defense Department must trim its budget by about $500 billion over ten years, and the Pentagon will have to trim an extra $50 billion in the short term if Congress can't find savings elsewhere by year's end. Forbes said the impending cuts could cost Virginia 128,000 jobs.¶ The military cuts have put some GOP lawmakers in an awkward position, [testing their commitment](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/06/obama-defense-cuts-house-congress_n_1258237.html) to budget-trimming at a time when Republicans are broadly calling for austerity.¶ Former Sen. Jim Talent (R-Mo.) called Obama's approval of the budget plan "the most irresponsible thing a commander in chief has done" in Talent's time "in and around Washington."¶ "It's going to have a huge impact on jobs in the country," he said. "These are overwhelmingly high-paying jobs, often in the manufacturing industry."¶ In an email, Obama campaign spokesman Danny Kanner criticized Romney for embracing a House Republican budget that would cut Veterans Affairs funding. He also said Romney needs to call on Republicans in Congress to come up with a plan to avoid automatic budget cuts through the sequestration trigger.¶ "Mitt Romney and Congressional Republicans are so determined to provide massive tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires that they’d put middle class military families at risk," Kanner said. "The Administration has made it clear that sequestration would be disastrous for our national security, and that's why Mitt Romney needs to demonstrate leadership and press his congressional allies to avoid it from becoming a reality."¶ Obama will be joined by Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.) and Democratic Senate hopeful Tim Kaine, a former Virginia governor, on the campaign trail Friday. According to recent polls, Obama holds a [slight lead](http://elections.huffingtonpost.com/pollster/2012-virginia-president-romney-vs-obama?gem) over Romney in Virginia.

#### Virginia is key to Obama’s overall election, it’s a must needed win

Hester 2012 Wesley P. Hester(Journalist for Richmond-Times Dispath),”Political panel agrees Virginia a key swing state”,timesdispatch.com,6/23/2012, <http://www2.timesdispatch.com/news/virginia-politics/2012/jun/23/tdmet02-political-panel-agrees-virginia-a-key-swin-ar-2008285/>

A panel of political prognosticators — including journalists and a former congressman — convened at the state Capitol on Friday to talk about presidential elections past and present and agreed on something: Virginia could be the key in 2012.¶ "It's increasingly the new bellwether. It's the new Ohio," said Politico senior reporter Jonathan Martin at the University of Virginia Center for Politics' 14th annual Virginia Political History Project.¶ "It's hard to see a path for President Obama to win back the presidency if he doesn't carry Virginia," Martin added.¶ Jill Lawrence, managing editor for politics for National Journal, said the state's transformation from a red state to a purple one has been unique.¶ She said that while immigrants and moderates have made the transition, "you also have this very culturally conservative contingent that's making life very difficult for the governor and may have deep-sixed his chances of getting on the Romney ticket."¶ Lawrence was referring to a series of social issues pushed by Republicans in the state legislature, most notably a measure to require ultrasounds before abortions, which will become law July 1.¶ Gov. Bob McDonnell backed the legislation, though he amended the original proposal, which would have required invasive transvaginal ultrasounds for women in early pregnancy.¶ Perhaps as a result of that and other social issues, Republican Mitt Romney is polling well behind the president in the state among women, trailing by 16 percentage points as of the latest survey of the presidential race.¶ "I don't know what it's going to be, but he's got to find a way to make that up," said Martin.¶ Former U.S. Rep. Thomas M. Davis III, R-11th, disagreed.¶ "I think this whole women's thing is way overblown in terms of the gender gap," Davis said, before being gently booed by the crowd.¶ Davis said Medicare and Social Security "are the best issues the Democrats have," adding that he thought the president's attacks on Romney's record with private equity firm Bain Capital were feeble.¶ "Obama can talk rich and poor all he wants, but he's a non-starter with so many working-class whites. They aren't even giving him a look. He can go Bain Capital till the cows come home," Davis said.

