## \*\*\*Shells\*\*\*

### 1NC – Obama Bad

#### Most recent polls show Obama with slight lead over Romney

Liptak 6/26, Kevin, a political contributor for CNN Politics. “Poll: Obama, Romney race still tight.” (6/26/2012, http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2012/06/26/poll-voters-tepid-on-romney-business-background/)

(CNN) – President Barack Obama holds a slight advantage over his Republican rival Mitt Romney, according to a poll released Tuesday, though Americans' views on the economy continue to put a damper on the president's bid for a second term in the White House. Overall, the NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll showed Obama edging Romney nationally, with 47% of registered voters saying they back the incumbent Democrat and 44% backing his Republican rival. The 3-point margin was within the poll's sampling error. Obama's edge nationally was bolstered by strong leads among women, minorities and independents. The president led Romney 52%-39% among women, 52%-35% among Latinos ages 18 to 29 and 40%-36% among independents. Romney was ahead among white voters, 53%-38%, and men, 48%-43%. The economy, which voters consistently rate the most important issue, remains a problem for Obama. Fifty-three percent say they disapprove of Obama's handling of the economy, and 33% say Obama's policies have hurt the economy. Another 32% say the president's economic policies haven't made any difference, and 32% say they've helped. In all, 61% of the respondents said they thought the nation was headed in the wrong direction, which was up three points from an NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll last month. A subset of registered voters in battleground states were questioned about Romney's business background, with the results indicating the former Bain Capital executive is struggling to turn his private equity experience into an asset for his campaign. The survey showed 33% of voters in 12 battleground states saying what they had read or heard about Romney's business background negatively influenced their view of the candidate, compared with 18% who said the information led them to view Romney more positively. The remainder either felt they didn't have enough information about Romney's private equity career or that the information didn't make a difference. The battleground states included in the NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll were Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin. President Barack Obama's campaign, eager to discredit his Republican rival's business credentials, has used attack ads in some of those states to paint Romney as a corporate raider who eliminated jobs and closed plants during his tenure as chief executive of Bain Capital. Romney's campaign argues the Obama attacks don't take into account Bain's successes. Those attack ads might be having an effect on Romney's favorability rating in the swing states. Some 30% of the battleground-state voters said they viewed Romney favorably in the poll, compared to 36% who viewed him favorably one month ago. Nationally, Romney's favorability hasn't taken such a hit. He holds a 33% favorably rating nationally, compared with 34% last month. The NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll was conducted nationally by telephone from 1,000 voters between June 20-24. The sampling error was plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

#### The transportation bill is just maintenance of the current system.

Crawley and Rappon 6/28

John Crawley and Roberta Rampton Jun 28, 2012 US Congress to vote on compromise transportation bill http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/06/28/usa-transportation-idINL2E8HS60520120628

The resolution was praised by business groups like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. But environmental groups were unhappy that Republicans won some concessions on environmental reviews of highway projects.

Jettisoned in the final days of talks was a politically charged plan pushed by House Republicans to defy President Barack Obama and move ahead with the Keystone XL oil pipeline, which would run from Canada to Texas.

Republicans also lost out on another proposal that would have eased proposed environmental regulations on coal ash, a byproduct used in the construction industry.

In the past, there was less partisan fighting over highway funding because of the jobs associated with construction, and the practise of "earmarking," which guaranteed funding to projects requested by individual lawmakers.

Earmarks were banned last year, and highway funding fell victim to ferocious politics and shifting powers and allegiances in Congress.

Transportation leaders were at times convinced the gridlocked Congress was too divided to pass such a big bill without sweeteners so individual members could claim credit for infrastructure improvements in their states.

Their priorities in the end were to simply maintain current funding and give states some certainty about the financial commitment from Washington. States rely on federal transportation dollars to help them plan and carry out projects, especially road repairs.

#### Plan is popular – the public wants new infrastructure investment.

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

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

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

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

#### Romney win rolls back EPA CO2 regs

**Star Ledger, 12** (6/3, <http://blog.nj.com/njv_editorial_page/2012/06/scary_times_for_environment_--.html>)

The grim report on jobs Friday greatly improves the odds that Republicans will win in November, putting Mitt Romney in the White House and bolstering GOP positions in the House and Senate. If that happens, they promise to roll back the progress made under President Obama and Environmental Protection Agency administrator Lisa Jackson. Romney wants to strip the EPA of its power to regulate carbon emissions. Jackson relied on that power to enact rules that will double automobile efficiency standards by 2025 and toughen truck standards, too. Transportation is the largest single source of air pollution. So cutting emissions in half will make a profound change, especially in a car-centric state such as New Jersey. It also will reduce oil imports sharply, lessening our dangerous dependence on unstable regimes in the Mideast. Jackson’s tough limits on coal-fired power plants rely partly on carbon controls, as well. So those gains would be endangered. Again, the air in New Jersey will get dirtier. Because, while our own coal plants have exotic pollution control equipment, those to the west and south do not. Many lack even the most basic filters, known as scrubbers, and rely only on tall smoke stacks to push the toxins higher into the atmosphere.

#### EPA REGULATIONS CAUSE GLOBAL ECONOMIC COLLAPSE.

**CARUBA 9**. [Alan, Public Relations Counselor and member of the Society of Professional Journalists, American Society of Journalists and Authors and the National Association of Science Writers, How to Destroy the U.S. Economy: Regulate Carbon Dioxide, Canada Free Press, Factiva]

In the course of the first year of the Obama administration, it has become clear to many close observers that it is intent on destroying the U.S. economy and, with it, the Republic. It has virtually shut down all exploration for energy resources such as oil and natural gas despite the bonus of thousands of jobs and billions in tax revenue that this would generate. It has declared war on the mining and use of coal even though coal provides just over half of all the electricity generated nationwide. Its “Stimulus” bill, at this point, has largely distributed funds to state governments to help them pay for Medicare and other entitlement programs. The program has claimed new jobs in congressional districts that don’t even exist. All the while unemployment has risen and there is no evidence of any actual new jobs because, sensibly, large businesses and small are waiting to see if Obamacare will take over one-sixth of the nation’s economy, slashing billions from Medicare, and raising the cost of health insurance. The other major legislative initiative, Cap-and-Trade is a huge tax on energy use, raising the cost of doing business in America. “Business Fumes Over Dioxide Rule” was a headline in the December 7 edition of The Wall Street Journal. Considering that one major corporation after another has gone out of its way to demonstrate how “Green” they are, it is a little late in the day for corporate America to wake up to discover that the entire agenda of Green organizations has been to strangle the economy in general and their ability to operate in particular. Two Obama appointments signaled the Obama administration’s intent. One was the appointment of Carol Browner, a former EPA director in the Clinton years and an avowed socialist, as its climate czar, and the appointment of Lisa Jackson as the new Director of the Environmental Protection Agency. Others include the Secretary of the Interior and of Energy, all global warming scare mongers. The EPA is momentarily expected to announce an “endangerment” finding that carbon dioxide (CO2) is a “pollutant” and thereby subject to EPA regulation under the Clean Air Act. If that is true than everyone exhaling in the nation is, by definition, a polluter. Humans exhale about six pounds of CO2 every day. In January, I wrote a commentary, “Glorious Carbon Dioxide”, that was a look at the science of CO2. It can be found [here](http://www.acuf.org/issues/issue124/090126cul.asp). One simple fact invalidates the EPA’s claim. All life on Earth is dependent on two gases, oxygen and carbon dioxide. A reduction of CO2 would be a reduction of the gas that all vegetation relies upon for its existence, but the EPA claims that a rise in CO2 is responsible for a rise in the overall temperature of the Earth. The EPA is doing this as a completely natural cooling cycle has been occurring since 1998. It is doing this despite ample scientific data that demonstrates that CO2 does not play any role in the increase of the Earth’s average temperature, but in fact increases many decades, even centuries, after such an increase. It is the Sun that determines the climate of the Earth, not CO2, and the Sun is in a natural cycle called a solar minimum, producing less radiation to warm the Earth. At times in the Earth’s 4.5 billion year history, the amount of CO2 has been much higher than its present concentration of a mere 3.618% of the atmosphere. Estimates of how much man-made CO2 contributes to this tiny amount are set at 0.117%. Despite this, the EPA is intent on regulating man-made CO2 emissions as if this would make any difference in light of the fact that many other nations also emit CO2 in the process of developing their economies. China and India come to mind and it is no accident that both were exempted from the UN Kyoto Protocols to limit CO2 emissions. The entire purpose of the current Climate Change Conference taking place is Copenhagen is a treaty to limit CO2 emissions that the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change asserts is necessary to avoid a “global warming” that is NOT happening. The conference, however, must ignore revelations that one of its primary providers of climate data, the Climate Research Unit of the University of East Anglia, has been deliberately fudging the data, falsifying it to justify the treaty. Another major source of such data has been NASA’s climate program, both of which have fought efforts under the Freedom of Information Acts of both the UK and the USA, to require them to make their data available for scientific peer review. As the Wall Street Journal article points out, “An ‘endangerment’ finding by the Environmental Protection Agency could pave the way for the government to require businesses that emit carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases to make costly changes in machinery to reduce emissions—even if Congress doesn’t pass pending climate-change legislation.” If either the EPA or the climate change legislation called Cap-and-Trade are put in place or enacted, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is on record warning that it would “choke off growth by adding new mandates to virtually every major construction and renovation project.” It would add to the cost of all electricity by industry, business, and all consumers. As the Wall Street Journal article notes, “Electricity generation, transportation and industry represent the three largest sources of U.S. greenhouse-gas emission.” What it doesn’t say is that such emissions play no role in climate change. Other nations, however, would not be subject to such costs and the result would be a mad rush to move as many U.S. industries as possible to foreign shores. Other businesses would have to shut down or raise the price of everything they produce. The current Recession would escalate into a full-blown Depression as millions of jobs would disappear or never return.

#### Extinction

**Auslin 9** (Michael, Resident Scholar – American Enterprise Institute, and Desmond Lachman – Resident Fellow – American Enterprise Institute, “The Global Economy Unravels”, Forbes, 3-6, http://www.aei.org/article/100187)

What do these trends mean in the short and medium term? The Great Depression showed how social and global chaos followed hard on economic collapse. The mere fact that parliaments across the globe, from America to Japan, are unable to make responsible, economically sound recovery plans suggests that they do not know what to do and are simply hoping for the least disruption. Equally worrisome is the adoption of more statist economic programs around the globe, and the concurrent decline of trust in free-market systems. The threat of instability is a pressing concern. China, until last year the world's fastest growing economy, just reported that 20 million migrant laborers lost their jobs. Even in the flush times of recent years, China faced upward of 70,000 labor uprisings a year. A sustained downturn poses grave and possibly immediate threats to Chinese internal stability. The regime in Beijing may be faced with a choice of repressing its own people or diverting their energies outward, leading to conflict with China's neighbors. Russia, an oil state completely dependent on energy sales, has had to put down riots in its Far East as well as in downtown Moscow. Vladimir Putin's rule has been predicated on squeezing civil liberties while providing economic largesse. If that devil's bargain falls apart, then wide-scale repression inside Russia, along with a continuing threatening posture toward Russia's neighbors, is likely. Even apparently stable societies face increasing risk and the threat of internal or possibly external conflict. As Japan's exports have plummeted by nearly 50%, one-third of the country's prefectures have passed emergency economic stabilization plans. Hundreds of thousands of temporary employees hired during the first part of this decade are being laid off. Spain's unemployment rate is expected to climb to nearly 20% by the end of 2010; Spanish unions are already protesting the lack of jobs, and the specter of violence, as occurred in the 1980s, is haunting the country. Meanwhile, in Greece, workers have already taken to the streets. Europe as a whole will face dangerously increasing tensions between native citizens and immigrants, largely from poorer Muslim nations, who have increased the labor pool in the past several decades. Spain has absorbed five million immigrants since 1999, while nearly 9% of Germany's residents have foreign citizenship, including almost 2 million Turks. The xenophobic labor strikes in the U.K. do not bode well for the rest of Europe. A prolonged global downturn, let alone a collapse, would dramatically raise tensions inside these countries. Couple that with possible protectionist legislation in the United States, unresolved ethnic and territorial disputes in all regions of the globe and a loss of confidence that world leaders actually know what they are doing. The result may be a series of small explosions that coalesce into a big bang.

### October Surprise Impact Mod.

#### Obama will strike Iran as October Surprise if he’s losing – Key to heg and prevents Israel strikes which are far worse, fail and cause multiple scenarios for conflict

Chemi **Shalev** is an Israeli journalist and political analyst. Chemi Shalev is a US foreign correspondent for Haaretz newspaper **12-27**-2011 <http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/west-of-eden/will-a-u-s-attack-on-iran-become-obama-s-october-surprise-1.403898>

Will a U.S. attack on Iran become Obama’s ‘October Surprise’? Israelis and many Americans are convinced that President Obama will ultimately back away from attacking Iran. They may be wrong. 1. “When American officials declare that all options are on the table, most Israelis do not believe them. They have concluded, rather, that when the crunch comes (and everyone thinks it will), the United States will shy away from military force and reconfigure its policy to live with a nuclear-armed Iran.” This was the bottom line of “What Israelis Hear When Obama Officials Talk About Iran”, an article written by William Galston, a senior research fellow at Brookings, after he canvassed the Israeli participants in the recent Saban Forum held in Washington in early December. Since that diagnosis, rendered only three weeks ago, the content, tone and intensity of American pronouncements on Iran have undergone progressively dramatic changes. These include: • December 16: President Obama, in a speech before the Union of Reform Judaism, goes from the passive “a nuclear Iran is unacceptable” to the assertive “We are determined to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.” • December 19: Secretary of Defense Panetta, hitherto the main articulator of the pitfalls of an attack on Iran, suddenly ups the ante by declaring that Iran might be only a year away from acquiring a nuclear bomb, that this the “red line” as far as the U.S. is concerned, and that Washington “will take whatever steps necessary to deal with it." • December 20: General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, tells CNN that “the options we are developing are evolving to a point that they would be executable, if necessary”, adding: 'My biggest worry is that they (Iranians) will miscalculate our resolve'. • December 21: Dennis Ross tells Israel’s Channel 10 television that President Obama would be prepared to “take a certain step” if that is what is required and “this means that when all options are on the table and if you’ve exhausted all other means, you do what is necessary". • December 22: Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak, commenting on the above statements, says that they "make clear a fact that was already known to us from closed-door (discussions). It makes clear to Iran that it faces a real dilemma." • December 23: Matthew Kroenig, former Special Adviser on Iran at the Pentagon, publishes an article in the prestigious Foreign Affairs, entitled “Time to Attack Iran”, in which he lays out the case for an American offensive against Iran – sooner rather than later. Israeli analysts, however, remain unconvinced. Influenced, perhaps, by their own experience with Israel’s cynical political leadership, they have ascribed much of this newly-found oomph in American utterances to an elections-inspired attempt by the Obama Administration to “show support for Israel” at a time of political need. Conversely, they maintain that the change in the American tone is a result of new intelligence information that was presented by Barak to Obama in their December 16 meeting in Washington. Both of these assessments may or may not be true, but they fail to tell the whole story. The timing of the reinvigorated American rhetoric is undoubtedly tied to the December 18 withdrawal of the last American troops from Iraq. The U.S. Army and the Pentagon have long opposed inflammatory rhetoric toward Tehran during the withdrawal, for fear it might endanger U.S. troops in Iraq. With the withdrawal complete, the Administration felt free to adopt a much more belligerent tone, literally overnight. As to the substance of American policy, Israelis appear to have persuaded themselves that, despite his vigorous prosecution of the war in Afghanistan and his successful and deadly pursuit of al-Qaida, Obama remains “soft” on Iran and will ultimately back down when push comes to shove. This perception has been fed by Obama’s ill-fated attempt to “engage” with Iran, his initial courtship of the Arab and Muslim world, what is widely perceived as his pro-Palestinian tendencies – and the overall animosity and prejudice directed at the president by many of his detractors. The Republicans are so convinced, in fact, that they are basing much of their foreign policy campaign against Obama on the assumption that he will ultimately capitulate to Tehran. That may be a dangerous assumption on their part. In his speech at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in December 2009 – possibly forgotten because of the ridiculously premature or spectacularly misdirected awarding of the prize - Obama spoke of a "just war" which can be waged “as a last resort or in self-defense”. After warning of the danger posed by Iran’s nuclear campaign, he said “those who seek peace cannot stand idly by as nations arm themselves for nuclear war.” In the days after that speech in Oslo, Christian theologian Reinhold Niebuhr was often cited as a source of inspiration for Obama, and it was Niebuhr who wrote, “contemporary history refutes the idea that nations are drawn into war too precipitately. It proves, on the contrary, that it is the general inclination of democratic nations at least to hesitate so long before taking this fateful plunge that the dictator nations gain a fateful advantage over them.” Obama may not want to fall into that pattern. People believe what they want to believe, but Obama has already proven - in Afghanistan, in Libya, in the offensive against al-Qaida, in the drone war in Somalia, Pakistan and Yemen – that he is no pacifist and does not shy way from using military force when necessary. And while he has stuck to his prepared script that “all options are on the table," people who have heard Obama speak about Iran in closed sessions have no doubt that if all else fails, including “crippling” sanctions and international isolation, Obama would order a U.S. attack on Iran, if he was convinced, as he appears to be, that it posed a clear and present danger to America’s national security. 2. And there can be no doubt - notwithstanding claims by the radical left and the isolationist right - that a nuclear Iran would be an unmitigated disaster for American interests, above and beyond the existential threat to Israel. Arab countries would be confronted by a stark choice between subservience to Tehran and the dangerous pursuit of their own nuclear prowess; Muslim extremism would flourish at a particularly precarious juncture in Arab history, compelling newly-emergent Muslim parties, especially in Egypt, to opt for extreme belligerence toward America and Israel; under a protective nuclear umbrella, Hamas and Hezbollah and others of their ilk would be able to run amok with impunity; the entire Middle East would be destabilized and America’s oil supplies held hostage by a self-confident and bellicose Iran. The standing of the U.S., after it is inevitably perceived as having lost out to the Ayatollahs, would reach an all-time low. Russia and China would gradually become the dominant powers in the region. Tehran would be free to expand and further develop its nuclear arsenal and ballistic missile capability. And Israel, America’s main ally in the region – perhaps in the world – would face a continuous mortal and ultimately paralyzing threat from an increasingly implacable enemy. Given their doubts about Obama’s resolve to order a U.S. military attack, Israeli analysts have tended to focus on the existence, or lack thereof, of an American “green light” for an Israeli attack on Iranian nuclear facilities. Indeed, one of the arguments made by Kroenig in Foreign Affairs is that a U.S. attack “can also head off a possible Israeli operation against Iran, which, given Israel’s limited capability to mitigate a potential battle and inflict lasting damage, would likely result in far more devastating consequences and carry a far lower probability of success than a U.S. attack.” But it is far from clear whether America’s acknowledged operational and logistical advantage is the most compelling argument against an Israeli attack, and whether Israel is indeed incapable of “inflicting lasting damage” on Iran. After years and years of preparation, and with the wily Barak at the helm, one should “expect the unexpected” from an Israeli attack. It would definitely not be a rerun of the 1981 bombing raid on Iraq’s nuclear reactor at Osirak, not in scope, not in intensity, not in the means of delivery and not in the yield and sophistication of the weapons that will be thrown into battle. But there are other profound drawbacks to an Israeli attack and corresponding advantages to an American offensive. An Israeli attack would rally the Arab and Muslim world behind Iran, strengthen radical Islamists, neutralize potentially sympathetic countries as Saudi Arabia and further distance Turkey from Israel and the West. The U.S. would have no choice but to support Israel, even though such support would inflame animosity toward Washington throughout the Muslim world. An American attack, on the other hand, would restore Washington’s stature and power of deterrence in the Arab world, could unite most of the Sunni monarchies and oil Sheikdoms in tacit assistance, at the very least, for the military effort, could facilitate Turkish neutrality and enable European support, and would sideline the incendiary issue of Israel, just as it did when Jerusalem maintained a “low profile” during the first two Gulf wars. It might also decrease the intensity of a combined Iranian-Hamas-Hezbollah and possibly Syrian counterattack against Israel, and would, in any case, free Israel to defend itself and to effectively deal with such an onslaught. And yes, though hardly devoid of risks, it might very well ensure Barack Obama’s reelection next November. 3. To be sure, despite Republican protestations to the contrary, American voters are ambivalent about a U.S. attack on Iran. In a recent Quinnipiac University Survey, 55 per cent of voters said the U.S. should not take military action against Iran – but 50 per cent would nonetheless support it, if all else fails. And 88 per cent believe that a nuclear Iran posed a serious threat or a somewhat serious threat to American national security. In the end, it would all come down to timing. The closer to elections that an American attack on Iran would take place, the more it would work in Obama’s favor. Though his left wing flank and possibly large chunks of the Democratic Party would not differentiate between Iraq and Iran, would draw historic parallels with the Bush Administration’s bogus evidence of Iraq’s WMD capabilities and would vehemently criticize Obama for “betraying his principles” - Obama would probably sway most independents and even moderate Republicans who would be swept up in the initial, patriotic wave of support for a campaign against a country that the Republican candidates for the presidency have described as America’s number one enemy. And Obama could point out to the American public that contrary to Iraq, no ground troops would be involved in Iran. A significantly earlier attack, however, would be far riskier. The initial patriotic fervor might dissipate and the wider ramifications would begin to sink in, including potential Iranian retaliation against American targets, and, perhaps more significantly, the disruption of oil supplies, an unprecedented spike in oil prices and an ensuing and crippling blow to U.S. economic recovery. If one wants to be absolutely cynical, perhaps Panetta’s one-year deadline was intentionally calibrated with this election timeline. Though there is no basis to suspect Obama of making political calculations, and without detracting from what is sure to be a serious American effort to get sanctions and possibly regime change to do the trick – October would be ideal. That’s the month that Henry Kissinger chose in 1972 to prematurely declare that “peace is at hand” in Vietnam, thus turning Richard Nixon’s certain victory over George McGovern into a landslide; that’s the month that Ronald Reagan feared Jimmy Carter would use in 1980 in order to free the Iran hostages and stop the Republican momentum; and that’s the month that many of Obama’s opponents are already jittery about, fearing the proverbial “October Surprise” that would hand Obama his second term on a platter. Two things are certain: the Republicans, who are now goading Obama for being soft on Iran and beating their own war drums, would reverse course in mid air with nary a blink and accuse the president of playing politics with American lives and needlessly embroiling it in a war which probably could have been avoided if he had been tough on Iran in the first place. And what about the Jewish vote? That would be Obama’s, lock, stock and barrel, including those Jewish voters who cannot forgive him for the Cairo speech, the bow to King Abdullah, the 1967 borders, the lack of chemistry with Netanyahu and that the fact that he has yet to produce evidence that he isn’t, after all, a closet Muslim. And in Israel, no doubt about it, he would be forever revered as the ultimate Righteous Gentile.