## Winner’s Win

#### Winners Win – Obama knows that wins strengthen his political power

Halloran 10

 For Obama, What A Difference A Week Made b[LIZHALLORAN](http://www.npr.org/people/101266638/liz-halloran)http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125594396

To paraphrase a former president, it's been a heckuva few weeks for the current one. President Obama signed his hard-won health care legislation into law, embarked on a road show to market it, and mimicked that same former president's famous "bring it on" challenge to Republicans rallying their party faithful with calls to repeal the new law. He's lectured leaders from Israel and Afghanistan, endorsed an offshore drilling plan, announced new gas mileage requirements, and, his voice shot-through with sarcasm during a speech in Iowa last week, mocked the media for peddling poll-driven impatience. Amazing what a win in a major legislative battle will do for a president's spirit. (Turmoil over spending and leadership at the Republican National Committee over the past week, and the release Tuesday of a major new and largely sympathetic book about the president by *New Yorker* editor David Remnick, also haven't hurt White House efforts to drive its own, new narrative.) Though the president's national job approval ratings failed to get a boost by the passage of the health care overhaul — his numbers have remained steady this year at just under 50 percent — he has earned grudging respect even from those who don't agree with his policies. "He's achieved something that virtually everyone in Washington thought he couldn't," says Henry Olsen, vice president and director of the business-oriented American Enterprise Institute's National Research Initiative. "And that's given him confidence." The protracted health care battle looks to have taught the White House something about power, says presidential historian Gil Troy — a lesson that will inform Obama's pursuit of his initiatives going forward. "I think that Obama realizes that presidential power is a muscle, and the more you exercise it, the stronger it gets," Troy says. "He exercised that power and had a success with health care passage, and now he wants to make sure people realize it's not just a blip on the map." The White House now has an opportunity, he says, to change the narrative that had been looming — that the Democrats would lose big in the fall midterm elections, and that Obama was looking more like one-term President Jimmy Carter than two-termer Ronald Reagan, who also managed a difficult first-term legislative win and survived his party's bad showing in the midterms.

# Impacts Defense

## US-Russia Relations Stable

#### US – Russia relations are stable and will remain that way

Lieven 11

U.S.-Russian Relations and the Rise of China By[Anatol Lieven](http://newamerica.net/user/90), New America Foundation Anatol Lieven, a former senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, previously covered Central Europe for *The Financial Times*; Pakistan, Afghanistan, the former Soviet Union, and Russia for *The Times* (London), and India as a freelance journalist. He was also an editor at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, where he also worked for the Eastern Services of the BBC. Mr. Lieven is the author of numerous books on foreign policy, including *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence* (Yale University Press, 1993), which won the George Orwell Prize for Political Writing and the Yale University Press Governors’ Award. His work on American political culture, *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*, was published by Oxford University Press in 2004. His latest book, *Ethical Realism: A Vision for America’s Role in the World*, coauthored with John Hulsman, was published by Pantheon in September 2006. He has also written for *The Financial Times*, the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *The National Interest*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Prospect* (U.K.), and *The Nation*, among other publications. Mr. Lieven holds a B.A. in history and a doctorate in political science from Jesus College, Cambridge.As a Senior Research Fellow with the New America Foundation, Mr. Lieven focuses on U.S. global strategy and the war on terror.<http://newamerica.net/publications/policy/us_russian_relations_and_the_rise_of_china>

Faced with this new reality, the Obama administration very sensibly moved to diminish tensions with Russia through the so-called "reset" in relations. NATO expansion has been shelved (though not of course formally abandoned); plans for missile defense in Eastern Europe drastically reduced; a new START treaty on a formal basis of equality signed with Moscow; and rhetoric about democracy and human rights in Russia greatly diminished. Given not just the rise of China, but the war in Afghanistan, America's endless strategic entanglement in the Middle East, and indeed the growing problems of Mexico (a good deal closer to the U.S. than is Georgia or Afghanistan), reducing U.S. commitments elsewhere reflected a sober and sensible realist approach in the White House, State Department, and Pentagon.  In return, Russia has become more helpful over Iran and Afghanistan and has not sought to stir up trouble in the Baltic States or exploit U.S. difficulties elsewhere in the world. The lack of attempts by Moscow to exploit ethnic tensions in the Baltic States is especially striking in view of the acute economic sufferings of Latvia and Lithuania as a result of the global economic recession, something that has made much of their populations doubt the benefits of NATO and EU membership.  There is certainly no objective reason for the U.S. to return to a strategy of challenging Russia in the former Soviet Union. As Stephen Kotkin has pointed out, this U.S. strategy has only served the interests of China: "As Russia pursues the chimera of a multipolar world, the United States pursues the delusion of nearly limitless NATO expansion. And in the process, both unwittingly conspire to put Russia in China's pocket."10As far as the West is concerned, our truly vital interest in this region is to avoid conflicts which could indirectly destabilize areas where we really do have vital interests: Central and even Western Europe, and the Middle East. They are of course of much greater interest to Russia, but Russia's ambitions have also been far more limited than many in the West have assumed, largely because of a deep unwillingness to make the sacrifices and run the risks involved in bringing the other republics of the former Soviet Union into a much tighter alliance with Russia.11  Moscow's conception of a sphere of influence on the territory of the former Soviet Union is more defensive than it is offensive. It is focused chiefly on the exclusion of rival sources of geopolitical influence and power, above all the United States. In Ukraine, the closeness and intermingling on the ground between Russians and Ukrainians suggests that if Russia does exert its influence in Ukraine in a restrained way, it seems quite possible that it may regain elements of a hegemonic position without setting off a massive reaction from within Ukraine, or triggering a strong response from the West. If Moscow uses its influence quietly to accumulate a dominant position for Russian firms in the Ukrainian economy, it would unlikely create a major public backlash – especially if the Russian financial-industrial groups are careful to seek alliances with Ukrainian magnates. Not even hard-line nationalists in Galicia are liable to be very agitated by this. The U.S. and EU should use their influence to encourage Russia to go on pursuing a restrained policy of extending soft influence, not a ruthless and illegitimate extension of hard power.

# NEG

## BRAC Links

#### BRAC is expensive – and they couldn’t start solving for years.

Transportation Research Board of the National Academies Press ’11 [Joseph M. Sussman, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Chair; Thera Black, Thurston Regional Planning Council, Olympia, Washington; Thomas B. Deen, Transportation Consultant, Stevensville, Maryland; James R. Gosnell, West Coast Corridor Coalition, Los Angeles, California; Max I. Inman, Mercator Advisors, Fairfax, Virginia; Ashby Johnson, Houston–Galveston Area Council, Houston, Texas; Fred Meurer, City of Monterey, California; Kevin Neels, Brattle Group, Washington, D.C.; George E. Schoener, I-95 Corridor Coalition, Celebration, Florida; Randall Yim, Independent Consultant, Scottsville, Virginia. Staff: Edward Weiner, Consultant; Stephen R. Godwin, Transportation Research Board, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies Press, “Federal Funding of Transportation Improvements in BRAC Cases: Special Report 302”, NAP, February 2011, http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/sr/sr302Summary.pdf AD]

Resolving metropolitan area transportation congestion problems is complex and expensive. The additional travel demand on congested routes serving bases caused by BRAC 2005 cannot be accommodated in a matter of a few months or years. Over time, delays can be eased, but greater DoD funding, realigned metropolitan area priorities, and better communication between base commanders and civilian authorities will be required. Adoption of the committee’s recommendations to improve base–community communication and planning will help avoid future problems caused by rapid growth in personnel at military bases.

#### BRAC funding would be politically unpopular because it would require raising taxes.

Transportation Research Board of the National Academies Press ’11 [Joseph M. Sussman, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Chair; Thera Black, Thurston Regional Planning Council, Olympia, Washington; Thomas B. Deen, Transportation Consultant, Stevensville, Maryland; James R. Gosnell, West Coast Corridor Coalition, Los Angeles, California; Max I. Inman, Mercator Advisors, Fairfax, Virginia; Ashby Johnson, Houston–Galveston Area Council, Houston, Texas; Fred Meurer, City of Monterey, California; Kevin Neels, Brattle Group, Washington, D.C.; George E. Schoener, I-95 Corridor Coalition, Celebration, Florida; Randall Yim, Independent Consultant, Scottsville, Virginia. Staff: Edward Weiner, Consultant; Stephen R. Godwin, Transportation Research Board, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies Press, “Federal Funding of Transportation Improvements in BRAC Cases: Special Report 302”, NAP, February 2011, <http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=13104&page=55> AD]