### Obama Good 1NC

#### Romney winning now—increased support and donations after health care decision

Sullivan, 6/28

(Andy Sullivan, political correspondent, June 28, 2012, Reuters, “Romney to campaign as only hope against "Obamacare"”, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/28/us-usa-healthcare-romney-idUSBRE85R12M20120628)

But the overhaul remains unpopular, and Romney cast the November 6 presidential election as the best chance for voters to overturn it. Most Americans oppose the law even though they strongly support much of what it does, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll released on Sunday. Obama's Democrats acknowledge that they have done a poor job of selling the Affordable Care Act, as it is known, and they suffered steep losses in the 2010 congressional elections that followed the law's passage. While the court decision avoids an embarrassment for Obama in an election year, it could energize conservative voters who were slow to warm to Romney during a months-long battle for the Republican party nomination. More than $1.5 million in donations poured in to Romney's campaign in the hours following the decision, according to an aide.

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#### Voters hate the plan it will be new investment and development

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A large majority of voters see room for improvement in how the government spends money on infrastructure and they endorse a host of reforms in this area. 64% of voters say that how the government currently spends money on building and maintaining our transportation infrastructure is inefficient and unwise, including one in four (26%) who says it is very inefficient. Just 32% say the government currently spends efficiently and wisely. Republicans (72% unwise) and independents (67% unwise) are particularly adamant that this is the case, though 56% of Democrats say that current spending is unwise as well. Given this attitude, it is unsurprising that the public supports a number of measures that would change the way in which transportation dollars are spent. Indeed, two-thirds or more of respondents favor nine of the 10 reforms tested in the survey, with the highest levels of support for holding government accountable for collecting data and certifying that all projects are delivered on time and fit into an overall national plan (90% favor), and allowing local regions to have a greater say in how transportation dollars are used in their area (90% favor), and having a “fix it first” policy that focuses on maintaining existing transportation systems before building new ones (86% favor). The only reform that does not engender majority support is developing a pilot program in which several areas replace the gas tax with a user fee based on the number of miles driven—40% favor this, while 50% oppose it.

#### Obama win key to EPA regs – solves CO2 and oil dependence

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#### EPA REGULATIONS ARE THE ONLY WAY TO SOLVE GLOBAL WARMING AND CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

**Parenti ’10** (Christian Parenti, a contributing editor at The Nation and a visiting scholar at the Center for Place, Culture and Politics, at the CUNY Grad Center, 4-20-10, “The Nation: The Case for EPA Action,” http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=126129216)

On April 1 the Environmental Protection Agency established rules restricting greenhouse gas emissions from cars and trucks, starting in 2012. This is the first of what could become a sweeping series of regulations stemming from the agency's conclusion that greenhouse gases harm human health. If the EPA were to act robustly, it could achieve significant and immediate greenhouse gas emissions reductions using nothing more than existing laws and current technology. Doing so would signal to a waiting world that America is serious about addressing climate change. But a dangerous assault on the agency is gathering momentum in Congress, corporate boardrooms, the media and the courts. The swarm of counterattacks all seek to strip the EPA of its power to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources like coal-fired power plants. Some legislative proposals would even undo the EPA's finding that greenhouse gases are hazardous, taking the EPA out of the climate fight altogether. Wonkish at first glance, the fight over EPA rulemaking may be the most important environmental battle in a generation. The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says rich countries like the United States must cut emissions 25 to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020—only ten years away—and thereafter make precipitous cuts to almost zero emissions. If we don't act now, average global temperatures will likely increase by more than 2 degrees Celsius and trigger self-compounding runaway climate change, resulting in a massive rise in sea levels, devastated agriculture and attendant social chaos. Not one of the climate change bills up for discussion meets this threshold, and it is looking increasingly unlikely that Congress will be able to pass any comprehensive climate change legislation this session. The failures of Congress and the harrowing facts of climate science mean that aggressive and immediate EPA action is essential. From a legal perspective, the EPA has all the tools it needs to respond adequately to the climate crisis. In fact, "the United States has the strongest environmental laws in the world," says Kassie Siegel, an attorney with the Center for Biological Diversity. The center specializes in suing the government when it violates green laws. "We don't need new legislation. The Clean Air Act can achieve everything we need: a 40 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions over 1990 levels by 2020." The two most important things the EPA can do are to halt any permitting of new coal-fired power plants—about fifty new plants are seeking approval—and to force all existing coal-fired facilities to make the technologically feasible switch to natural gas. If this "fuel switching" happened, total nonvehicle US emissions would be reduced by 13 percent or more in a matter of a year or two, say various experts. Natural gas is generally half as polluting as coal. But in the case of old, inefficient coal-fired plants, switching to gas can reduce emissions by as much as two-thirds. And there is plenty of natural gas: discoveries have glutted the market, and prices are down more than 60 percent from their recent peak. Gas is not a solution; it merely offers a realistic "bridging fuel" as we move toward power generated from wind, solar, geothermal and hydro sources. Perhaps the most far-reaching impact of EPA regulation would be to put a de facto price on carbon by leveling fines on greenhouse gas polluters. Such penalties could reach thousands per day, per violation. If targets for emissions reductions are tough enough, few coal plants will be able to meet them and will instead pay fines—what amounts to a carbon tax. Then a cheap source of energy would become expensive, which would drive investment away from fossil fuels toward carbon-neutral forms of energy. At first, President Obama seemed ready to use executive power to do an end run around a sclerotic Congress, when he authorized the EPA to start regulating greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act. Obama was merely complying with the law: the EPA has been mandated to act since 2007, when the Supreme Court ruled, in Massachusetts v. EPA, that the agency should determine whether greenhouse gases threaten our health. The Bush administration refused to use this authority, but when Obama took office he allowed the EPA to do its job again.

#### THE IMPACT IS EXTINCTION.

**Tickell 08** [Oliver, “On a planet 4C hotter, all we can prepare for is extinction]

We need to get prepared for four degrees of global warming**,** *Bob Watson told the Gurdian last week. At first sight this looks like wise counsel from the climate science adviser to Defra*. But the idea that we could adapt to a 4C rise is absurd and dangerous. Global warming on this scale would be a catastrophe that would mean*, in the immortal words that Chief Seattle probably never spoke*, "the end *of living and the beginning of survival"* for humankind. Or perhaps the beginning of ourextinction. The collapse of the polar ice caps would become inevitable, bringing long-term sea level rises of 70-80 metres. All the world's coastal plains would be lost, complete with ports, cities, transport and industrial infrastructure, and much of the world's most productive farmland***.*** *The world's geography would be transformed much as it was at the end of the last ice age, when sea levels rose by about 120 metres to create the Channel, the North Sea and Cardigan Bay out of dry land*.Weather would become extreme and unpredictable, with more frequent and severe droughts, floods and hurricanes. The Earth's carrying capacity would be hugely reduced. Billions would undoubtedly die.

## \*\*\*Elections – Uniqueness\*\*\*

### Obama Winning – General

#### **Obama winning but its close.**

Mali 6/25 <http://thehill.com/blogs/ballot-box/polls/234481-poll-voters-doubt-either-romney-obama-win-will-help-economy> Meghashyam Mali Lawyer and Political Analysis writer for theHill

A new poll finds that over half of voters express doubts that either President Obama or Mitt Romney can boost the economy after the election, a troubling sign for both campaigns, which have made economic policy a centerpiece of their messaging. Six in 10 likely voters surveyed in a new Associated Press-Gfk poll released Monday gave answers ranging from "slim” to “none" when asked what effect the presidential election winner would have on the unemployment rate, according to an AP report on the poll. The results show that two-thirds of those surveyed describe the economy as weak, and 31 percent expect unemployment to worsen this year. Fifty-five percent say the winner in November will have "just some impact" to "no impact" on tackling the nation's budget deficits. The poll's results come on the heels of surveys last week showing GOP nominee Romney closing the gap on Obama by focusing on the economy. A Pew Research poll showed Obama up 4 points, with the support of 50 percent of registered voters to Romney's 46. An AP-GfK poll showed Romney trailing Obama 44 percent to 47, a gap within that poll's margin of error. Both of those surveys and a Bloomberg National Poll showed Obama still vulnerable on economic issues. But the new AP-GfK survey suggests skepticism over Romney’s economic policies as well. The former Massachusetts governor’s campaign has worked to turn the election into a referendum on the White House's economic record. Obama's team has hit back, acknowledging that while there is still work to do on the recovery, the private sector has shown improvement and the administration needs more time to correct Bush-era problems. Of those surveyed in Monday’s AP-GfK poll who doubt the November winner can improve economic conditions, only one in three, 32 percent, expect the economy to improve over the coming year. GOP voters, however, are more optimistic that the winner of the presidential election can turn the economic recovery around. Fifty-eight percent of Republicans surveyed said the election result would affect the overall economy, but fewer than half believed it would affect job growth in particular. The AP-Gfk poll was conducted from June 14 to 18 and has a 4-point margin of error.

### Obama Winning – Key States

#### Obama winning now—leads in the key states

Heavey and Bell, 6/28

(Susan Heavey and Alistair Bell, staff writers, June 28, 2012, Reuters, “Obama takes lead in swing states, economy still weighs”, http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/politics/sns-rt-us-usa-campaign-swingstates-pollbre85q0yj-20120627,0,3671979.story)

(Reuters) - President Barack Obama is carving out a clear lead in swing states that are key to the November 6 presidential election, even as national polls show him neck-and-neck with Republican rival Mitt Romney. Helped by the White House's recent loosening of immigration rules, Obama leads Romney in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Florida, according to a Quinnipiac University survey on Wednesday. Obama was ahead of Romney by 9 percentage points in Ohio (47 percent to 38 percent) and 6 points in Pennsylvania (45 percent to 39 percent) in the Quinnipiac poll. He led in Florida by 45 percent to 41 percent. No one has won the White House since 1960 without taking at least two of those three states.

#### Obama Gaining Support in swing states – independent voters

Kristin Jensen 6/27 Reporter at Bloombreg http://www.sfgate.com/business/bloomberg/article/Obama-Tops-Romney-in-Poll-of-Pennsylvania-Ohio-3667244.php

President Barack Obama holds an edge over presumed Republican nominee Mitt Romney in the competitive states of Pennsylvania, Ohio and Florida, a Quinnipiac University poll shows. Obama leads Romney by 9 percentage points in Ohio, 6 points in Pennsylvania and 4 points in Florida, according to the June 19-25 “swing-state” survey released today. Obama has gained ground in Ohio and Florida while his lead in Pennsylvania diminished slightly, compared with a Quinnipiac poll released on May 3. The president’s move to stop deportations of some illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. as children helped win over voters, said Peter Brown, assistant director of the Hamden, Connecticut-based Quinnipiac University Polling Institute. The president holds almost a 2-1 lead among Hispanic voters in Florida, the poll found. “If he can keep those leads in all three of these key swing states through Election Day, he would be virtually assured of re-election,” Brown said in an e-mailed statement. No one has won the White House since 1960 without carrying at least two of the three states surveyed in this poll; Obama won all of them in 2008. The three states combined hold 67 of the 270 electoral votes needed to win the White House. Florida Results In Florida, Obama leads Romney 45 percent to 41 percent, the poll showed. In the swing-state poll released May 3, the president led by 1 point, meaning the race in the state was a virtual dead heat. The revised deportation policy Obama announced June 15 and his June 22 address to the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials meeting in Lake Buena Vista, Florida -- following a Romney speech to the group the previous day -- boosted the president’s standing with Hispanics in that state, according to Quinnipiac poll data. In a June 12-18 poll by Quinnipiac solely of Florida voters -- in which Obama also led by 4 percentage points -- the president had a 10-point edge over Romney among Hispanics surveyed, 49 percent to 39 percent. In the latest poll, Obama’s lead over Romney in this bloc has grown to 24 points, 56 percent to 32 percent. Immigration Initiative Among all Florida voters in the new survey, 58 percent said they supported Obama’s immigration initiative, while 33 percent opposed it. Voters in the other two states in the poll were also supportive, backing the policy 52 percent to 38 percent in Ohio and 51 percent to 41 percent in Pennsylvania. In the fight to carry Ohio, Obama leads Romney 47 percent to 38 percent, the poll showed. In the May 3 swing-state poll, Obama was up 44 percent to 42 percent. The president benefits from positive views about him among Ohio voters -- 50 percent rate him favorably, compared with 44 percent who have an unfavorable opinion of him. By comparison, 32 percent of Ohio voters say they view Romney favorably, while 46 percent don’t. While Democrats and Republicans in the state allied overwhelmingly with their party’s candidate, independent voters backed Obama 45 percent to 36 percent. “The president’s lead is largely due to his lead among independent voters, the group that usually decides Ohio elections,” Brown said. Pennsylvania Results In Pennsylvania, Obama leads 45 percent to 39 percent in the latest poll; in the survey released May 3 he was backed by 47 percent to Romney’s 39 percent. Obama has a 12-point edge with women voters in the state in the latest poll. Neither candidate enjoys positive favorability ratings in the state. Obama gets favorable marks from 45 percent, while 49 percent view him unfavorably. Romney is viewed favorably by 34 percent, unfavorably by 39 percent. “Pennsylvania voters have no great love for President Barack Obama, but at this point they like Governor Mitt Romney less,” said Tim Malloy, assistant director of the polling institute. In all three states, Obama is holding his own against Romney on the handling of the economy -- the central argument the Republican has made for replacing the president. In Ohio, voters back Obama 47 percent to 42 percent when asked whether he or Romney would do a better job on the economy. In Pennsylvania, voters tie on this question -- 44 percent for each -- while in Florida, Romney has a slight edge, 46 percent to 44 percent for Obama. Vanishing Advantage “For much of last year, more voters in these swing states have said Romney would do a better job on the economy,” Brown said. “That advantage has largely disappeared.” Ohio has been carried by the winner of every presidential election since 1964, and Florida sided with a loser only once over that period -- in 1992, when it backed then-President George H.W. Bush over Democrat Bill Clinton. Pennsylvania has been won by every Democratic White House contender since the 1992 vote. The poll’s margin of error in each state is plus or minus 2.8 percentage points. Quinnipiac surveyed 1,200 voters in Florida, 1,237 in Ohio and 1,252 in Pennsylvania. A Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll of 12 swing states released today shows that taken as a whole, Obama has a 12-point margin over Romney, 50 percent to 42 percent. Along with Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania, the states in this group were Colorado, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Virginia and Wisconsin. The survey was conducted June 20-24 and the finding for the 12 states has an error margin of plus or minus 6.2 points.

#### Obama win now – demographic shifts and swing state advantage

Frontrunner, 6/11

The New York Times (6/9, Harwood, Subscription Publication, 1.23M) reported that in several presidential swing states, "demographic changes add another variable to a campaign conversation that has largely revolved around high unemployment and slow growth" -- and could work to President Obama's advantage. An analysis "for the liberal Center for American Progress" concluded that "that in 12 battleground states, the proportion of votes cast by working-class whites, a group Mr. Obama lost lopsidedly in 2008, will drop by three percentage points this fall," while "the proportion cast by minority voters, who backed Mr. Obama by overwhelming margins, will rise by two percentage points." The Chicago Sun-Times (6/10, Sweet, 370K) reported that Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, in an interview to air on CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS Sunday, "predicted that the presidential election will be decided in 'five states, 500 precincts.'" He did not specify the states. Several Swing States Have A Relatively Low Unemployment Rate. Charles Babington, in a piece for the AP (6/11) titled, "Ohio's Job Growth Doesn't Guarantee An Obama Win," says, "About 10 battleground states will decide the election, and seven of them have employment levels that beat the US average." Babington adds, "Most of the states are led by Republican governors eager to highlight their progress in creating jobs," which "complicates...Romney's claim that the economy has been so mismanaged that Obama deserves to be ousted." Babington says Ohio Gov. John Kasich "tries to finesse the political dilemma by saying jobs have increased despite Obama's policies."