Federal Funding of transportation improvements in BRAC Cases state infrastructure Banks: Many of the states with BRAC actions have state infrastructure banks that could be a source of upfront capital to improve transportation facilities at low or no interest if a revenue source could be found to repay the loan. In the case of Fort Bliss, the state is dedicating a share of future federal surface transportation revenues to pay a developer who financed the project. Another possibility is for a local jurisdiction or state to dedicate some portion of existing tax revenues, or raise taxes, to repay a loan from a state infrastructure bank. Some complexities with this approach are obvious. Most of the facilities adversely affected by base expansion are state highways, and local property or business taxes would not apply. The state could dedicate a share of future highway user taxes to repay the loan, but, as indicated above, most state transportation trust funds are inadequate to meet current needs. Given the current status of state and local finances, the concept of diverting existing tax revenues to a new purpose, or raising taxes, would be politically unpopular, but such an approach might be possible in the future for some projects. impact fees The situation of a sharp increase in base personnel being transferred to new or expanded facilities is analogous to an unanticipated new, large private development occurring within a metropolitan region. Typically, regional leaders would negotiate with the developer and require that certain conditions be met to ameliorate the negative impacts of the development, and they often impose fees to offset capital improvement needs as a result of the development. If developers in such instances are unwilling to pay the impact fees, local governments can refuse to allow the development. Exactions, the on-site construction of public facilities or dedication of land, have been used for decades.3 Impact fees, a form of exaction, were instituted in the 1920s as a local financing tool. Where no appropriate land was available for a traditional exaction, off-site land or a fee- in-lieu could be substituted for a dedication. Over time, these fees came to include capital costs for on- and off-site improvements brought about by new development. Rooted in the idea that new development should pay its own way, impact fees increasingly have been used to pay for improvements traditionally paid for by property taxes. According to the California State Controller’s Office, fees and service charges account for See Appendix A, from which this chapter is derived, for a more extended discussion of impact fees. 3 72

#### And, Americans hate paying taxes.

Bryner ’12 [Jeanna Bryner, LiveScience Managing Editor, LiveScience, “Why Americans Hate Paying Taxes, May 23, 2012, <http://www.livescience.com/20518-paying-taxes-moral-principles.html> AD]

The debate over taxes has long been an issue in American politics, and now researchers have found some of the moral underpinnings that may explain why many hate paying taxes. The study was small, with just 24 small businesspeople taking part in relatively open-ended interviews. Even so, Jeff Kidder of Northern Illinois University and Isaac Martin from the University of California-San Diego, found some trends. In essence, middle-class Americans, the results suggest, see taxes as a means of robbing hardworking citizens of their dignity. The participants "portray taxation as a threat to the moral order because they believe taxes deprive deserving hardworking middle class people of dignity, while rewarding others who are undeserving (both rich and poor)," the researchers write this week in the journal Symbolic Interaction. [Infographic: Death and Taxes] Kidder and Martin chose this group of participants from the South, because such entrepreneurs are typically strongly anti-tax, while southern states also hold plenty of supporters of the Tea Party (whose name stands for Taxed Enough Already). In fact, a recent survey by payroll service provider Paychex found that tax codes, along with employment regulations and retirement security are the top three election issues for small business owners. The interviews in the new study revealed participants associated income taxes as violating the moral principle that hard work should be rewarded, the researchers noted. So rather than being associated with a free-market ideology or a person's own economic interests, at least for these taxpayers, tax hostility was more linked with moral principles. "When Americans lash out at 'takeovers,' 'massive taxes' and 'bailouts,' they are looking at these issues from the perspective of a hardworking middle class besieged on all sides," Kidder said in a statement. "Tax talk is about dollars, but it is also about a moral sense of what is right."

#### And, raising taxes to pay for BRAC roads is unpopular in the context of the Great Recession – also, there is no possibility of cost underruns.

Transportation Research Board of the National Academies Press ’11 [Joseph M. Sussman, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Chair; Thera Black, Thurston Regional Planning Council, Olympia, Washington; Thomas B. Deen, Transportation Consultant, Stevensville, Maryland; James R. Gosnell, West Coast Corridor Coalition, Los Angeles, California; Max I. Inman, Mercator Advisors, Fairfax, Virginia; Ashby Johnson, Houston–Galveston Area Council, Houston, Texas; Fred Meurer, City of Monterey, California; Kevin Neels, Brattle Group, Washington, D.C.; George E. Schoener, I-95 Corridor Coalition, Celebration, Florida; Randall Yim, Independent Consultant, Scottsville, Virginia. Staff: Edward Weiner, Consultant; Stephen R. Godwin, Transportation Research Board, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies Press, “Federal Funding of Transportation Improvements in BRAC Cases: Special Report 302”, Alexandria.gov, February 2011, http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/BRAC/Federal%20Funding%20of%20Transportation%20Improvements%20in%20BRAC%20cases.pdf AD]

The fundamental question posed in the committee’s statement of task concerns the responsibility of the Department of Defense (DoD) to pay for off-base transportation impacts. The first section of this chapter reviews existing DoD programs for assisting communities whose transportation facilities are affected by military base growth. The second section reviews traditional non-DoD government programs to fund surface transportation infrastructure. These programs include those administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), for which national defense is an eligibility criterion. State and local government transportation sources are also reviewed in this section, including how local governments normally work with private developers who propose major projects that will affect the localities’ transportation networks. Alternatives to construction funding for capital improvement to increase infrastructure capacity, such as operations and maintenance (O&M) funding for ongoing congestion management, are also discussed. The committee is also charged with assessing current federal programs that could be of assistance in BRAC cases. The committee’s treatment of traditional federal, state, and local programs for funding transportation is influenced by the current fiscal context. In the aftermath of the “great recession,” governments are under the most demanding fiscal pressure experienced in recent decades and face a public unsympathetic to tax increases to fund transportation. Even as the military budget has grown dramatically to wage wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, governments have seen their revenues decline because of the recent recession, particularly tax revenues they typically rely on for transportation. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROGRAMS The official policy of DoD is that, with limited exceptions, the impact of bases on local government infrastructure is the responsibility of those governments (DoD 2008) (see also Box 1). The principal argument is that DoD employees pay taxes into the state and local coffers that fund infrastructure, and those sources should be tapped for making improvements to meet the demands placed on the infrastructure by soldiers and DoD civilian employees. DoD policy, however, also allows for special circumstances in which DoD provides funds for transportation improvements. Defense Access Roads Program Under the Defense Access Roads (DAR) program, administered by the military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC), DoD may pay for public highway improvements to address the impact on traffic of sudden or unusual defense-related actions (see Box 2). DAR enables DoD to help pay indirectly for improvements to highways DoD designates as important to the national defense. Under DAR, DoD can use funds provided in military construction (MILCON) appropriations to pay for all or part of the cost of constructing and maintaining roads designated as “defense access roads.” The DAR program began decades ago when many bases were located, or being located, in relatively undeveloped regions. The program appears to have been designed to pay for access roads used principally by the military or to improve roads that would be harmed by heavy military equipment. The program has funded road projects that access missile installations and other military facilities that were off the federal-aid primary highway system. These facilities were generally in isolated areas and not served by access roads. Funds appropriated for DAR projects are transferred from DoD to FHWA to administer. The provisions of U.S. Federal Code, Title 23, which includes requirements of federal laws applying to federal-aid highways, apply to all DAR projects. Allocations are project specific; therefore, underruns cannot be used on other projects and unused DAR funds may be reallocated by the Washington Headquarters office of FHWA or returned to the military. Funds must be obligated within 5 years of approval. Unobligated balances lapse after the period of availability. Unexpended funds are canceled 10 years after the last year of obligation. As federal transportation programs go, the DAR program is quite modest. From 2001 to 2010, it certified as eligible 19 projects, 15 of which have been funded. Since 2005, the program has provided about $22.5 million annually for transportation improvements, including projects that are not BRAC related. By way of comparison, federal aid for highway transportation funded through USDOT exceeded $30 billion annually from 2006 to 2010.

## Impacts

### Heg

#### Obama is key to US leadership

USA TODAY 7/23 (USA TODAY “Romney's foreign trip to show contrast with Obama”¶ July 23, 2012 http://content.usatoday.com/communities/onpolitics/post/2012/07/mitt-romney-foreign-policy-trip-middle-east-/1#.UBA\_O7SXR14