### **Obama Winning – Electoral College**

#### Numbers are close but Obama will maintain steady electoral college lead.

Silver 6/22

Nate Silver June 20, 2012 Outlier Polls Are No Substitute for News http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/20/outlier-polls-are-no-substitute-for-news/

If you’ve been looking at the average of polls since our forecast model was released two weeks ago, it really hasn’t changed very much. Our analysis finds that there has been about a 1-point swing in the polls toward Mr. Romney over this period. In our forecast model, this small shift in the polling has been roughly offset by the rally in the stock market (one of several economic variables the model considers), which reflects increasing investor optimism about the situation in Europe and efforts by the Federal Reserve to stimulate the economy. So Mr. Obama’s chances of winning the Electoral College have remained roughly constant, at just slightly over 60 percent, during this period.

This constancy is nothing new. There have been [few major changes](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/president_obama_job_approval-1044.html) in Mr. Obama’s approval ratings for the past two or three years. Reaction to the shooting of Representative Gabrielle Giffords in Arizona, and to the killing of Osama bin Laden, produced temporary shifts toward Mr. Obama in the polls, while reaction to the debt ceiling debate produced a temporary unfavorable one. Otherwise, Mr. Obama’s approval ratings have remained in the mid-to-high 40s.

If news events as momentous as the Giffords or Bin Laden stories produce only relatively modest and relatively temporary changes in the polls, that doesn’t leave much room for the lead horse race story on a slow news day to matter much at all — especially when the story is [literally about a horse race](http://blogs.reuters.com/talesfromthetrail/2012/06/16/ann-romneys-horse-trainer-headed-to-olympics/).

#### Electoral college and swing state advantages

Cohen, 5/26(Micah, Assistant @ FiveThirtyEight.com, The Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/may/27/michael-cohen-obamas-election-chances?newsfeed=true>)

That Obama is neck and neck with Romney is what should perhaps be most shocking. The track record of presidential incumbents battling high unemployment, sluggish economic growth and an electorate overwhelmingly convinced the country is on the wrong track is generally not good. In fact, there's a name for them: one-termers. If anything, Obama's ability to keep his head above water against Romney is an indication of his unusually high favourability ratings and Romney's improving but still lacklustre personal marks. But anyone who thought Obama was going to have an easy time of it was deluded. And with minefields on the way to November, such as a potential Supreme Court decision that could gut his main domestic accomplishment (in healthcare) and a financial crisis in Europe that could eventually infect the United States, the road ahead may not be so easy for the president. Still, none of this means it is time for liberals to start looking for rental properties in Vancouver or Toronto. In fact, the one place where Obama appears to have something of a political advantage is the only place that actually matters – the electoral college. For British readers not familiar with the electoral college, it is an invention of America's Founding Fathers that makes democracy in the United States messy, complicated and unfair. Rather than simply count up all the votes and give the presidency to the one who has the most, candidates must win states and their resulting number of electoral votes. (This, by the way, is why Al Gore, who won 500,000 more votes than George W Bush in 2000, ended up making documentaries… and the United States invaded Iraq.) In 2000, the key battleground state was Florida. But it wasn't the only showdown state: places such as Wisconsin (which Gore won by 5,000 votes); Iowa (where he won by 4,000) New Mexico (which he won by a mere 500) were incredibly competitive. Even in traditionally liberal states such as Minnesota and Oregon, Gore won by mere percentage points. In 2004, the map was remarkably similar – only New Hampshire, New Mexico and Iowa changed columns and while John Kerry won many of the same states that Gore won, he did so by similarly slim margins. But in 2008, things changed dramatically. States that were once highly competitive such as Wisconsin, Michigan and Nevada moved decisively into the Democratic column; states that were perennial swing states, such as Florida and Ohio, were won by Obama and even states such as Virginia and North Carolina that were barely on their radar screen in 2004 went Democratic. Part of this was a function of the Republicans' broken political brand, but it was also a function of Obama himself and his appeal to blacks, Hispanics and college-educated whites. This new electoral map was a reflection of the Democratic coalition he was seeking to create. Conversely, for Republicans, their electoral map remains disturbingly static. Since 2000, the number of solid Republican or Republican-leaning states is largely unchanged – and no state that even Kerry won in 2004, except perhaps New Hampshire, Wisconsin or Pennsylvania, is considered a Republican target this year. With the caveat that one can only read so much into polls taken five months before election day, Obama enjoys a small but noteworthy advantage in the Electoral College. According to a recent tally by the RealClearPolitics website, Obama has 227 solid or "leaning" electoral votes, while Romney has 170. Combined, that represents 39 of the 50 states (plus the District of Columbia). These are places where residents will for the most part hear more about the election than experience it first hand since candidates will likely not make more than a token appearance in them. Of the 11 other states, Obama is either leading or tied in nine of them. For Romney to become president, he needs to win the majority of these swing states, not just perennial targets such as Florida and Ohio, but also North Carolina and Virginia (places where Obama is leading or tied). Amazingly, if he were to win all four of these states he could still lose the election. In fact, for Romney, it's extremely difficult to construct a scenario where he wins the election while losing Florida. Barring an electoral free-fall for Obama, places that were highly competitive such as Wisconsin, Minnesota, New Mexico, Michigan and Nevada will likely not be seriously contested. In the end, what this means for election day is that more likely than not the battle will be waged on turf that strongly favours the president.

#### Obama win now – Virginia lead

**Conroy, 6/13** (Scott, Political Reporter @ RealClearPolitics, http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2012/06/13/northern\_virginia\_edge\_could\_be\_pivotal\_for\_obama\_114458.html)

Northern Virginia Edge Could Be Pivotal for Obama SPRINGFIELD, Va. -- For President Obama's organizational machine in Virginia, Tuesday's jam-packed statewide schedule was typical. There was a voter registration drive outside a Bonnie Raitt concert in Charlottesville, an afternoon phone bank at the Hopewell library just south of Richmond, and a volunteer recruitment meeting at a private home in this distant suburb of Washington, D.C. All told, the Obama campaign listed on its website 62 separate events throughout the Commonwealth that day. Recent weeks have seen regular openings of new Obama field offices across Virginia (there are now 15), and the dozens of paid staffers working out of the campaign headquarters in Richmond and elsewhere around the state have become increasingly visible. In what both sides regard as one of the election’s three or four most critical swing states, Obama has opened up a slim yet significant three-point lead in the latest RCP average of Virginia polls. Though he shows strength in other regions of the state, the president largely has the expansive D.C. suburbs to thank for that advantage.

### Obama Winning – Penn/Ohio/Florida

Obama is winning Pennsylvania, Ohio, Florida – independents and hispanics

Kristin Jensen 6/27/12 Reporter at Bloombreg http://www.sfgate.com/business/bloomberg/article/Obama-Tops-Romney-in-Poll-of-Pennsylvania-Ohio-3667244.php

President Barack Obama holds an edge over presumed Republican nominee Mitt Romney in the competitive states of Pennsylvania, Ohio and Florida, a Quinnipiac University poll shows. Obama leads Romney by 9 percentage points in Ohio, 6 points in Pennsylvania and 4 points in Florida, according to the June 19-25 “swing-state” survey released today. Obama has gained ground in Ohio and Florida while his lead in Pennsylvania diminished slightly, compared with a Quinnipiac poll released on May 3. The president’s move to stop deportations of some illegal immigrants brought to the U.S. as children helped win over voters, said Peter Brown, assistant director of the Hamden, Connecticut-based Quinnipiac University Polling Institute. The president holds almost a 2-1 lead among Hispanic voters in Florida, the poll found. “If he can keep those leads in all three of these key swing states through Election Day, he would be virtually assured of re-election,” Brown said in an e-mailed statement. 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By comparison, 32 percent of Ohio voters say they view Romney favorably, while 46 percent don’t. While Democrats and Republicans in the state allied overwhelmingly with their party’s candidate, independent voters backed Obama 45 percent to 36 percent. “The president’s lead is largely due to his lead among independent voters, the group that usually decides Ohio elections,” Brown said. Pennsylvania Results In Pennsylvania, Obama leads 45 percent to 39 percent in the latest poll; in the survey released May 3 he was backed by 47 percent to Romney’s 39 percent. Obama has a 12-point edge with women voters in the state in the latest poll. Neither candidate enjoys positive favorability ratings in the state. Obama gets favorable marks from 45 percent, while 49 percent view him unfavorably. Romney is viewed favorably by 34 percent, unfavorably by 39 percent. “Pennsylvania voters have no great love for President Barack Obama, but at this point they like Governor Mitt Romney less,” said Tim Malloy, assistant director of the polling institute. In all three states, Obama is holding his own against Romney on the handling of the economy -- the central argument the Republican has made for replacing the president. In Ohio, voters back Obama 47 percent to 42 percent when asked whether he or Romney would do a better job on the economy. In Pennsylvania, voters tie on this question -- 44 percent for each -- while in Florida, Romney has a slight edge, 46 percent to 44 percent for Obama. 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### Obama Winning – Key Groups

#### Obama will win – wall street support

Weinstein 6/18 http://www.politico.com/blogs/click/2012/06/weinstein-obama-will-win-over-wall-street-126461.html

Movie mogul Harvey Weinstein on Monday defended President Barack Obama on private equity regulations, telling “Fox & Friends” he believes Wall Street will “come around” and vote for the president this fall. “There are a lot of guys in private equity who do a lot of good, there’s a lot of guys who run big investment houses on Wall Street who do a lot of good,” he said. “Yet the country lost its sight with regulations. … What I think the president is saying is we need oversight. We need regulations. We just recently witnessed that we do need that.” And Wall Street will support Obama over Mitt Romney once people start listening to what the Republican candidate has to say, Weinstein said. “I think they'll come around,” he said. “I think when you start to hear Governor Romney's specific plans for the economy, he doesn't say anything. I watched him yesterday on that ‘Face the Nation’ for an hour. The only thing I got out of it was he said, ‘I’m not a politician.’” As for Weinstein, an active fundraiser for Obama, he’s at a loss for why many in the business world offer financial backing to Republicans. “Here it is, these rich guys keep writing checks, you know, to the Republicans, they all get their tax breaks, but eventually these guys bankrupt the country with these terrible economic policies,” he said. “I love George W. Bush, but he dealt this bad hand to the president. Mitt Romney will do the same and then the same guys who invested all that money will be dealing with a country that's bankrupt.” “To compete against Mitt Romney and to compete against Republicans we'll have to do a lot more,” Weinstein added.

#### Obama will win – Hispanic votes

White 6/25 journalist and writer specializing in liberal politics, and progressive issues and perspectives. http://usliberals.about.com/b/2012/06/25/hispanics-favor-obama-over-romney-will-likely-decide-election.htm

Hispanic citizens have never been more influential in American politics. In 2012, Hispanic voters are likely to decide the 2012 presidential election... that is, if they are energized to vote. Today's Supreme Court ruling on Arizona's discriminatory, largely unconstitutional immigration law should be just the ticket to drive Hispanic voters to the polls in November. Explains the Wall Street Journal about the one element of Arizona's bigoted law not struck down by SCOTUS: "... the court upheld for now the law's directive that state and local police check the immigration status of people they stop when they suspect them of lacking authorization to be in the U.S... The court left open the possibility that the surviving provision could be challenged depending on how it is applied. It acknowledged concerns that the provision could lead to abuses, such as prolonged detention of arrestees while their status was being checked." The surviving provision ensures that Arizona authorities will continue racial profiling of Hispanics. It also forces all Hispanics in the state, even those born in America, to carry extensive ID at all times, or risk deportation. Such measures are required of no other ethnic groups in the United States. For the past decade, Hispanics have been the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. Per the 2010 Census, Hispanics comprise a politically powerful percentage of many of the fourteen 2012 battleground states, including: Nevada - 26.5% of Nevada population Colorado - 20.7% of Colorado population Florida - 22.5% of Florida population New Mexico - 46.3% of New Mexico population Two other battleground states... Virginia and North Carolina... have experienced very rapid growth of Hispanic populations. And with today's SCOTUS ruling, Democrat's fondest political dreams for the Southwestern U.S. may come to fruitition: traditionally Republican red-state Arizona may turn Democratic blue in November, due to its burgeoning Hispanic population. Hispanics now comprise almost 30% of all Arizona state residents. To further motivate Hispanic voters to actively support his reelection bid, President Obama signed an Executive Order last week temporarily implementing portions of the DREAM Act. The President's order will halt for two years deportation of about 800,000 to 1 million Hispanics under age 30 who are either attending college or working, who have no criminal records, and who meet certain other criteria. Hispanic-Americans have long advocated for the DREAM Act, and were frustrated with President Obama when Congress narrowly failed to pass DREAM Act legislation in December 2010. To the delight of the White House, "... more than eight in 10 Latinos approved of the president's action, most of them strongly," per a Gallup/USA Today poll released today. In contrast, Mitt Romney, who campaigned for the Republican party presidential nomination by opposing the DREAM Act and advocating for "self-deportation" of 12 million undocumented workers and their families, has done little to reach-out effectively to the concerns of Hispanic-Americans. In fact, Gov. Romney's staunchest immigration-related stance, to date, has been to advocate for a border fence to be built along the entirety of the U.S.-Mexico border... a policy abhorrent to the Hispanic community. In the 2008 election, Barack Obama was victorious because he won the Hispanic vote in four states that historically had voted Republican in presidential races. In 2012, Hispanic voters are again likely to decide the 2012 presidential election... and it appears that President Obama is again their overwhelming choice. Understandably so.

### Too Close to Call

#### Election neck and neck, Romney ahead on the economy—unemployment numbers

Heavey and Bell, June 27th

(Susan Heavey and Alistair Bell, staff writers, June 27, 2012, Reuters, “Obama takes lead in swing states, economy still weighs”, http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/politics/sns-rt-us-usa-campaign-swingstates-pollbre85q0yj-20120627,0,3671979.story)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Barack Obama is carving out a clear lead in swing states that are key to the November 6 presidential election, even as national polls show him neck-and-neck with Republican rival Mitt Romney. Fifty-three percent disapprove of the president's handling of the economy, which is up 1 point from last month. Although polls consistently show that voters see Romney as less likeable than Obama, the former Massachusetts governor's message that he is a job creator strikes a note with Americans tired of dire monthly unemployment statistics. Romney "gets a gift from God on the first Friday of every month," analyst Greg Valliere, the chief political strategist at Potomac Research Group, told the Reuters Washington Summit, referring to monthly Labor Department jobs reports. The latest report said unemployment rose a tenth of a point in May to 8.2 percent.

#### Obama and Romney deadlocked- Next few months are critical

Murrey 6/26/12 <http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2012/06/26/12423422-nbcwsj-poll-obama-romney-remain-in-dead-heat>

President Barack Obama and presumptive Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney remain locked in a tight contest, with each candidate displaying significant strengths and weaknesses four months before Election Day, according to the latest NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll. For Obama, he runs stronger than Romney does in the key swing states, and he holds a strong base of support among young voters, African Americans and Latinos. What’s more, the president continues to be personally popular. But in the past month, the public has grown more pessimistic about the state of the U.S. economy and the country’s direction. And two key parts of Obama’s base – young voters and Latinos – aren’t as enthusiastic about the election as they were four years ago. For Romney, key Republican groups – including the Tea Party – have begun to rally around the former Massachusetts governor, and he has the opportunity to capitalize on the attitudes about the economy and nation’s trajectory. Read the full poll results here (.pdf) Yet he largely remains a largely undefined figure, and his favorable-unfavorable rating is still a net-negative. “If the election is a referendum on health care or the economy, the odds work to Romney’s favor,” says Democratic pollster Peter D. Hart, who conducted this survey with Republican pollster Bill McInturff. “Obama is the odds-on favorite if it’s a referendum on the personal aspects.” Stable numbers after another unstable month After another eventful month in American politics – the disappointing May jobs numbers, the unsuccessful gubernatorial recall in Wisconsin, the economic uncertainty in Europe and Obama’s recent immigration announcement – the Obama vs. Romney race is essentially unchanged. Related: NBC/WSJ poll: More would be pleased if health law ruled unconstitutional In the poll, the president leads his presumptive challenger by three points among registered voters, 47 to 44 percent, which is within the survey’s margin of error. Last month, Obama’s edge over Romney was four points, 47 to 43 percent. Also in the current poll, the president’s overall approval rating stands at 47 percent (down a point from May), and his favorable-unfavorable score is 48 to 38 percent (which is essentially unchanged). “It looks like a dead heat on a merry-go-round,” Hart adds. “The position of the two horses has not changed.” Obama is ahead among African Americans (92 to 1 percent), women (52 to 39 percent), Latinos, voters ages 18-29 (52 to 35 percent) and independents (40 to 36 percent). Romney leads among Tea Party supporters (94 to 1 percent), whites (53 to 38 percent) and men (48 to 43 percent). And the two are running even among seniors, Midwest residents and high-interest voters.

### Romney Winning - General

#### Obama losing now--fundraising and own campaign manager admits

Lee, 6/28

(Kristen Lee, staff writer, June 28, 2012, New York Daily News, “Obama campaign official: We could lose this election”, http://www.nydailynews.com/news/election-2012/obama-campaign-official-lose-election-article-1.1103852)

President Barack Obama’s campaign is issuing a dramatic warning to its supporters: We could lose this election. “If we're drastically outspent in this election, there's a very good chance we will lose to Mitt Romney,” deputy campaign manager Julianna Smoot wrote in an email to supporters Wednesday night. “This is a distinct possibility. The financial landscape in this race has changed over the last few weeks.” The desperate tone follows the surprise news earlier this month that Mitt Romney and the GOP raised more money in May than Obama and the Democratic Party. And Republicans have an additional fundraising weapon in their arsenal: the Republican super PAC, “Restore Our Future,” which has taken in multi-million dollar donations from billionaires like casino magnate Sheldon Smoot’s email did not mention the RNC’s lawsuit, but said the presidential election should be decided by small donors, rather than millionaires and billionaires. She said that if the fundraising gap grows too wide, “Mitt Romney will win, and it will be because we couldn't keep up.”

#### Election tied, Romney ahead on the economy—unemployment numbers

Heavey and Bell, 6/28

(Susan Heavey and Alistair Bell, staff writers, June 28, 2012, Reuters, “Obama takes lead in swing states, economy still weighs”, http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/politics/sns-rt-us-usa-campaign-swingstates-pollbre85q0yj-20120627,0,3671979.story)

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Barack Obama is carving out a clear lead in swing states that are key to the November 6 presidential election, even as national polls show him neck-and-neck with Republican rival Mitt Romney. Fifty-three percent disapprove of the president's handling of the economy, which is up 1 point from last month. Although polls consistently show that voters see Romney as less likeable than Obama, the former Massachusetts governor's message that he is a job creator strikes a note with Americans tired of dire monthly unemployment statistics. Romney "gets a gift from God on the first Friday of every month," analyst Greg Valliere, the chief political strategist at Potomac Research Group, told the Reuters Washington Summit, referring to monthly Labor Department jobs reports. The latest report said unemployment rose a tenth of a point in May to 8.2 percent.

#### Romney winning now—recent poll

Rasmussen Reports, June 27th

(Rasmussen Reports, media company specializing in the collection, publication and distribution of public opinion information, June 27, 2012, http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public\_content/politics/obama\_administration/daily\_presidential\_tracking\_poll)

The Rasmussen Reports daily Presidential Tracking Poll for Tuesday shows Mitt Romney attracting 46% of the vote, while President Obama earns 45%. Five percent (5%) prefer some other candidate, and four percent (4%) are undecided. During Election 2008, Rasmussen Reports projected that Barack Obama would defeat John McCain by a 52% to 46% margin. Obama was 53% to 46%. In 2004, Rasmussen Reports was the only firm to project the vote totals for both candidates within half a percentage point. Learn more about the Rasmussen Reports track record over the years.

#### Romney win now – polls, turnout, economy

Ponnuru, 6/25

Ramesh Ponnuru, Senior Editor, National Review, lexis

'We've gotta wake up," James Carville wrote in a May 31 fundraising e-mail. "Everywhere I go, people are telling me that 'Obama has it in the bag.' Newsflash: nothing is in the bag." He's right: Democrats have been overconfident about President Obama's chances this fall. Only slowly, if at all, is it dawning on them that Mitt Romney poses a serious challenge. For months now, the polls have suggested that Obama, while not a sure loser, is in trouble. In the Real Clear Politics average of polls, the president has not cracked a 50 percent approval rating so far in 2012. In both its average and Pollster.com's, the candidates have since the first week of May been consistently less than three points apart. There are several reasons Romney is giving Obama a tough race. The primary campaign distorted perceptions of the general-election campaign. It seemed to take forever for Romney to win the Republican nomination, and his poll numbers sank during the long slog. (Except for his "negatives": the percentage of people who told pollsters they had an unfavorable impression of him. That number rose.) Plenty of coverage suggested that Romney was going to have trouble unifying the party. Republicans grew pessimistic. But it should have been obvious that these perceptions were dependent on circumstances that were already changing. The primary highlighted Romney's deficiencies from the point of view of conservatives. In the general election, Republicans were never going to be choosing between Romney and Santorum or Gingrich. They were going to face a choice between Romney and a candidate who favors higher taxes, took health care farther down the road to government control, and will continue to appoint liberal judges as long as he can. On each of these issues Republicans strongly prefer Romney's position. That is why they quickly consolidated behind him once he wrapped up the nomination. While Romney has his weaknesses as a candidate, the arduousness of the primary campaign made them look more fatal than they are. The timing of the elections worked against him. Jay Cost, a writer for The Weekly Standard, points out that winning the Florida primary in 2008 gave John McCain the momentum to do well on Super Tuesday. This time around, Romney won Florida, his poll numbers improved, and then . . . and then the next actual primary was held four weeks later, and Super Tuesday a week after that. Momentum dissipated. Some of Romney's vulnerabilities in the primary won't matter much in the general election. His primary opponents had an incentive to use his record of flip-flops to portray him as unconservative and untrustworthy, but Obama can't simultaneously portray him as a right-wing extremist and a flip-flopper. All signs point to his deploying the right-wing-extremist attack, since it's scarier. The country is closely divided. After the 2006 and 2008 elections, some analysts decided that the country now had a natural Democratic majority. In retrospect -- and again, this should have been obvious at the time -- those seem like abnormally Democratic years (as 2010 seems like an abnormally Republican one). Even if 2008 had been a happy year for our nation, Republicans would have had to contend with the public's instinct that it was time for a change after eight years of their party in the White House. But there was also an economic crisis, which hit just weeks before the election. The Republican presidential nominee nonetheless won 46 percent of the vote. Republicans were always likely to do significantly better in 2012, simply because the odds of their facing similarly awful circumstances again were so low. You can't make history twice. There's another reason the Republicans' 2008 performance was likely to represent a floor for the next election. Strong turnout among voters who were young, black, or both swelled Obama's totals. Both black voters and young white voters are likely to vote for Obama again, but probably not in the same numbers, because the excitement of voting in the first black president has faded. Obama didn't change the map. Because his 2008 victory reached deep into "Republican territory" -- that is, he carried seven states that had gone for George W. Bush twice -- some analysts thought Obama had made assembling an Electoral College majority harder for the Republicans. But his sweep was a function of a national Democratic wave, not a permanent geographic realignment. As Sean Trende points out in his book, The Lost Majority, Obama's winning coalition was actually narrower geographically than Bill Clinton's. Missouri, which was very recently a swing state, seems now to be a lost cause for the Democrats. And Obama's hold on the states he carried in 2008 is weak. Florida seems to have become more Republican over the last decade, too. The Democrats have written off Indiana, and are surely ruing their decision to hold their national convention in North Carolina, not least because its state Democratic party is immersed in scandal. Even some states long in the Democratic fold look iffy. Wisconsin, which has not voted for a Republican presidential candidate since 1984, seems to be in play. Minnesota last voted for a Republican in 1972, but its Democratic tilt (compared with the national electorate) declined a little in the 2008 election, and a solid Romney victory nationally could well sweep it in. The economy hasn't cooperated. We haven't had a strong recovery, or one that most people trust will last. Democratic optimism about Obama has been tied not only to Romney's primary struggle but also to a few months of data suggesting the economy was picking up. But we have now had a few months of more recent, ominous data -- and the continuing crisis in Europe, or heightened tension in the Middle East, could tip us back into recession.

### Romney Winning – Key Groups

#### Obama losing now—support declining among key white subgroups

Saad, June 12th

(Lydia Saad, staff writer, Gallup, June 12, 2012, “Obama's White Base Shows Cracks Compared With 2008”, http://www.gallup.com/poll/155156/Obama-White-Base-Shows-Cracks-Compared-2008.aspx)

The 46% of registered voters supporting Obama today is five percentage points below the 51% supporting him in final weeks of the 2008 election campaign. Similarly, whites' support for Obama is six points lower than it was in October/November 2008 (38% vs. 44%), and blacks' is down four points (87% vs. 91%). At the same time, Hispanics' support, at 67%, is essentially unchanged. Whites make up about three-quarters of all U.S. registered voters, and are therefore the most important racial or ethnic group in any election, at least mathematically. Even if Obama were to regain his 2008 level of support among blacks and improve his support somewhat among Hispanics, he could still lose if his support among whites slips any further. By the same token, even a slight increase in whites' support could secure his re-election. Obama's support is down about equally among whites and blacks, while it is unchanged among Hispanics. Additionally, Obama has generally lost more support from the white subgroups that were most supportive of him in 2008 -- young adults, postgraduate women, nonmarried women, residents of low-income households, non-Christians, and nonreligious adults -- than from the white subgroups that were less supportive. Obama has also lost a greater-than-average amount of support among nonmarried men and non-postgraduate men. The declines in support among Obama's core white supporters may be especially troubling for him if his campaign strategy is, as many have speculated, to repeat his strong 2008 performance among women, the working class, and young voters, as well as minorities. On the one hand, these findings suggest his campaign may need to do more to mobilize those voters. On the other hand, the decline among his core 2008 white supporters could make these the easiest groups of voters for him to win back -- something the Democratic Convention this summer and Obama's fall campaigning will no doubt strive to do.

### Romney Winning – The Economy

#### **Obama losing support – the economy**

KUHNHENN And AGIESTA 6/22/12 <http://www.dailydemocrat.com/ci_20914885/poll-obama-romney-are-now-neck-and-neck> JIM KUHNHENN And JENNIFER AGIESTA

Fighting a swell of economic anxiety, President Barack Obama has lost much of the narrow lead he held just a month ago over Mitt Romney and the two now are locked in a virtually even race for the White House, according to a new Associated Press-GfK poll. The survey also found a majority of Americans disapproving of how the Democratic president is handling a national economy that fewer people think is improving. Less than five months before the election, 47 percent say they will vote for the president and 44 percent for Romney, a difference that is not statistically significant. The poll also shows that Romney has recovered from a bruising Republican primary, with more of his supporters saying they are certain to vote for him now. The economy remains Obama's top liability. Only 3 out of 10 adults say the country is headed in the right direction and 55 percent disapprove of his handling of the economy, the highest level detected in AP-GfK polls this year. "I'm not going to vote for Obama," said Raymond Back, a 60-year-old manufacturing plant manager from North Olmsted, Ohio, one of the most competitive states in this election. "It's just the wrong thing to do. I don't know what Romney is going to do, but this isn't the right way." Yet, in a measure of Romney's own vulnerabilities, even some voters who say they support Romney believe the president will still be re-elected. Of all adults polled, 56 percent believe Obama will win a second term. And despite three months of declining job creation that have left the public increasingly glum, Romney has not managed to seize the economic issue from the president, with registered voters split virtually evenly on whether Romney or Obama would do a better job improving it. The polling numbers come as no surprise to either camp. Both Romney and Obama advisers have anticipated a close contest that will be driven largely by economic conditions. The Obama camp is busy trying to define Romney, hoping it is reaching more independents like Doss Comer, 58, of Jacksonville, N.C., who said he would vote for Obama again, despite the lagging economy.

### **Obama losing votes**

#### Romney taking Lead- Obama losing key support

Witt 6/26/12 <http://www.examiner.com/article/new-poll-shows-obama-ahead-colorado-and-ohio-but-losing-virginia-and-north-c> Witt teaches Government and Politics at Washington University Law school in St. Louis.

Today four new polls were released in key battleground states in the 2012 presidential election. The poll results show a split between the two main contenders, with Obama winning Colorado and Ohio, and Mitt Romney winning Virginia and North Carolina. A summary of each poll, along with analysis, can be read below. Ohio (18 Electoral Votes) According to Public Policy Polling, President Obama currently leads in Ohio with 47% of the vote compared to 44% for Mitt Romney. Even though President Obama is winning Ohio according to PPP, his lead actually decreased from seven points in the last poll to three points in this poll. PPP has a very good track record in accurately predicting election results. A Real Clear Politics average of five polls from the last two months has Obama with a smaller, one-point lead, 45.8% to 44.8%. Two other polls from Purple Strategies and Rasmussen Reports showed Romney ahead in Ohio, but each poll was released more than two weeks ago. Ohio is probably second only to Florida in importance in the 2012 presidential election. The state is really a must win for Romney, and the state looks more competitive according to these recent polls. At this point, the state is a true toss-up, and the economy may serve as the tiebreaker between the two candidates. Virginia (13 Electoral Votes) A poll from WeAskAmerica has Mitt Romney ahead by five points in Virginia, with Romney garnering 48% of the vote compared to 43% for President Obama. WeAskAmerica is a pollster which tends to favor Republican candidates, and they currently have Romney winning the state by a larger margin than any other pollster. A Real Clear Politics average of five polls released over the last six weeks, has President Obama with a 1.4-point lead in Virginia (46.8% to 45.4%). A Rasmussen Reports poll released early this month had the race tied at 47%-47%. Obama won Virginia by a fairly large margin in 2008, but Virginia appears more competitive in 2012. There are many paths to victory for Obama that do not include Virginia, but Mitt Romney would have a harder time winning without the state. North Carolina (15 Electoral Votes) A poll from Rasmussen Reports currently shows Romney a 47% to 44% lead over President Obama in North Carolina. Rasmussen has been known to favor Republican candidates, but in this case their results are backed up by another poll from Public Policy Polling which shows Romney with a similar lead (48%-46%). A Real Clear Politics average of four polls released over the last six weeks has Romney with a two-point lead in the state (46.8% to 44.8%). After narrowly winning the state in 2008, North Carolina now seems to be more likely to go Republican in 2012. Colorado (9 Electoral Votes) Another poll from WeAskAmerica has President Obama winning the state of Colorado by four points (47% to 43%). The poll still gives Obama a smaller lead in Colorado than a survey released last week from Public Policy Polling, which showed President Obama with a stronger seven-point lead (49%-42%). Rasmussen Reports showed President Obama tied with Romney (45%-45%) in their poll released earlier this month. A Real Clear Politics average of six polls released over the last six weeks has President Obama with a three-point lead in Colorado (47.2% to 44.2%). Colorado still is fairly safe Obama territory at this point. The only poll showing Romney even tied comes from Rasmussen, a pollster with a documented history of favoring Republican candidates. Barring a major change of events between now and Election Day, the state’s nine electoral votes will likely go to the President.

#### Obama down in polls of many important swing states

Witt 6/12, Ryan, Political Buzz Examiner and teacher from WashU of government and politics. “New polls show Obama losing North Carolina, winning Pennsylvania”. (June 12 2012, <http://www.examiner.com/article/new-polls-show-obama-losing-north-carolina-winning-pennsylvania>)

The second survey, from Public Policy Polling, shows Obama losing North Carolina to Mitt Romney by a two-point margin (46%-48%). Pennsylvania has 20 electoral votes in the upcoming election, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to find a path to victory for President Obama without the Keystone State. In 2008, then-Senator Obama won the state over Senator John McCain (R-AZ) by an 11 point margin (55%-44%). Obama is still winning the state according to the Quinnipiac poll, but the margin is smaller. The poll matters because if the gap continues to close between Obama and Romney the Obama campaign may have to commit more resources to Pennsylvania that they could be committing to other key states like Florida, Ohio, Virginia, and North Carolina. North Carolina has 15 electoral votes, but, unlike Pennsylvania is not a “must-win” for the President. If President Obama wins Florida, Ohio, or Virginia he still easily could get to the 270 electoral votes he needs without North Carolina. Still, the PPP poll on North Carolina has to be worrisome for Democrats for a number of reasons. First, the poll comes from an organization with a quality record. Unlike Rasmussen Reports, which tends to favor Republicans, the PPP polls tend to favor Democrats, if the polls favor any candidate at all. Therefore, if PPP says that Obama is losing ground in North Carolina there is little reason to doubt their conclusions. Secondly, the PPP poll in North Carolina matches up with an overall trend of President Obama losing ground in swing states. A number of polls over the last two weeks have shown President Obama losing Florida, Ohio, and Virginia. President Obama can afford to lose one, two, or even three of these states, but the polls show him losing ground in all four.Finally, the PPP poll shows a steep decline in support for President Obama among the key independent voter demographic, with a simultaneous uptick in support for Romney.

#### Obama Might lose critical votes- New voting laws

CBS 6/26 http://www.cbs12.com/news/top-stories/stories/vid\_972.shtml

Thousands of attorneys and support staffers have agreed to aid in the effort, providing a mass of legal support that appears to be unrivaled by Republicans or precedent. Obama's campaign says it is particularly concerned about the implementation of new voter ID laws across the country, the possibility of anti-fraud activists challenging legitimate voters and the handling of voter registrations in the most competitive states. Republicans are building their own legal teams for the election. They say they're focused on preventing fraud - making sure people don't vote unless they're eligible - rather than turning away qualified voters. Since the disputed 2000 presidential election, both parties have increasingly concentrated on building legal teams - including high-priced lawyers who are well-known in political circles - for the Election Day run-up. The Bush-Gore election demonstrated to both sides the importance of every vote and the fact that the rules for voting and counting might actually determine the outcome. The Florida count in 2000 was decided by just 537 votes and ultimately landed in the Supreme Court. This year in that state alone, Obama and his Democratic allies are poised to have thousands of lawyers ready for the election and hope to have more than the 5,800 attorneys available four years ago. That figure was nearly twice the 3,200 lawyers the Democrats had at their disposal in 2004. Romney has been organizing his own legal help for the election. Campaign attorney Ben Ginsberg did not provide numbers but said the campaign has been gratified by the "overwhelming number of attorneys who have volunteered to assist." "We will have enough lawyers to handle all situations that arise," he said. The GOP doesn't necessarily need to have a numerical counterweight to Obama's attorneys; the 2000 election showed that experienced, connected lawyers on either side can be effective in court. Former White House counsel Robert Bauer, who is organizing the Obama campaign's legal deployment, said there is great concern this year because he believes GOP leaders around the county have pursued new laws to impede the right to vote. "The Republican Party and their allies have mapped out their vote suppression campaign as a response to our success in 2008 with grass-roots organization and successful turnout," Bauer said. "This is their response to defeat: changing the rules of participation so that fewer participate." Several states with Republican leaders have recently pursued changes that could make voting more difficult, including key states such as Florida and Ohio, despite objections from voting rights groups that believe that the laws could suppress votes from low-income and minority blocs. Republicans dispute that the laws are political, pointing to cases of election fraud and arguing that measures like those requiring voters to show identification are simply common sense. Independent from the Romney team, a conservative group is prepping an Election Day team of its own to combat possible fraud. Catherine Engelbrecht, president and founder of True the Vote, said the organization hopes to train and mobilize up to one million volunteers this year, many of them to serve poll watchers. One of the group's main initiatives is to "aggressively pursue fraud reports." "Being a poll watcher is an age-old tradition and we're fortunate that so many volunteers are ready and willing to take a day off, learn what they need to know and help out at the polls," Engelbrecht said. True the Vote already has thousands signed up to help and had 500 trained election workers monitoring the Wisconsin recall vote earlier this month. "They serve as volunteer guardians of the republic, to ensure that procedures at the polls are in keeping with state law," she said. It's one of the efforts that have Obama's team fretting. The Democrats fear that anti-fraud activity could get out of hand, with vigilante poll watchers targeting and intimidating voters who may not know their rights. "We will have the strategy and the resources to address the threat and protect the voter," Bauer said. The Obama-aligned attorneys, most of whom are not election experts by trade, undergo training and have materials to show them how to help at the polls on Election Day. Charles Lichtman, who is helping advise the effort in Florida this year after leading it in the last two cycles, first created the Florida Democratic Lawyers Council after the 2000 election, vowing that there would never be a repeat of that disputed vote. He contends Democrat Al Gore would have won the presidency over Republican George W. Bush if a similar legal infrastructure had been in place then. Lichtman's efforts have since been replicated for other states. He said that is vital to provide voter protection. "My experience has been that, in every election, the other side has taken drastic measures to try to suppress the vote," Lichtman said. The volunteer organization has not been involved in the 2012 legal disputes so far, though they are monitoring the developments. Four years ago, the teams of lawyers organized by Obama and Republican candidate John McCain in 2008 went largely unused since the election wasn't very close. But this year may be different given all the changes to voting laws - and the closeness of the race in recent polling. The states with the strictest ID laws require voters to show photo identification before casting ballots. If they don't have proper identification or fail to bring it, they can cast a provisional ballot but must later go to meet with state elections administrators to sort things out before the ballot is counted. Voting groups see a variety of potential problems, such as how voters are informed of the rule changes, how poll workers handle voters who fail to bring IDs and whether voters are provided adequate notice of the steps they need to take after casting an absentee ballot. About 30 states have some form of an ID law, with varying methods of implementation. Legal challenges typically start coming in the weeks before the election, but "litigation has started coming sooner and more vociferously" this year, says Edward Foley, an elections law expert with Ohio State University. That includes lawsuits surrounding Florida's plan to purge ineligible voters from the rolls. Foley said. "We're in an era of increased litigiousness over the voting process." He said lawsuits after Election Day may occur only if votes in a battleground state are within the "margin of litigation." That would probably be a difference of just hundreds of votes, a result that would be rare.