Mitt Romney faces challenges in convincing Americans he is the best candidate to handle foreign affairs, as a new USA TODAY/Gallup Poll shows President Obama with an advantage over his GOP rival.¶ More than half of Americans, or 52%, say Obama can better handle foreign policy concerns compared with 40% who choose the presumptive Republican nominee. The numbers are closer among registered voters, who give Obama a 4-point advantage.¶ Romney will leave Tuesday for England, Israel and Poland, which his campaign is billing as a "learn and listen" trip. He is likely to frame the foreign policy debate in his speech tomorrow to the Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting in Reno. Obama addressed the VFW today.¶ Jamie Fly, executive director of the Foreign Policy Initiative, a conservative think tank, told USA TODAY that the Romney trip will help bring a much-needed spotlight on issues that have not been at the forefront of the campaign.¶ "The American people need to remember that they're electing a commander in chief, not just someone who will fix the economy," Fly said in a telephone interview. "I'm always concerned when don't have real debate on national security in a campaign. We need to have a dialogue."¶ Andrea Saul, a spokeswoman for the Romney campaign, said Romney understands the difference between U.S. allies and those who pose threats.¶ "President Obama thinks visiting our closest ally in the Middle East is a 'distraction,' that Hugo Chavez is not a 'serious' threat and that the right response to Russia is to promise more 'flexibility' in exchange for giving him 'space' before the election," Saul said. "It is clear that President Obama's foreign policy is confused, ineffective, and has weakened our influence in every region of the world."¶ In advance of Romney's first campaign trip abroad, the Obama campaign held a conference call with reporters to bring attention to what it views as some of the former Massachusetts governor's shortcomings on issues in the Middle East and relations with Russia.¶ Romney's trip brings to mind comparisons to a similar overseas visit made four years ago by then-senator Barack Obama, who was criticized in the 2008 Democratic primary and in the general election as not being prepared to handle such crises as the war in Iraq. Since taking office, Obama can say he authorized the strike that killed Osama bin Laden and has taken steps to bring home U.S. combat troops from Afghanistan.¶ "The record has been very clear that since the president's election, he has been successful in revitalizing our alliances, especially in Europe, and has strengthened the U.S. leadership position globally," said Michelle Flournoy, a former undersecretary of Defense for policy.¶ In light of some of Obama's foreign policy achievements, some foreign policy experts say Romney has his work cut out for him during his first overseas trip of this campaign.¶ "Romney's main line of attack is 'I'm Mr. Tough Guy, and I understand how to wield American power,' and he's attempted to portray Obama as less forceful on questions of American diplomacy," said Charles Kupchan, a professor of international affairs at Georgetown University and a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.¶ "The problem is that's not where the American public is," Kupchan said. "The Obama administration generally gets high marks on security, and Obama has turned around the landscape where Democrats are seen as weaker on national security and Republicans are stronger."

### European Relations

#### Obama is Key to European relations.

New York Times July 9 (“Obama or Romney, Europe Is In for Disappointment” July 9, 2012http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/10/world/europe/10iht-letter10.html)

But now, because it is election time in the United States, Mr. Obama’s star is beginning to shine again in Europe. The reason is his Republican rival, [Mitt Romney](http://elections.nytimes.com/2012/primaries/candidates/mitt-romney?inline=nyt-per), whose ideas and policies have raised hackles in many European capitals. “Romney in the White House would be bad news for Europe,” said one high-ranking European diplomat who declined to be identified.¶ Mr. Romney, who in the 1960s spent two years in France as a Mormon missionary, has lambasted Europe during his campaign. He has harshly criticized Europe’s handling of the euro crisis and, unlike Mr. Obama, the role of the state in Europe, be it for the provision of health care, a fair tax structure or a social welfare system that protects the disadvantaged.¶ In stark contrast to Mr. Obama and almost all European leaders, Mr. Romney is also overtly pro-Israel and a close friend of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He plans to visit Israel in the coming weeks.¶ Republicans in Congress have also stated that they would fully fund the missile defense shield that the White House has cut back. They would impose much tougher sanctions on Iran. They would keep those accused of being terrorism combatants detained in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and try them in military, not civilian courts.

### Climate/Proliferation

#### Obama is key to climate reform and proliferation prevention.

Lizza, 6/18 (Ryan, The New Yorker’s Washington correspondent. Former political correspondent for The New Republic, correspondent from 1998 to 2007 formerly a correspondent for GQ and a contributing editor for New York. He has also written for the New York Times, Washington Monthly, and the Atlantic Monthly. “THE SECOND TERM: What would Obama do if reelected?” JUNE 18, 2012 The New Yorker http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2012/06/18/120618fa\_fact\_lizza#ixzz21pqC4iYc)

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