### GOP Base Mobilized Now

#### GOP base mobilized now -- opposition to Obama causes a rally-around-Romney effect

Malone, 6/7/12

Jim Malone, “Romney Rising, Obama Slipping,” Voice of America News, 6-7-2012 (http://blogs.voanews.com/2012-election/2012/06/07/romney-rising-obama-slipping/)

We know the Republicans seem unified in their dislike for President Obama and a strong desire to throw him out of office.  This anti-Obama feeling will likely trump any conservative hesitation about Mitt Romney not being enough of a true-believer to turn out the party faithful. The best thing Romney has going for him right now is how negatively Republicans feel about the president — and not any enthusiasm they may have for the former Massachusetts governor. On the economy, the latest meager jobs numbers and a looming sense that the country may be headed for more rocky times in the months ahead are clearly bad news for the president.  This will help the Romney effort to make the election simply a referendum on President Obama, a simple thumbs-up or down on his first three years in office.

#### GOP base mobilized now because of the Wisconsin recall

Malone, 6/7/12

Jim Malone, “Romney Rising, Obama Slipping,” Voice of America News, 6-7-2012 (http://blogs.voanews.com/2012-election/2012/06/07/romney-rising-obama-slipping/)

Republican Scott Walker’s relatively easy win in the Wisconsin recall election has a lot for Republicans to cheer and just as much for Democrats to be concerned about.  Walker became a lightning rod for union activists and Democrats after he pushed the Wisconsin legislature to strip away most union collective bargaining rights. The showdown over Walker’s efforts to cut the state budget energized Democrats both in Wisconsin and around the country and sparked a recall effort to try and oust him from office. But the recall attempt also energized Republicans. Walker has become a conservative folk hero around the country for taking on unions and their Democratic allies in the legislature, just the kind of fight conservatives and Tea Party supporters were spoiling for.

The New York Times reports that some conservative activists are already talking Walker up as a possible candidate for national office one day. It says some might be tempted to push him as Romney’s running mate this year, though that seems unlikely. Democrats first were divided over who should run against Walker, eventually settling on Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, who was not a favorite among the union activists.  It then came down to a turnout fight and in a possible harbinger of what may come in November, Republicans rallied to Walker’s side with help from independents and even a few Democrats who opposed the recall.

### Election Unpredictable

#### It’s too early to predict the election

Sabato, political scientist and analyst, 2012

Sabato, Larry. “Presidential Polling in June: Flip a Coin Instead?” Sabato’s Crystal Ball. May 31, 2012. http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/presidential-polling-in-june-flip-a-coin-instead/

With all of the polls, models and history at their disposal, political analysts should be able to figure out who is going to win a November presidential election by June, right? Well, not quite. While we would modestly suggest to Socrates and our readers that we know more than nothing about the election, declaring the winner with certainty at this point is a fool’s errand, particularly when the current data argue only that the contest will be a close one. In the RealClearPolitics average of national horse race polls as of Wednesday, President Obama was narrowly ahead of Mitt Romney by 2.0 percentage points. Meanwhile, in last week’s Crystal Ball, Alan Abramowitz showed how his respected presidential election model forecasts a very tight race at this point, with Obama as a slight favorite. But surely, this year is an outlier, many would assert. Because of the unique circumstances surrounding this election, including the great economic dislocation caused by the 2008 crash and the restless mood of Americans even after three straight wave elections, it’s understandable that this contest would remain hazy late into the spring. That’s true. But uncertainty in June is not unique, at least not in modern history. If anyone doubts that a reassessment — maybe several of them — will come as 2012 wears on, consider this: Over the past eight elections, Gallup — the most recognizable of polling organizations — has only identified the eventual popular vote winner twice in its early June horse race polling: In June 1980, President Jimmy Carter led Ronald Reagan 39% to 32%, with independent John Anderson at 21%. In November, Reagan defeated Carter, 51% to 41%, with Anderson getting less than 7%. Remember that this race appeared close until the very end, with some polling even indicating that Carter might actually win just a few days before the election. But Reagan proved his mettle in a late debate, and Carter’s attempt to negotiate freedom for the American hostages in Iran failed. Those late developments helped turn a close election into a blowout. Note, also, Anderson’s strong early performance in polls: Third party candidates sometimes appear formidable in early surveys and then fade away as the election gets closer, victims of the voters’ desire not to “waste” their ballots. The polling was fairly stable in 1984. In June, Reagan already led Walter Mondale by 53% to 44%. The incumbent won 59% in the fall. Such early polling, and Reagan’s strength, prompted Mondale to throw a Hail Mary by selecting Geraldine Ferraro as his running mate. Like most Hail Marys, the pass was incomplete. By 1988, the June polling was far more misleading: Michael Dukakis was ahead of George H.W. Bush by a landslide, 52% to 38%. Bush ended up winning more than 53% in November. The June 1992 polling projected the nation’s first independent president, Ross Perot. At 39%, Perot easily topped Bush (31%) and Bill Clinton at 25%. Less than five months later, the order was reversed: Clinton won with 43%, Bush (37%) was ousted and Perot finished last with 19%, failing to win a single electoral vote. However, Perot maintained his support to a greater degree than most independent candidates do down the stretch. Gallup’s June 1996 survey got Clinton’s reelection percentage right on the nose (49%), but Bob Dole, at 33%, was well below his eventual 41% and Perot had 17% in June but finished with about 8% in November. Like 1984, Clinton’s reelection bid lacked drama. The squeaker of 2000 was close even in June, but Gallup had George W. Bush up over Al Gore, 46% to 41%. Come November, Gore won the popular vote by half a percentage point, though of course he lost the Electoral College vote. Gallup had John Kerry well on his way to avenging Gore’s loss in June 2004. Kerry led Bush outside the margin of error at 49% to 43%. Instead, Bush grabbed his second term with 51% in November. It’s rarely recalled, but John McCain actually led Barack Obama by a whisker in Gallup’s daily tracking at the beginning of June 2008, 46% to 45%. It wasn’t close in the fall, with Obama winning 53%. And the uncertainty goes back further. Jimmy Carter looked as though he would roll Gerald Ford in 1976; instead, the election ended up incredibly tight. So did the 1960 and 1968 contests. As we never tire of repeating, Harry Truman shocked the world in 1948 by defeating “President-elect” Thomas E. Dewey. This is not meant to cast aspersions on Gallup; rather, it’s to say that presidential races are not static, and that polling conducted five months before the election is only a snapshot in time, as opposed to a reliable prediction as to how the race will eventually shake out. As of Wednesday, Obama and Romney were tied, 46%-46%, in the Gallup poll. Obviously, this is a matchup that could go either way. Almost everything can change, and frequently does, during the course of the summer and fall in a presidential race. The economy can get decidedly better or worse. International crises can pop up — or peace can break out. Unexpected scandals can engulf one or both major party candidates. One or more independents or third-party candidates may prove influential in the presidential tally. Politics, as we’ve insisted for years, is a good thing. And a fun thing, too, for people who do not treat American elections as a life or death affair. There will be many spectacles between now and Nov. 6, and plenty of unexpected developments in this semi-scripted human drama. But while we know the road to the finish line will be fascinating, let’s also grant that it will be somewhat unpredictable.

### AT: Too Soon to Predict

#### Not too early – Obama popularity early in race matters – but can still shift

Silver, 12(Nate, 5/15, chief pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center. Regarded as top-level pollster based on distinct mathematical models – <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/05/15/a-30000-foot-view-on-the-presidential-race/>)

Although we are getting to the point where these national polls are at least worth a passing glance, it is still also worth paying attention to Mr. Obama’s approval rating. These have a history of predicting electoral outcomes at least as closely as head-to-head polls in the early stages of the race, especially for incumbent presidents. Mr. Obama’s approval ratings have not moved all that much. For the last month or two, they have been essentially even. Right now, in the RealClearPolitics average, 48.3 percent of Americans approve of the job that Mr. Obama is doing, and 48.6 percent disapprove. A president can get re-elected with numbers like those. Obviously, he can also lose. But the fact that Mr. Obama’s approval ratings are close to even means that it should not be surprising that the numbers in his matchup against Mr. Romney are getting closer to even, too. I am not a purist who says that candidates and campaigns make no difference. That said, the most reliable benchmark in the past of when presidential results deviate from those predicted by approval ratings is when one of the candidates has a relatively “extreme” ideology, like Barry M. Goldwater or George S. McGovern. Mr. Romney does not qualify as an extremist by the various measures we can look at that attempt to quantify this objectively — neither does he qualify as a moderate. Instead, he is a “generic Republican,” who might run fairly close to the outcomes predicted by Mr. Obama’s approval ratings. Mr. Romney also went through a period where his favorability ratings were quite poor. However, they have since improved to about even, possibly because his job has been less complicated since the effective end of the Republican primary campaign. It is not uncommon for favorability ratings to shift over the course of a campaign, particularly once the primaries end.

#### Now key – swing voters will decide by end of august

USA Today, 12 (5/7, lexis)

Seven of 10 voters in those states say their minds are firmly made up and won't change. Both campaigns are focused not only on firing up enthusiasm among those core supporters but also winning over the 7% who are undecided and the 24% who are only loosely committed to a candidate. Under the United States' unique Electoral College system, that fraction of voters in a dozen states are likely to decide who can claim the presidency for the next four years. Based on turnout in 2008, these swing voters in the swing states consist of roughly a million people in Virginia; 1.6 million in Ohio; 2.5 million in Florida; 220,000 in New Hampshire -- a total of about 13 million voters out of an expected national turnout of more than 130 million. The next six months, when political spending will likely top $2 billion, will be aimed in large part at winning them over. In the 2008 campaign, almost precisely the same proportion of voters were up for grabs until late August, when it began to decline sharply with the choice of a Republican vice presidential candidate and the political conventions. By Election Day, the number of uncommitted voters nearly disappeared.

#### Not too early to predict

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

Third, if we look at the models in a different way, they arguably do a good enough job. Say that you just want to know who is going to win the presidential election, not whether this candidate will get 51 percent or 52 percent of the vote. Of the 58 separate predictions that Nate tabulates, 85 percent of them correctly identified the winner — even though most forecasts were made two months or more before the election and even though few of these forecasts actually incorporated trial heat polls from the campaign.

#### Now is key to the election -- voters make up their minds several months out and once a trend sets, it will determine the winner

Malone, 6/7/12

Jim Malone, “Romney Rising, Obama Slipping,” Voice of America News, 6-7-2012 (http://blogs.voanews.com/2012-election/2012/06/07/romney-rising-obama-slipping/)

So yes, five months is a long time for the voters to decide.  But recent presidential election history shows that many voters begin to make up their minds at this point in the election cycle, and that relatively few minds can be changed between now and Election Day. If it’s true that the cement is beginning to set, the Obama White House may not have a lot of time to change the dynamics of a race that shapes up as a straight up or down vote on how this president has handled the national economy.

### AT: Too Late to Change Opinions

#### Public perception of Obamas economic policy can still swing

Cook, 12(Charlie, Cook Political Report, National Journal, 3/26, <http://cookpolitical.com/node/12306>)

A far more important factor in determining whether voters decide to renew Obama’s contract for another four years is whether they see his stewardship of the economy as a success. Has he done as well as anyone could realistically have done? Or did he have other priorities—like health care—that seemed to merit more attention than dealing with a worsening economic downturn and dramatically escalating unemployment? With each passing week we will get a new crop of statistics that will provide clues as to how the economy is faring. Will the narrative be a continuation of the improvement seen since last fall? Or, will this spurt have been more temporary, bumping against headwinds—in the form of high energy prices, a global economic downturn, and recession in Europe—preventing that pattern from continuing through the November election? How will the economy perform over the seven months between now and the election? Upcoming economic reports are likely to answer the question about whether Obama’s presidency will be judged as a success. The Conference Board on Tuesday will release its latest survey of consumer confidence. On Friday, the Thomson/Reuters/University of Michigan Index of Consumer Sentiment will be released. These are the two most closely watched measures of how Americans see the economy now, and what their expectations are for the coming months. A week from Friday, the March unemployment figures will be reported. Analysts will look to see whether the improvement in the jobless picture seen over the winter will continue or whether it has leveled off. Some speculate that rapidly rising gasoline prices may ease sooner, rather than skyrocketing through the spring and summer, as many have forecasted. Which forecasts turn out to be right will be hugely important both politically and for the economy. Up until now, much of the spike in gas prices has been offset by unusually low heating bills paid during the fourth-warmest winter on record, and the warmest since 1990. The Wall Street research firm ISI Group, as of Oct. 3, had charted 16 out of 20 weeks as having more negative economic news and developments than positive ones. Since October 10, it has marked 25 weeks in a row of more positive than negative news and developments. But it has noted that the positive mix last week was not particularly convincing—a possible sign that the recent upbeat pattern may be breaking up. Right now, a fair number of voters sit on the fence when it comes to assessing Obama’s performance on the economy. They are disappointed that he didn’t do better, but they are unwilling to pass final judgment. How the economy fares in the coming months will determine which side of that fence these voters decide to come down on.

#### Voters can break one way or other even in final weeks

CNN, 6/4 (<http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2012/06/04/cnn-electoral-map-seven-states-up-in-the-air-in-fight-for-white-house/>)

The map currently indicates that seven states are true toss-ups. Those states are Colorado (9 electoral votes), Florida (29), Iowa (6), Nevada (6), New Hampshire (4), Ohio (18) and Virginia (13). Eighty-five electoral votes are up for grabs in those seven states. Four states currently lean towards Obama: Michigan (16), New Mexico (5), Pennsylvania (20) and Wisconsin (10). Four states currently lean towards Romney: Arizona (11), Indiana (11), Missouri (10), and North Carolina (15). "Elections generally break one way late, meaning if you head into the final weeks with six toss-ups, four or five - and sometimes all - break with the winner. And so that could well happen this time. But if you look at the map today, this looks a lot more like Bush vs. Gore than it does Obama vs. McCain," says CNN Chief National Correspondent John King, anchor of "John King, USA." "It's no surprise that Florida and Ohio are toss-ups and potential 'deciders' - they traditionally play that role in presidential politics. What is fascinating is the number of plausible scenarios under which one or two of the 'smaller' battlegrounds could prove decisive," King added. "Iowa and New Hampshire, for example - what a delicious storyline if it all ends in the states where it began. Colorado and Virginia are relative newcomers to the 'swing state' role, and now critical to what amounts to a multi-dimensional chess game." Overall, 15 states right now are either toss-ups or lean towards either the president or Romney. "The 2012 presidential election likely will be decided by these 15 key states, worth a total of 183 electoral votes," CNN Political Research Director Robert Yoon says. "Determining what qualifies as a battleground state is not an exact science, but it's a rough mix of several criteria, including polling, past election results, the state's political, demographic, and economic trends; whether the campaigns and parties will devote resources to the state, such as ad spending, candidate visits, field offices, and staff, and the presence of other high-profile races on the ballot. CNN's Electoral Map will take into account all these factors, as well as its own reporting and analysis."

#### Voters can still easily switch

Ettinger, 6/12/12

Yoruam Ettinger, Chairman of Special Projects at the Ariel Center for Policy Research. Formerly the Minister for Congressional Affairs to Israel's Embassy in Washington, DC, “Obama’s Steep Uphill Reelection Battle,” 6-12-2012 (http://www.jewishpress.com/indepth/analysis/yoram-ettinger-obamas-steep-uphill-reelection-battle/2012/06/12/)

12. The history of US politics suggests that, in most campaigns, incumbents – rather than challengers – win/lose elections. Irrespective of the long-term and severe economic crisis, and regardless of the results of the June 5, 2012 Wisconsin election, November is still five months away. That is sufficient time for unexpected developments – including significant blunders by Obama and Romney – which could determine the outcome of the election either way.

#### Its super close and shifts can still happen

Silver, 12(Nate, 5/15, chief pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center. Regarded as top-level pollster based on distinct mathematical models <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/05/15/a-30000-foot-view-on-the-presidential-race/>)

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## \*\*\*Links – Generic Transportation/Spending\*\*\*

### Transportation—Not popular

#### Funding Transportation infrastructure unpopular with the public – they fear wasteful planning and don’t see the upside.

Orski ‘12

Ken Orski is editor and publisher of Innovation NewsBriefs, an influential and widely read transportation newsletter, now in its 20th year of publication. Orski has worked professionally in the field of transportation for close to 40 years. He served as Associate Administrator of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration under President Nixon and President Ford. He is a magna cum laude graduate of Harvard College and holds a J.D. degree from Harvard Law School. NewGeography – 02/05/2012 – http://www.newgeography.com/content/002662-why-pleas-increase-infrastructure-funding-fall-deaf-ears

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

#### Transportation infrastructure not popular—good design, politics, public’s attention diverted

Roode ‘12

(Benjamin Roode, staff writer, May 2012, PE Magazine, “Infrastructure: How We Got Here”, http://www.nspe.org/PEmagazine/12/pe\_0512\_How.html)

As a result, spending on transportation and water infrastructure as a percentage of gross domestic product has decreased steadily since the late 1950s. [It is] projected to sink even more. New projects with federal funding are marginalized as earmarks or pork by those who pay for them but don't see immediate results. And local funding is secured only when each minute detail is laid out at the ballot box. How did the United States, with the world's most enviable highway, power, and water infrastructures, suddenly come to the brink of literal collapse? The answer lies at the junction of a well-designed and built infrastructure, a fracturing political system, and a public more focused on tomorrow than a decade hence.

#### Upgrades and repairs not popular with taxpayers—don’t perceive problems

Roode, ‘12

(Benjamin Roode, staff writer, May 2012, PE Magazine, “Infrastructure: How We Got Here”, http://www.nspe.org/PEmagazine/12/pe\_0512\_How.html)

When taxpayers drive the same roads day-in and day-out, turn on the faucet for automatic water, and flip a switch for light, it gets easier to take for granted the infrastructure making those amenities possible. Why spend tax money when there's no problem apparent to a public that lacks infrastructure engineering knowledge and perspective? "As long as the commode works when you flush it, people aren't worried about spending money on infrastructure," says Bill Fendley, P.E., F.NSPE, who chairs NSPE's Legislative and Government Affairs committee. Money to upgrade or repair such systems is sometimes hard to come by, however, especially when neither voters nor the politicians they elect recognize the limits of infrastructure nor will commit to long-term solutions. Why spend public money on a system that currently works, voters ask.

#### Transportation infrastructure unpopular—voters view as political game

Roode, ‘12

(Benjamin Roode, staff writer, May 2012, PE Magazine, “Infrastructure: How We Got Here”, http://www.nspe.org/PEmagazine/12/pe\_0512\_How.html)

There was political debate on infrastructure in the past, just not what we have today. Congress debated the official creation of the federal interstate highway system in the early 1950s for sure, Swift says. What they debated, however, was how to pay for it, not whether it was needed or necessary. Now, federal spending on infrastructure is a political issue, thanks to earmarks and boondoggles like the infamous Alaskan "Bridge to Nowhere." When voters and politicians identify spending with pet projects, funding levels start to slide.

#### Transportation infrastructure unpopular—costs voters right away while returns take awhile

Roode, ‘12

(Benjamin Roode, staff writer, May 2012, PE Magazine, “Infrastructure: How We Got Here”, http://www.nspe.org/PEmagazine/12/pe\_0512\_How.html)

Taxes are immediate, and infrastructure's returns are long-term. Therefore, an infrastructure tax, whether for a sewer system or development of a port, is viewed by most taxpayers solely as a cost to avoid, not an investment, says Andrew Herrmann, P.E., president of the American Society of Civil Engineers. And when taxpayers are still feeling the effects of a down economy, any new tax, and many existing ones, is the target of voter ire.

### Transportation Unpopular

#### No perception of economic benefit and fiscal discipline is top issue for key independent voters

Schoen, 10

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

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

#### Infrastructure policy unpopular—too expensive and funding mechanism disliked

Roode, ‘12

(Benjamin Roode, staff writer, May 2012, PE Magazine, “Infrastructure: How We Got Here”, http://www.nspe.org/PEmagazine/12/pe\_0512\_How.html)

Even though the Senate passed the two-year, $109 billion bill, experts say that would have been a drop in the bucket for what infrastructure needs. ASCE's infrastructure report card calls for $2.2 trillion over five years to address current infrastructure needs. Each time ASCE releases a new report card, that number jumps up. Key players aren't optimistic that a long-term deal will be passed in this, an election year. Pitching new spending when voters still aren't convinced it's needed is political suicide for politicians seeking reelection. They won't use the tough talk needed to sell funding for infrastructure that protects a high standard of living and safety, LePatner says. And the caustic, antitax climate that seems to permeate all political discussions means it's unlikely to come up again until after the November presidential and congressional elections, if at all, Horsley says. "If you're a politician, it's never a comfortable vote…to increase taxes," Horsley says.

### Transportation Key

#### **It single handedly swings votes**

A.D.S. ‘12

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cooper, 12

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Transportation Not Key

#### Public transit doesn’t help re-election—people who benefit don’t vote

Shapiro, 12

(Lila Shapiro, business writer, March 20, 2012, Huffington Post, “Transit Workers Union Targets Riders In New Campaign”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/20/transit-workers-union-campaign\_n\_1368294.html)

As gas prices rise, public transit systems across the nation have faced dwindling budgets and fewer routes. In 2010, nearly 80 percent of public transit systems were forced to raise fares or cut service due to flat or decreased funding from state and local governments, according to the American Public Transportation Association. And while the majority of bus riders may not be seen as swing voters, they are more likely to be citizens without driver's licenses, and thus more vulnerable to voter suppression in states like Florida that require a government-approved photo ID, said Hanley, adding that the ATU will focus on that issue as well. They may also be in need of a ride to the polls on voting day.

#### Transportation and gas prices don’t matter to the American public—government efforts and consumer spending prove

Davidson, 12—co-founder of NPR’s Planet Money

(Adam Davidson, co-founder of NPR's Planet Money a radio series heard on “Morning Edition,” “All Things Considered” and “This American Life.”, March 27, 2012, The New York Times, “The Real Oil Shock”, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/01/magazine/rising-gas-prices-dont-actually-affect-americans-behavior.html?\_r=1)

In other words, Americans may protest loudly, but their economic behavior indicates a remarkable indifference to the price of oil. In Europe, where taxes keep gas prices well above $5 a gallon, citizens are more likely to take public transportation and live near the center of town. The streets are filled with mopeds and tiny cars. The United States, on the other hand, barely exerts the minimum effort expected of a gas-phobic society: its enthusiasm for car pooling, enhanced public transportation and fuel-efficient vehicles remains relatively low. The average American even spends more gas money on social and recreational trips (about $13 a week, on average) than on their commutes to and from work (around $8). If gas prices truly damage the quality of our lives, we have done a remarkable job of hiding it.

#### Infrastructure not important to citizens—underestimate maintenance costs and overestimate budgets

Roode, May 2012

(Benjamin Roode, staff writer, May 2012, PE Magazine, “Infrastructure: How We Got Here”, http://www.nspe.org/PEmagazine/12/pe\_0512\_How.html)

"Most citizens have no clue what is needed in terms of cash flow in a given state to maintain highways, bridges, and other transportation," he says. Those voters also overestimate what they already pay for infrastructure maintenance and expansion. Combined, the viewpoints mean most voters believe there's enough money in federal and state budgets to adequately maintain roads, bridges, and other infrastructure even though groups like AASHTO and ASCE have identified massive spending deficits.

### Plan Swings the Election

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

USA Today, 12(5/1, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/story/2012-05-01/federal-transportation-highway-bill/54660278/1>)

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

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

Lawder, 12(David, Journalist @ Reuters, Reuters, 6/8, <http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/06/07/usa-infrastructure-boehner-idINL1E8H7AH320120607>)

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

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

Dorsey, 12(Thomas, CEO, Soul of America, 1/25, <http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/01/25/on-infrastructure-hopes-for-progress-this-year-look-glum/>)

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

#### Gives Obama a key win – swings election

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

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

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

Reuters, 12(2/13, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/13/us-usa-budget-idUSTRE8191MJ20120213>)

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

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

Freemark, 12

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

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

### Transportation—Popular

#### New transportation infrastructure popular—develops economy and specificity of plans avoids earmarks

Roode, May 2012

(Benjamin Roode, staff writer, May 2012, PE Magazine, “Infrastructure: How We Got Here”, http://www.nspe.org/PEmagazine/12/pe\_0512\_How.html)

It's been more popular, however, to pursue new projects in the name of economic development and political cronyism than to maintain existing infrastructure that already bolsters the economy, LePatner says. He argues that politicians have used vague "transportation" or "infrastructure" funding as a type of federal or state rewards system for fundraisers and other political supporters, the same earmarks and pork-barrel spending vilified in recent election cycles. When voters and taxpayers see such behavior, they're less likely to support money for needed projects, he says. That, combined with an unwillingness to propose new taxes or spending in the first place, means there's little will to tackle this important health, safety, and welfare issue.

### Transportation Spending Popular

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

Madland, 12(David, Center For American Progress, 3/22, <http://www.americanprogressaction.org/experts/MadlandDavid.html>)

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

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

Halsey, 11(Ashley, columnist @ Washington Post, Washington post, 2/14, lexis)

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

#### Public loves it – supports increased spending

Wytkind, 10

Ed Wytkind, President, Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, 10/27, http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2010/10/obama-infrastructure-a-top-pri.php?comments=expandall#comments

It’s clear that we’re going to need the Administration’s leadership if we’re going to do anything worth doing.

The funny thing is there isn’t much disagreement about the need for America to invest in our infrastructure. 19 out of 20 Americans are concerned about our nation’s infrastructure, and 84 percent support greater investment to address it, according to the report by the Treasury Department and the Council of Economic Advisers at the President’s meeting. Major elements of the business lobby agree with us and not with the Congressional naysayers. Why? Because businesses of all sizes understand that the economy won’t turn around and they won’t thrive without a first-class transportation system, and that current investment levels get a failing grade.

#### Public support overwhelms spending concerns – they’d even support a tax increase

Prah, 9(Pamela, Reporter @ Stateline, Stateline.org, 2/22, lexis)

A survey by national pollster Frank Luntz reinforced the message. He found that more of those responding to a poll were concerned about the openness of the process than the fairness of how funds were distributed, the number of jobs it created or even the safety of the projects. "The public wants to know exactly what you're doing and exactly what the measurement is," Luntz told dozens of governors at a morning meeting Saturday. The success of the stimulus package could have even larger implications, Luntz said. "If you deliver on this over the next few years, not only will you have great job approval numbers, you will single-handedly be able to restore confidence in government, at least at the state level." The debate over infrastructure spending, which dominated Saturday's session, largely turns on how to finance it in the long term. Luntz told the governors that eight in 10 Americans said they would be willing to pay a 1 percent increase in their federal income tax for infrastructure, providing the money was not wasted. Rendell used the findings to say "the American people are ready to spend more money" on infrastructure. The $100 billion for infrastructure in the economic stimulus bill is only about 5 percent of the nation's total need for transportation and other infrastructure, Rendell said.

#### Massively popular – ballot initiatives and surveys prove

Lovaas, 10

(Deron Lovaas, National Resource Defense Council, Federal Transportation Policy Director, 10/29, <http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2010/10/obama-infrastructure-a-top-pri.php?comments=expandall#comments>)

The group discussed ways of moving forward with a national agenda, something the President pressed for in a Labor Day speech as I wrote about here. An economic rationale was proffered by a new Treasury Department report released just a couple of hours ago. The report addresses demand- and supply-side considerations. On the demand side, it points out that there is widespread public support for new infrastructure investments doubtless driven in part by concerns over crumbling roads and bridges and evidenced by remarkably successful election results in recent years for transportation ballot initiatives (such as the one providing new revenue for the 30/10 program in L.A.) and national surveys. The analysis also strikes an ominous tone regarding our nation's competitiveness globally noting that we invest a mere two percent of GDP on infrastructure, which is half the level in 1960 and small compared to China's investment of 9 percent and Europe's of five percent (in the case of China this can be in part justified because that nation is at an earlier stage of development and investing more to "catch up" but no such reasoning appies to Europe).

### Transportation –Dems

#### Republicans not concerned about transportation vote—its demographics are already dedicated to Democrats

Shapiro, 12

(Lila Shapiro, business writer, March 20, 2012, Huffington Post, “Transit Workers Union Targets Riders In New Campaign”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/20/transit-workers-union-campaign\_n\_1368294.html)

Conservative operatives, meanwhile, seem resigned to the loss of the transit riders' vote. "If you’re taking the bus to work, you likely live in an urban environment, are on the lower half of the socioeconomic scale or you have an ideological aversion to cars -– all demographics that are far more kind to Democrats," said Jonathan Collegio, the director of communications for American Crossroads, one of the leading Republican super PACs. "In the end, these are voters who are unlikely to jump from the Democratic ship."

### Transportation –GOP

#### Transportation advocates likely to vote for Republicans—faster and more innovative measures

Lefkowitz, 12

(Melanie Lefkowitz, freelance writer, January 4, 2012, City Limits, “New York: Local Transit's Future Depends on the Feds”, http://www.citylimits.org/news/articles/4504/new-york-local-transit-s-future-depends-on-the-feds/4)

But Mica says he believes a Republican Congress or administration would speed transportation initiatives along faster than Obama and the Democrats, who he says have kept thousands of worthy projects mired in red tape. "I think Republicans would be very innovative … bringing in the private sector to help operate and finance. I think it could move a lot of transportation forward faster," Mica says.

### Transportation—Unions

#### Labor unions push for transportation measures—believe government not doing enough now

Laing, 12—national political journalist with focus on transportation policy

(Keith Laing, national political journalist that covers transportation policy in Congress and manages the paper’s Transportation Report blog, April 1, 2012, The Hill, “Transportation advocates see little hope for pre-election long-term highway bill”, http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/219369-transportation-advocates-see-little-hope-for-long-term-highway-bill-pre-election)

AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department (TTD) President Edward Wytkind told The Hill he does not see the political dynamic changing before the extension expires in 90 days. "We're hedging our bets that the House is going to get anything done, so I went out and got a lotto ticket and I'm publicly announcing that I'll donate any winnings to transportation," Wytkind said on Friday, ahead of the popular Mega Millions drawing. "That may be our best hope for transportation policy at this point, at least for the next couple of weeks."

#### Transportation unions are organizing votes—rising gas prices, weak economy, and more voting strategies

Shapiro, 12

(Lila Shapiro, business writer, March 20, 2012, Huffington Post, “Transit Workers Union Targets Riders In New Campaign”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/20/transit-workers-union-campaign\_n\_1368294.html)

This election cycle, the unionized workers that run your public transportation system are doing something a little different. They're not only turning out the votes of their own membership, they're pushing for the riders to vote as well. The Amalgamated Transit Union -- the largest labor union representing transit and allied workers in the U.S. and Canada -- has at least two trends working in its favor: With gas prices rising and the economy still weak, public transit use is near its highest point in decades. Last year, Americans took 10.4 billion trips on mass transit -- including buses, trains, street cars and ferries -- a 2.3 percent increase from the previous year, according to the American Public Transportation Association, a nonprofit advocacy organization. And the people who ride buses and trains -- mostly urban, poor, or environmentally conscious -- are more likely to share the unions' preference for Democratic candidates, say advocates on both sides of the issue. In an age of unlimited spending by super PACs -- where Republican groups have outspent their Democratic counterparts -- the Amalgamated Transit Union's strategy is part of a critical role that labor advocates plan to play between now and November. The unions say they cannot compete with Republican donors' money, but that they do have an ample supply of bodies and plan to deploy them in broader and more creative ways than they did in 2008.

#### Unions will be the decisive vote in several key swing states

Horsley, 12

(Scott Horsley, White House Correspondent, Febraury 29, 2012, NPR, “Obama Reminds Critics Auto Industry Bailout Worked”, http://www.npr.org/2012/02/29/147616204/obama-reminds-critics-auto-industry-bailout-worked)

HORSLEY: Mr. Obama's also counting on support this year from other unions, some of which have been alarmed by Romney's tough stance against organized labor, and by the efforts of several Republican governors to limit collective bargaining. Four years ago, Mr. Obama won 60 percent of the union vote. That kind of support this fall could be decisive, not only in Michigan, but also in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

#### Revitalizing labor support key to Obama election – because turnout, voter registration and fundraising – but support not resilient

Flock, 12(Elizabeth, columnist @ US News and World Report, 6/13, <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/washington-whispers/2012/06/13/afl-cio-redeploying-funds-from-obama-campaign-to-advocacy-and-infrastructure>)

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

#### Unions Key

Cost, 12

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

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

### Transportation—Florida

#### Transportation Association mobilizing Florida voters

Shapiro, 12

(Lila Shapiro, business writer, March 20, 2012, Huffington Post, “Transit Workers Union Targets Riders In New Campaign”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/20/transit-workers-union-campaign\_n\_1368294.html)

Exact funding or staffing has not yet been determined, but the ATU says it is hoping to mobilize bus riders and sympathetic progressive groups to provide additional bodies to work the bus stops and buses. These groups have already begun to form in some key states, like Florida, and have engaged in heated debates over public transit issues since early 2010. "On the bus, you're getting a segment of voters who have not been reached out to," Bennet said. "So that is my mission this election year."

#### Transportation investment massively popular in Florida– key to perception of effective economic policy

S.G.A. ’11(Smart Growth America, Florida Report, Feb

<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/smart-transportation-ohio.pdf>)

Like the rest of the country, Florida’s state budget and economy face significant challenges. These challenges also create the opportunity – indeed the imperative – to revisit existing programs and ask if Florida is really getting everything it can from them. Right now, voters do not think the current approach is working. Polling nationwide shows people are dissatisfied with the economy and believe the nation is on the wrong track. People do not trust their state with their money. Only 10% of voters think the government spends money wisely, while fully 86% of voters think their state does a fair or poor job. Moving forward, Americans do think there is a better way. In a recent survey by Hart Research Associates, 68% of those polled believe “now is the time for the state to invest in transportation because if done right these investments will create new jobs and attract new businesses.” Voters are clear about their hopes for their state, and Smart Growth America has practical solutions to help make that vision a reality. In the following pages we outline an innovative, yet common sense approach to transportation spending that cuts costs, creates jobs, attracts businesses, and clearly shows that the state is responding to the fiscal and economic crisis with strong leadership that is not satisfied with a system that makes fair or poor use of taxpayer dollars.

#### Massively popular in Florida – key issue, swings voter perception and not perceived as wasteful spending

S.G.A. ’11(Smart Growth America, Florida Report, Feb

<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/smart-transportation-florida.pdf>)

The Need: If it continues on its current path, Florida’s transportation system is on track to become highly expensive, uncompetitive, and unsafe. Florida has invested heavily in transportation, but declining revenues and escalating debt service will reduce the state’s ability to maintain its facilities in a state of good repair. Carrying on business as usual will result in a deteriorated road network, inadequate transit network, and a six- to ten-fold increase in repair costs resulting from neglect and deferred maintenance. The Smart Solution: Florida is at a crossroads. While there is still a sizable gap between revenue and the large wish list of projects, this gap can be closed if the state makes strategic decisions about how to get the highest return on its investment. By making fiscally responsible choices about the state’s transportation priorities, Florida can not only save money and create jobs, but it can also help preserve the transportation system and create a more welcoming business climate on the mid- and long-term horizons. Spending more on repair and maintenance is a good investment: it saves the state money, saves citizens money, is a superior job creator, and is very popular among voters. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), every $1 spent to keep a road in good condition avoids $6-14 needed later to rebuild the same road once it has deteriorated. In addition, poor roads add an average of $335 to the annual cost of owning a car – in some cities an additional $740 more – due to damaged tires and suspensions and reduced fuel efficiency. While Florida has invested heavily in repair and maintenance in recent years, insufficient investment over the long-term has led to a backlog of roads and bridges in “poor” and “deficient” condition requiring $83 million annually in major rehabilitation costs over the next twenty years. Cont… Public transportation is popular with voters November 2010 National Poll by Hart Research Associates: 73% of those polled rated “the number of jobs created in the long term that would remain in [my] community” as the most important factor in developing the state transportation plan. 61% regardless of their party affiliation (and 57% of Independents) said they would feel more positively about a governor who favors a plan that “provides more choices such as buses, carpools, light rail, van service, and commuter rail.” 64% said “buses, carpools, light rail, van service, and commuter rail were a good or very good value for the cost.” March 2010 National Poll by Public Opinion Strategies and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates: 66% of respondents agreed they would like more transportation options available to them. 69% agreed their community would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system. Cont… With these smart transportation approaches, the leaders of Florida can demonstrate to voters the ability to be fiscally responsible while growing the economy.

### Transportation—Ohio

#### Transportation is key to Ohio—jobs depend on those industries and both campaigns are singling it out

Scherer, April 23rd—White House correspondent

(Michael Scherer, White House correspondent for TIME, Time, April 23, 2012, “The Obama Campaign Unleashes ‘Real People’ in Ohio”, http://swampland.time.com/2012/04/23/the-obama-campaign-unleashes-real-people-in-ohio/)

It must be general election time. “Real people,” that mythical breed of talking-point-driven, down-home American, have been unleashed in Ohio. They will be trotted out like exotic animals throughout Ohio this week, as the Obama campaign launches a real “Made in Ohio” Auto Tour, with stops in real places like Lyma, Akron, Avon Lake and Perrysburg. At each stop, the “real people” will talk about their “real” jobs in the “real” auto industry that President Obama played a major role in saving from liquidation in 2009. “One in eight jobs in Ohio is tied to the auto industry,” said Bob King, the head of the United Auto Workers, an Obama supporter, on a campaign conference call Monday morning. “Every job is a real person with a real story here in Ohio.” There is a real reason that the Obama campaign is calling on real people at just this moment. Once again, Ohio is set up to be a perfect microcosm for the coming national campaign: A closely divided state in the industrial Midwest that suffered horribly during the great recession, while also benefiting from some of President Obama’s economic rescue policies. And so we have some clear dividing lines for the coming campaign. When Romney talks about lost manufacturing jobs, Obama will talk about the auto industry. When Obama talks about the auto industry, Romney will talk about the autoworkers unions.

#### Obama popular with unions in Ohio—transportation policies support their economy

Schouten, 12

(Fredreka Schouten, politics reporter, USA Today, March 1, 2012, “Union ad jabs Romney on auto bailout”, http://content.usatoday.com/communities/onpolitics/post/2012/02/union-ad-hits-romney-in-ohio/1#.T-uhS2A9b0p)

The nation's largest public employee union is spending $500,000 to pummel Republican Mitt Romney ahead of Tuesday's primary in Ohio -- its second bid to influence the Republican primary in a general-election swing state. The 1.6 million-member American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees is targeting Romney with a TV, radio and Internet commercial slam the former Massachusetts governor for his stance opposing the auto bailout. "We just want to highlight some of the places where Mitt Romney's positions are counter to the economic interests of voters in Ohio," said Seth Johnson, the union's assistant political director. AFSCME previously spent $1 million to attack Romney ahead of January's GOP primary in Florida. Romney won that contest handily. The auto industry has a significant presence in Ohio, a key battleground in the fall election. It is one of nine states President Bush won in 2004 that Obama captured four years later.

#### Manufacturing groups love it

Hastings, 12

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

Business and Labor Organizations Support Republican Plan to Expand American Energy Production, Create Jobs, and Fund Critical Infrastructure Organizations representing various sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, and energy are joining multiple labor unions to call for passage of energy portions of the American Energy & Infrastructure Jobs Act, a common sense Republican plan to expand American energy production, create jobs and fund high-priority infrastructure projects. What They’re Saying: U.S. Chamber of Commerce “This suite of bills would create jobs while keeping energy prices low, a true win-win scenario for American consumers.” Laborers International Union of North America LIUNA believes that expanding access to America’s domestic energy resources will create good jobs, lower energy prices and generate desperately needed new revenues. The fact that these revenues are intended to help pay for desperately needed infrastructure improvements is a win/win for the American people.” International Union of Operating Engineers Simply put, without an increase in employment in the construction economy, sluggish growth will continue to plague the American macro economy. These will be good-paying jobs for U.S. workers, and this legislation should be a congressional priority.” United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America Cont… National Association of Manufacturers “Access to affordable sources of energy is extremely important given that manufacturers use one-third of our nation’s energy supply… We welcome efforts by the House to create jobs through increased domestic energy production and investment in our transportation infrastructure. Manufacturers want to lead, and they can no longer afford to wait.”

#### That swings ohio – it’s the key issue in the key state

King and Borger, 12(John, CNN Anchor, Gloria, CNN Senior Political Analyst, CNN, 5/16, lexis)

We begin this evening with the campaign's biggest issue, the economy and jobs and in what arguably could end up being the defining battleground state, Ohio. Vice President Biden took the Obama campaign's case to blue-collar Youngstown today, casting Republican Mitt Romney as a son of privilege and Vice President Biden his record at a private investment firm suggests Governor Romney cares more about profits than workers. (BEGIN VIDEO CLIP) JOSEPH BIDEN, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: My mother and father dreamed as much as any rich guy dreams. (CHEERING AND APPLAUSE) BIDEN: They don't get us. They don't get who we are. (END VIDEO CLIP) KING: Now, where the vice president was today is you might say is a battleground within the battleground. Let's look at Ohio. This is the 2008 map. Barack Obama carried the state 52 percent to 47 percent, but, look, a lot of red in here for John McCain. President Obama, then Senator Obama won by winning where the people are. But look at this here. This is Youngstown. This is where the vice president was today. In the general election, then Senator Obama carried it quite convincingly. But let's go back to the Democratic primaries. Look at this. This was Hillary Clinton country. You have white blue-collar workers. And I am going to bring the state back now. Look at this. Hillary Clinton carried Ohio big-time. Senator Obama winning where you have African-American populations, but among white blue-collar workers back in 2008, that was a big problem for Senator Obama. That's the reason they sent Vice President Biden here into Youngstown, Ohio. Now, why will this be a battleground in the fall? Well, because it always is. Let's go back and take a look. This is the 2008 election. Again, Senator Obama winning a decent margin there, 52-47. But that's pretty close. If you go back to 2004, George W. Bush just barely winning. What's different about 2008 and 2004? Look down here. Hamilton County, Cincinnati area down here, President Obama, then Senator Obama, then carried it then. Make that go off. President Bush carried it in '04. President Bush carried it in 2000 as well. Also the suburbs around Cleveland, the suburbs around Columbus and again that area down around Cincinnati, those are the big battlegrounds in a general election in Ohio. Watch for the candidates to be there in the weeks ahead. Now, Governor Romney not in Ohio today. He was in another huge battleground state, down here in Florida. But -- but he had the industrial states like Ohio, jobs debate in mind, as he drew this contrast. (BEGIN AUDIO CLIP) MITT ROMNEY (R), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: We are able to help create over 100,000 jobs. And, secondly, on the president's watch, about 100,000 jobs were lost in the auto industry in auto dealers and auto manufacturers. So he is hardly one to point a finger. (END AUDIO CLIP) KING: Our chief political analyst, Gloria Borger, is here. You hear Governor Romney talking about the auto industry, manufacturing, jobs. That will be key in battleground, Ohio. And if you ask the voters right now, President Obama carried it in 2008. Republicans had a great year in 2010. As we head into 2012, they seem a bit conflicted as to the state -- the psychology of this election. How is the economy doing? GLORIA BORGER, CNN SENIOR POLITICAL ANALYST: Right. Well, and it's one of the reasons Ohio is such a battleground state, because there is really a mixed message there. We were looking at some of the numbers in the state. By a 2-1 margin, people in Ohio believe the state is in a recession, the country is in a recession. But 55 percent also believe that the economy, the recovery has begun. So, people who believe the recovery has begun, that's good for President Obama. People who believe they are still in a recession and it is terrible, 2-1, that would be better for Mitt Romney. And this is going to be fought, as you point out -- and I was talking to a Romney adviser today, a senior Romney adviser -- this is going to be fought in the suburbs of Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus and particularly suburban women. KING: It is fascinating. If you go back campaign, go back four more years, four more years, four more years, the state hardly changes. Certain areas are locked in Republican, certain areas locked in Democrat. But you have the area, the suburban area right around Cincinnati, the suburban area right around Columbus and the suburban area up along the lake up around Cleveland. Suburban voters and as you mentioned, suburban women, like in Pennsylvania, in those bigger states when they are locked so close, that's usually the key. BORGER: Right. And it's interesting because the Romney people believe that they can really do well with married suburban women. And President Obama's campaign believes that they have a lock on the sort of younger, single suburban women and of course urban women. So, that's going to be the real battleground. We talk about a large gender gap throughout country. But in these specific suburban areas is where it really counts in a battleground. KING: And the vice president is important to this president because that's his biggest weaknesses is those white, blue-collar guys I call them guys who work with their hands. BORGER: Right. And you heard Joe Biden make the class argument, I would say, very, very strongly today. They don't know how we feel, he said in Youngstown, Ohio. That is a message that Joe Biden can deliver, but that President Obama would have a tougher time delivering. KING: Gloria Borger, appreciate your insights. We are going to spend a lot of time Ohio, Ohio, Ohio. (CROSSTALK) (BEGIN VIDEOTAPE) KING: So why worry so much about just one state? Well, this one state could settle the election. No Republican has won the White House in modern times without carrying Ohio.

### Ohio voters love it

#### Transportation investment massively popular in Ohio – key to perception of effective economic policy

S.G.A. ’11 (Smart Growth America, Ohio Report, Feb

<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/smart-transportation-ohio.pdf>)

Like the rest of the country, Ohio’s state budget and economy face significant challenges. These challenges also create the opportunity – indeed the imperative – to revisit existing programs and ask if Ohio is really getting everything it can from them. Right now, voters do not think the current approach is working. Polling nationwide shows people are dissatisfied with the economy and believe the nation is on the wrong track. People do not trust their state with their money. Only 10% of voters nationwide (and 10% of those polled in the Midwest) think the government spends money wisely, while 86% of voters (85% in the Midwest) think their state does a fair or poor job. Moving forward, Americans do think there is a better way. In a recent survey by Hart Research Associates, 68% of those polled believe “now is the time for the state to invest in transportation because if done right these investments will create new jobs and attract new businesses.” Voters are clear about their hopes for their state, and Smart Growth America has practical solutions to help make that vision a reality. In the following pages we outline an innovative, yet common sense approach to transportation spending that cuts costs, creates jobs, attracts businesses, and clearly shows that the state is responding to the fiscal and economic crisis with strong leadership that is not satisfied with a system that makes fair or poor use of taxpayer dollars.

#### Massively popular in Ohio – key issue, swings voter perception and not perceived as wasteful spending

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The Need: If it continues on its current path, Ohio’s transportation system is on track to become highly expensive, uncompetitive, and unsafe. Ohio has invested heavily in transportation, but declining revenues and escalating debt service will reduce the state’s ability to maintain its facilities in a state of good repair. Carrying on business as usual will result in a deteriorated road network, inadequate transit network, and a six- to ten-fold increase in repair costs resulting from neglect and deferred maintenance. The Smart Solution: Ohio is at a crossroads. While there is still a sizable gap between revenue and the large wish list of projects, this gap can be closed if the state makes strategic decisions about how to get the highest return on its investment. By making fiscally responsible choices about the state’s transportation priorities, Ohio can not only save money and create jobs, but it can also help preserve the transportation system and create a more welcoming business climate on the mid- and long-term horizons. Spending more on repair and maintenance is a good investment: it saves the state money, saves citizens money, is a superior job creator, and is very popular among voters. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), every $1 spent to keep a road in good condition avoids $6-14 needed later to rebuild the same road once it has deteriorated. In addition, poor roads add an average of $335 to the annual cost of owning a car – in some cities an additional $740 more – due to damaged tires and suspensions and reduced fuel efficiency. While Ohio has invested heavily in repair and maintenance in recent years, insufficient investment over the long-term has led to a backlog of roads and bridges in “poor” and “deficient” condition requiring $194 million annually in major rehabilitation costs over the next twenty years. Cont… Public transportation is popular with voters November 2010 National Poll by Hart Research Associates: 73% of those polled rated “the number of jobs created in the long term that would remain in [my] community” as the most important factor in developing the state transportation plan. 61% regardless of their party affiliation (and 57% of Independents) said they would feel more positively about a governor who favors a plan that “provides more choices such as buses, carpools, light rail, van service, and commuter rail.” 64% said “buses, carpools, light rail, van service, and commuter rail were a good or very good value for the cost.” March 2010 National Poll by Public Opinion Strategies and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates: 66% of respondents agreed they would like more transportation options available to them. 69% agreed their community would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system. Cont… With these smart transportation approaches, the leaders of Ohio can demonstrate to voters the ability to be fiscally responsible while growing the economy.

### Manufacturing Voters Key Ohio

#### Manufacturing voters key to ohio

Chicago Tribune, 12 (5/4, lexis)

Facing the reality of running their candidate as a bruised incumbent in a politically divided country, Obama's advisers say they are plotting a strategy that does not depend on a wave of support to lift the president's chances across the country. And it won't hinge on a single theme such as "change" that captured the zeitgeist in 2008. Instead, the Obama campaign is prepping for a block-by-block, hard-slog approach. The campaign, which the president kicks off this weekend, will be tailored to swing states and the key voters in those states. That means talking up the revival of manufacturing in Ohio. But in Virginia it means tapping into the growing suburban vote and using the state's GOP-controlled Legislature and Republican governor as a foil to energize female voters. "Each state's volunteers (will) help drive what is important for them to work on in that state," said campaign manager Jim Messina. Campaign advisers, however, stress that what voters in Columbus, Ohio, and Richmond, Va., hear from the president Saturday will not be inconsistent. "We are not the candidate who reinvents himself from week to week," David Axelrod, Obama's top campaign strategist, said in a dig at the GOP's Mitt Romney. Republicans, for their part, see this as an option of last resort for an incumbent who cannot run on his own record. "Overall, this will be a referendum on whether or not we want four more years of misery," said Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus. Even before the Obama campaign unveiled its national slogan, "Forward," its Ohio campaign had its own: "Made in Ohio." The slogan was rolled out on a media tour of auto manufacturing plants across northern Ohio -- a state he won by just 4 points in 2008. A message stressing manufacturing and the auto bailout is key in a state where the campaign must persuade skeptical independent voters to give the president another shot.

### Ohio Link – AT: Spending Turn

#### Perception of economic benefit massively swamps spending concerns for ohio voters

NYT, 12(3/7, lexis)

A majority of voters in Ohio said the economy was the top issue for them, according to exit polling, far outpacing the federal budget deficit, abortion or illegal immigration. Voters citing the economy were more apt to support Mr. Romney. Mr. Santorum won a broad majority of those who cited abortion as their top issue.

### Virginia Link

#### It fires up the dem base in virginia

ProgressVA.org, 11(11/17, <http://www.progressva.org/progressivepoint/stand_up_with_virginia_for_jobs.html>)

The Richmond Times Dispatch reports at noon today, "unemployed workers and Occupy Richmond members will join activists from Virginia Organizing, Moveon.org, Service Employees International Union, and AFL-CIO [and] will declare an 'Emergency for the 99 percent.' Rally-goers will gather at the foot of the bridge to call attention to Rep. Cantor's obstruction of the American Jobs Act, which would help provide much-needed jobs repairing many of the 1,267 other bridges in Virginia that engineers have identified as having a 'major defect in its support structure or its deck.'" Progressive Point: Investing in Virginia's roads and bridges will help get our economy moving. The state of the Hamilton Street bridge in Richmond is a local example of a national problem, as is Congressman Eric Cantor's obstruction of the American Jobs Act. While today is a day of national action for all of the 99%, Virginia has a severe need for infrastructure investments and the jobs it will provide. Virginia Organizing shares, "The American Jobs Act would provide $809,000,000 in infrastructure funding for Virginia and 10,500 infrastructure jobs." Today at noon, Virginia rally-goers will join others across the country in calling for Congress to create jobs, invest in infrastructure, and end the obstructionism epitomized by Eric Cantor. His allegiance to millionaires instead of his constituents is costing the country and Virginia. Our representatives must choose investing in infrastructure and creating jobs for Virginians and stop playing politics with our future.

#### Dem base mobilization key to virginia

Chicago Tribune, 12 (5/4, lexis)

Facing the reality of running their candidate as a bruised incumbent in a politically divided country, Obama's advisers say they are plotting a strategy that does not depend on a wave of support to lift the president's chances across the country. And it won't hinge on a single theme such as "change" that captured the zeitgeist in 2008. Instead, the Obama campaign is prepping for a block-by-block, hard-slog approach. The campaign, which the president kicks off this weekend, will be tailored to swing states and the key voters in those states That means talking up the revival of manufacturing in Ohio. But in Virginia it means tapping into the growing suburban vote and using the state's GOP-controlled Legislature and Republican governor as a foil to energize female voters. "Each state's volunteers (will) help drive what is important for them to work on in that state," said campaign manager Jim Messina. Campaign advisers, however, stress that what voters in Columbus, Ohio, and Richmond, Va., hear from the president Saturday will not be inconsistent. "We are not the candidate who reinvents himself from week to week," David Axelrod, Obama's top campaign strategist, said in a dig at the GOP's Mitt Romney. Republicans, for their part, see this as an option of last resort for an incumbent who cannot run on his own record. "Overall, this will be a referendum on whether or not we want four more years of misery," said Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus. Even before the Obama campaign unveiled its national slogan, "Forward," its Ohio campaign had its own: "Made in Ohio." The slogan was rolled out on a media tour of auto manufacturing plants across northern Ohio -- a state he won by just 4 points in 2008. A message stressing manufacturing and the auto bailout is key in a state where the campaign must persuade skeptical independent voters to give the president another shot. In Virginia, however, Obama's campaign will have to worry less about swaying voters and more about turning out sympathetic ones. In Richmond on Wednesday, the campaign office was humming as a phone bank of 30 volunteers tried to boost turnout for the president's rally at Virginia Commonwealth University. Obama's campaign also is seeking to motivate suburban women in northern Virginia by branding the efforts of state Republicans to tighten abortion laws as part of a "war on women." "We can see what is happening. We as women are under attack," said Jean Cunningham, a co-chairwoman of the state's Women for Obama effort. A new Washington Post poll shows Obama leading Romney 56 percent to 38 percent among women in that state. An earlier ABC News/Washington Post survey showed Obama leading Romney among women by a similar margin nationwide. Overall, Obama leads 51 percent to 44 percent in Virginia.

#### Virginia is the key

Silver, 12

Nate, 6/7, chief pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center. Regarded as top-level pollster based on distinct mathematical models <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/07/election-forecast-obama-begins-with-tenuous-advantage/>

The model suggests that the campaigns might do best to concentrate their resources. As much as campaign operatives love to talk about how they are expanding the map, contemplating unusual parlays of states in which they reach 270 electoral votes, the election is very likely to come down to a mere handful of states. In many ways, the relative ordering of the states is more predictable than how the election as a whole will play out. The term the model uses for these key states is tipping point states, meaning that they could tip the balance between winning and losing in an election that came down to the final vote. Foremost among these tipping point states are Ohio and Virginia. In 2008, both states had a very slight Republican lean relative to the rest of the country. However, the economy is comparatively good in each state, and Mr. Obama’s polling has held up reasonably well in them, putting them almost exactly in balance. Mr. Obama is given just slightly over 50 percent odds of winning each one, just as he is given a very slight overall lead in our national projection. But if Mr. Obama’s national standing slips, he would probably lose his lead in those states as well.

### Virginia Link

#### Transportation investment massively popular in Virginia – key to perception of effective economic policy

S.G.A. ’11(Smart Growth America, Virginia Report, Feb

<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/smart-transportation-virginia.pdf>)

Like the rest of the country, Virginia’s state budget and economy face significant challenges. These challenges also create the opportunity – indeed the imperative – to revisit existing programs and ask if Virginia is really getting everything it can from them. Right now, voters do not think the current approach is working. Polling nationwide shows people are dissatisfied with the economy and believe the nation is on the wrong track. People do not trust their state with their money. Only 10% of voters think the government spends money wisely while fully 86% think their state does a fair or poor job. Moving forward, Americans do think there is a better way. In a recent survey by Hart Research Associates, 68% of those polled believe “now is the time for the state to invest in transportation because if done right these investments will create new jobs and attract new businesses.” Voters are clear about their hopes for their state, and Smart Growth America has practical solutions to help make that vision a reality. In the following pages we outline an innovative, yet common sense approach to transportation spending that cuts costs, creates jobs, attracts businesses, and clearly shows that the state is responding to the fiscal and economic crisis with strong leadership that is not satisfied with a system that makes fair or poor use of taxpayer dollars.

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S.G.A. ’11 (Smart Growth America, Virginia Report, Feb

<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/smart-transportation-virginia.pdf>)

The Need: If it continues on its current path, Virginia’s transportation system is on track to become highly expensive, uncompetitive, and unsafe. Virginia has invested heavily in transportation, but declining revenues and escalating debt service will reduce the state’s ability to maintain its facilities in a state of good repair. Carrying on business as usual will result in a deteriorated road network, inadequate transit network, and a six- to ten-fold increase in repair costs resulting from neglect and deferred maintenance. The Smart Solution: Virginia is at a crossroads. While there is still a sizable gap between revenue and the large wish list of projects, this gap can be closed if the state makes strategic decisions about how to get the highest return on its investment. By making fiscally responsible choices about the state’s transportation priorities, Virginia can not only save money and create jobs, but it can also help preserve the transportation system and create a more welcoming business climate on the mid- and long-term horizons. Spending more on repair and maintenance is a good investment: it saves the state money, saves citizens money, is a superior job creator, and is very popular among voters. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), every $1 spent to keep a road in good condition avoids $6-14 needed later to rebuild the same road once it has deteriorated. In addition, poor roads add an average of $335 to the annual cost of owning a car – in some cities an additional $740 more – due to damaged tires and suspensions and reduced fuel efficiency. Cont… Public transportation is popular with voters November 2010 National Poll by Hart Research Associates: 73% of those polled rated “the number of jobs created in the long term that would remain in [my] community” as the most important factor in developing the state transportation plan. 61% regardless of their party affiliation (and 57% of Independents) said they would feel more positively about a governor who favors a plan that “provides more choices such as buses, carpools, light rail, van service, and commuter rail.” 64% said “buses, carpools, light rail, van service, and commuter rail were a good or very good value for the cost.” March 2010 National Poll by Public Opinion Strategies and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates: 66% of respondents agreed they would like more transportation options available to them. 69% agreed their community would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system. Cont…. With these smart transportation approaches, the leaders of Virginia can demonstrate to voters the ability to be fiscally responsible while growing the economy.

### Economy—unemployment

#### Successful economic policies boost re-election chances—esp gas prices, stock market, unemployment

Carroll, June 25th—economist at the World Bank

(Richard J. Carroll, economist at the World Bank, June 25, 2012, Bloomberg, “Democratic Presidents Are Better for the Economy”, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-06-25/democratic-presidents-are-better-for-the-economy.html)

The prevailing political wisdom says that a U.S. president should win re-election if gasoline prices are stable, the stock market is climbing and monthly jobless numbers are declining. There is some logic to this: Such indicators affect our pocketbooks and our psyches, whether or not the president has much control over them. Yet short-term economic fluctuations are not what make the nation strong or a president great. A president is a success economically if he can help steer the country onto a longer-term path of broadly shared economic growth, and if his policies lay a foundation for sustainable prosperity for the future. Although it isn’t easy for voters to determine if a president is contributing to long-term economic success, they can do better than base their decisions on gas prices.

#### Unemployment numbers won’t hurt Obama—similar situation to the re-elected Reagan

Lopez, June 19th—was professor of economics faculty at Universidad Nacional de Colombia and Editor in Chief of business magazine, PODER

(Jose Fernando Lopez, was a professor of the economics faculty of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia for 15 years and currently Editor in Chief of PODER magazine—premier business magazine, June 19, 2012, Huffington Post, “Unemployment and the Reelection”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jose-fernando-lopez/unemployment-and-the-reelection\_b\_1602565.html)

Americans usually punish presidents at the voting booths because they have not lowered the unemployment rates during the last government year. During the last 12 months of Jimmy Carter's administration unemployment grew from 5.9% to 7.5%, and during George Bush senior's administration it climbed from 7 to 7.4%. Both lost the reelection. During Bill Clinton's first administration -- It's the economy, stupid! -- the rate stayed almost the same during the last year, decreasing from 5.6 to 5.4%, and ended 2 points below the one existing when his administration began. In George W. Bush's case, the rate ended in 5.4, a little more than one point above its initial value, but more than half a point below that present when his last year began. Both were reelected. In statistical terms -- solely statistical, so that I am not misunderstood -- Obama's case looks more like Ronald Reagan's. Reagan began his administration with an unemployment rate of 7.5%, but the recession generated by his anti inflationary policies -- designed to combat an inherited situation -- forced it to climb to 10.8% in November of 1982 (and stayed above 10% for nearly a year). Towards the end he managed to lower the unemployment rate to 7.2%, a level similar to that at the beginning of his mandate. Obama inherited an unemployment rate of 7.8% and an economy facing the risk of going into a deep recession. In October of 2009 the unemployment rate reached the 10% level -- for the first time since the Reagan era -- and today it's at 8.2%.

#### Unemployment numbers will decide the election—recent diversions and campaign strategies prove

Lopez, June 19th—was professor of economics faculty at Universidad Nacional de Colombia and Editor in Chief of business magazine, PODER

(Jose Fernando Lopez, was a professor of the economics faculty of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia for 15 years and currently Editor in Chief of PODER magazine—premier business magazine, June 19, 2012, Huffington Post, “Unemployment and the Reelection”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jose-fernando-lopez/unemployment-and-the-reelection\_b\_1602565.html)

The publishing of the employment statistics for May by the Bureau of Labor Statistics was without doubt a big blow to President Barack Obama's reelection ambitions, to the extent that many consider that the suspension of deportations of dreamers is a measure calculated to focus attention on issues other than the economy. At five months short of the election, an increase -- even if it's of only a tenth of a perceptual point -- in the unemployment rate isn't good news for Obama's followers. Especially when polls show that November's election could be a closer run than many thought it would be several months ago. As expected, the Republican politicians, standing by the now official candidate Mitt Romney, jumped in joy at the Bureau of Labor Statistics numbers, and wasted no time to launch yet another campaign against Obama and his economic policies, taking advantage of the President's mistake of stating, without clarifying -- as clearly evident in the automobile industry and in several more --, that the country's private sector is doing well, when the truth is that many sectors continue having economic problems, as he had to admit several hours later. But it's possible that we need to give this a second look.

### Economy—gas prices

#### Gas prices and related policies are key to Obama’s re-election—perception of no solution

Salter, June 20th—syndicated columnist

(Sid Salter, syndicated columnist, June 20, 2012, Hattiesburg American, “Gas prices significant issue in election”, http://www.hattiesburgamerican.com/article/20120621/OPINION/206210314/Gas-prices-significant-issue-election)

Clearly, President Barack Obama's energy policy will be a key factor in the 2012 presidential election. Should gasoline prices soar at the pumps leading up to the November election, Obama's fortunes will take a decided hit. For good or ill, Obama has been roundly criticized for failing to make it easier for U.S. companies to drill for new U.S. domestic supplies of oil rather than to maintain dependence on oil from the nation's enemies like Iran and other hostile countries in the Middle East. Obama has also been criticized for his management of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The country is still dependent on imports for about half the nation's energy needs. But perception is reality in politics and should gas prices soar again in states like Mississippi where nothing hurts the economy like higher gas prices, President Obama will likely have to pay the political tab that comes due in November.

#### Gas prices key to Obama re-election—reflected in approval ratings

Paulson, June 22nd—national political writer

(Scott Paulson, national political writer for CBS and Examiner Chicago, June 22, 2012, CBS Minnesota, “Obama’s Approval Rating Drops To 43% For Good Reason”, http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2012/06/22/obamas-approval-rating-drops-to-43-for-good-reason/)

Gallup polling tracks the percentages of Americans who approve and disapprove of the job President Barack Obama is doing as president, daily. It wasn’t long ago – April 24, 2012, as a matter of fact – that I wrote an article about Obama hitting a 50% approval rating. It didn’t last long. During that particular week, gas prices dropped slightly and the only negative headlines about anything in Washington, D.C. was Obama complaining things are former-President Bush and Congress’s fault. However, shortly thereafter, gas prices quit going down and Obama’s approval rating quit going up. The most recent polls show America’s frustration with all of Obama’s endless talk and non-results. His current Gallup poll approval rating is a dismal 43%. Of course, it makes some aptly wonder what those 43% who approve are thinking. Five months before the presidential election, this rating is disastrous for Obama – almost as disastrous as the lack of any results for America these past four years.

#### Gas prices not key to election and even if they did results of policies wouldn’t be seen in time—surveys and oil analysts prove

Silverleib, May 28th—Congressional Producer for CNN

(Alan Silverleib, CNN Congressional Producer, May 28, 2012, CNN, “Will falling gas prices help Obama?”, http://www.cnn.com/2012/05/25/politics/gas-price-politics/index.html)

A CNN/ORC International survey from late March, when gas prices were still rising, showed serious public concern over the issue. Roughly one in five Americans called pump pain the most important issue facing the country; seven in 10 said higher gas prices had caused hardship for them. There were indications, however, that political fallout from rising gas prices was limited. The poll showed that most Americans blamed oil companies for the price increases, not the Obama administration. Congressional Republicans received almost as much blame as the White House, and foreign oil-producing countries got more blame than politicians of either party. "Republicans seemed to think they had a big weapon to use against Obama. Now, it's not so clear that they will," said CNN Polling Director Keating Holland. "Americans don't worry about gas prices as much as they worry about gas shortages. The energy crises of the 1970s that arguably had some effect on elections were really due to long lines and rationing. If those return for any reason, Obama would face a big problem. But if prices are high and gasoline is still easy to acquire, the public would probably not view that as a crisis." Policy changes such as increased domestic drilling wouldn't affect prices "one way or the other" right now, Kloza [chief oil analyst for the Maryland-based Oil Price Information Service] said. Changes to automobile mileage standards or Gulf drilling permits could affect prices in about five to 10 years, he estimated.

#### Gas tax unpopular—contentious in Congress and voters dislike high gas prices

Roode, May 2012

(Benjamin Roode, staff writer, May 2012, PE Magazine, “Infrastructure: How We Got Here”, http://www.nspe.org/PEmagazine/12/pe\_0512\_How.html)

The U.S. federal gasoline tax of 18.4 cents per gallon almost expired in March after sharp debate over how much Washington should spend on federal transportation projects. Senators passed a transportation bill earlier in the month, but House Republicans failed to pass it. Both houses agreed on a 90-day extension just days before the tax and bill were set to expire. Gasoline taxes fund almost 90% of all federal transportation projects. State and local fuel taxes do much the same on the local level. It's hard to pass a new tax these days, and gasoline taxes are especially distasteful to voters looking at $4 per gallon gasoline. Toll booths and mileage charges? Same thing.

## \*\*\*Links – Specific Plans\*\*\*

### Clean Energy

#### Republicans and Democrats continue to fight on energy issues – which can potentially affect the presidential campaign

Cappiello 6/13

Dina Cappiello Associated Press national environment/energy reporter Matthew Daly reporter covering energy and environment issues 06/13/12 <http://fuelfix.com/blog/2012/06/13/republicans-democrats-at-odds-on-energy-issues/>

WASHINGTON — Republicans and Democrats seem to be living on different planets when it comes to how to meet U.S. energy needs.A new survey by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research of public attitudes about energy shows that Republicans in the poll overwhelmingly push for more oil drilling, while Democrats back conservation and new sources such as wind and solar power.That reflects the polarized positions on energy that have divided Congress and emerged in the presidential campaign.The poll shows that majorities in both parties say energy an important issue**.** But political party identification is closely tied to people’s perceptions of the causes of energy problems and possible solutions. No other demographic factor is as consistently associated with opinions on energy

#### Clean Energy diminishes Romney’s reputation

Geman 5/29

Ben Geman Energy and environment reporter/blogger <http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/229853-obama-campaign-strikes-back-at-romney-over-green-energy> 5/29/12

President Obama’s reelection campaign is returning fire after Mitt Romney's bashed White House support for green energy companies. Obama campaign spokeswoman Lis Smith accused Romney of opposing renewable energy development while casting the president as fighting to ensure the U.S. doesn't cede green energy markets to China. “As Governor, Romney called for a moratorium on offshore wind energy in Massachusetts, which would have severely hampered the development of that clean energy and impacted job growth across the state,” Smith said in a statement, referring to the planned Cape Wind project off the Massachusetts coast. Smith also defended the embattled Energy Department loan program, noting its bipartisan roots, and other White House investments in alternative energy. The 2009 stimulus law steered tens of billions of dollars into various alternative energy and efficiency programs. “President Obama’s investments in clean energy — along with the loan guarantee program established under the Bush administration that Romney now attacks — have supported 200,000 jobs in the clean energy sector and have helped bring our dependence on foreign oil to a 16-year low,” she said. The Romney web video released Tuesday attacks the White House over the bankruptcy of the taxpayer-backed advanced solar panel manufacturing company Solyndra, and highlights financial headwinds facing other Energy Department-backed companies. It’s part of a wider attack by Romney on energy policies that Republicans say place too many limits on domestic fossil fuels production. The White House has parried those attacks by noting that oil and natural gas production have been rising in recent years. Romney’s energy and environmental platform calls for stripping EPA’s power to regulate greenhouse gas emissions and expanding oil-and-gas leasing to include areas that are currently off limits, including the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, among other measures. On green energy, Romney says his policies would emphasize basic research. “We should not be in the business of steering investment toward particular politically favored approaches. That is a recipe for both time and money wasted on projects that do not bring us dividends,” his campaign website states. The Obama campaign, for its part, is also seeking to turn Romney’s vow to try and repeal the Dodd-Frank financial reform law into a political liability when it comes to energy, noting that the law requires new limits on oil market speculation. “While Romney would do the bidding of his Big Oil donors by providing massive tax breaks for big oil companies, eliminating protections against Wall Street speculators who manipulate oil prices, and turning our backs on fuel efficiency standards, President Obama has refused to cede the clean energy market to China,” Smith said.

#### **Obama’s is losing votes – Alt. Transportation Fuel**

Raju 6/5

[http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0612/77084.html 6/5/12](http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0612/77084.html%206/5/12) Manu Raju is a senior congressional reporter He covered the Senate leadership for The Hill newspaper, and before that, he reported for Congressional Quarterly, writing about energy and environmental issues for its weekly magazine and daily issue

BUCKHANNON, W.Va. — Sen. [Joe Manchin](http://www.politico.com/tag/joe-manchin%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) didn’t vote for the felon on the ballot, but he still won’t say whether he actually checked the box for President Barack Obama in last month’s Democratic primary in West Virginia. That’s how bad it is for [Obama](http://www.politico.com/tag/barack-obama%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) in West Virginia: A popular Democratic senator refuses to admit whether he voted for his party’s sitting president. “This is something I’ve never seen in my life,” said Manchin, who’s been asked repeatedly whether he left his ballot blank instead. Manchin’s reticence reflects the bigger challenges for Obama in West Virginia and beyond as the president tries to win over disenchanted, largely white working-class voters in swing states from the Rust Belt to the Sun Belt. Even as Democrats control all levers of power in West Virginia and dominate the state’s voter registration rolls by a nearly 2-1 margin over the GOP, Obama remains just as unpopular here as he was when he lost the 2008 primary and general election by resounding margins. The state is expected to be an easy [Mitt Romney](http://www.politico.com/tag/mitt-romney) win in November**.** A onetime ally — the United Mine Workers of America — is considering sitting out its first election since 1980 because of concerns over the administration’s environmental policies. With the use of coal declining as a source for electricity generation, coal constituencies in states like Ohio, Virginia, Pennsylvania and Colorado could be problematic for the president given the tightly contested nature of those battlegrounds. And after he struggled in last month’s Democratic primaries in West Virginia, Arkansas and Kentucky, Republicans believe the president’s problems with conservative Democrats in rural areas across the country could provide an opening for Romney in November. “I can’t believe that is a Kentucky, Arkansas or West Virginia phenomenon,” Senate Minority Leader [Mitch McConnell](http://www.politico.com/tag/mitch-mcconnell%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) (R-Ky.) told POLITICO. “I think the president has a kind of fundamental weakness.” Interviews with voters across the state reveal the president’s unique weakness among working-class voters even as local Democrats like Manchin gain more strength among the electorate here. The population is more socially conservative than the national Democratic Party. The aggressive efforts by the Environmental Protection Agency to control air pollution at coal-fired power plants, seek alternative sources of energy and toughen clean water permits on mining operations have infuriated key groups here. “Fossil fuels,” Katherine Wagner, president of the Harrison County Chamber of Commerce, deadpanned when asked about Obama’s struggles here. “That’s what West Virginia has lived on for the last century or more.” But there are other factors as well. The president has invested scant time in the state after attending both memorial services for the late Sen. Robert Byrd and the mine workers who were killed in the Upper Big Branch disaster in 2010. He’s effectively allowed the opposition to single-handedly dominate the political narrative since there are few Democrats in the state sticking their necks out for the president. On top of that, voters and political experts believe that lingering racial issues in a state where 94 percent of the population is white could be a factor among some voters here.

### National Infrastructure Bank/P3 Investments

#### National Infrastructure bank and P3 investments massively popular – avoids spending and effectiveness concerns

Halsey, 11(Ashley, columnist @ Washington Post, Washington post, 2/14, lexis)

Upkeep of roads, bridges and transit systems is a high priority to an overwhelming margin of Americans, but by an even greater margin they don't want to pay more for it, according to a survey that will be released this week. With the Obama administration's budget due Monday, House Republicans embarked on an effort to reduce spending by $100 billion and a long-term transportation bill stalled in Congress, 78 percent of those surveyed say private investors should be tapped to rebuild the country's aging infrastructure. The poll was commissioned by the Rockefeller Foundation, which has funded a $66 million transportation initiative, and was conducted this month by Hart Associates. "Transportation infrastructure affects so many critical issues for the country - economy, social mobility and energy - and it drives our economic growth," said Nicholas Turner, a managing director of of the Rockefeller Foundation who runs the initiative. "Most people don't realize that transportation is the second-highest expense for most Americans and the highest for those with the lowest incomes. The promotion of accessible and equitable transportation policies is critical to providing affordable options to all Americans." The telephone poll of 1,001 registered voters came four months after a bipartisan panel of 80 transportation experts warned that the transportation system was deteriorating so rapidly that it would undermine U.S. ability to compete in a global economy. Headed by two former transportation secretaries - Norman Y. Minetahttp://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/23/AR2006062300579.html and Samuel K. Skinner - the group estimated that an additional $134 billion to $262 billion must be spent per year through 2035 to rebuild and improve the nation's roads, rail systems and air transportation. Their report said a major increase in the federal gas tax, which has remained unchanged since it went up to 18.4 cents per gallon in 1993, might be the most politically palatable way to boost revenue in the short term. In the long term, however, Americans should expect to pay for each mile they drive, the report said. The Rockefeller Foundationinfrastructure survey found that Americans don't support either as an option to raise revenues, or any other approach that would tax them directly. Seventy-one percent opposed a gas tax increase, 64 percent were against new tolls on existing roads and bridges, and 58 percent said no to paying for each mile they drive. While 66 percent said they thought spending on infrastructure is important, the same number of those surveyed said the government didn't spend transportation money efficiently. "People are willing to pay if they have faith they are getting quality," Turner said. "Uncertainty in the poll more reflects a frustration with bridges to nowhere from Congress. The answer is that with clear outcomes and better accountability, people want and support investments in transportation infrastructure." Almost as many said they would support President Obama's proposal to create a National Infrastructure Bank. The bank is seen as a way to insulate government investment from the political process, keeping the focus on the most important projects and encouraging investment from the private sector. Approaching transportation from a banker's perspective, advocates say, would emphasize making investments in projects that have demonstrable financial returns.

#### Voters love national infrastructure bank and P3 investments – resolves spending fears

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

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

Voters are open to several suggested funding streams for national transportation projects, though there is considerable hesitancy among voters to backing higher taxes to pay for them. Proposals that the majority of voters find acceptable are encouraging more private investment (78% acceptable) and imposing penalties on projects that go over budget or exceed their deadline (72% acceptable). There also is significant support for establishing a National Infrastructure Bank (60%), issuing new transportation bonds (59%), and eliminating subsidies for American oil companies that drill in other countries (58%). Voters are far less accepting of proposals that would affect their own wallets. Seventy-one percent (71%) say it would be unacceptable to increase the federal gas tax; majorities also are opposed to placing a new tax on foreign oil (51% unacceptable), replacing the federal gas tax with a mileage fee (58%), and adding new tolls to interstate highways and bridges (64%).

#### Voters love National Infrastructure bank and P3 investment – avoids spending and efficiency concern

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

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

Moreover, few believe that current government spending in this area is efficient and wise, and voters welcome a range of reforms in how transportation projects are financed. At the same time, as is the case with many spending-related issues today, voters are unwilling to personally pay for additional funding of national transportation projects. While wide support exists for encouraging more private investment, imposing penalties on over-budget projects, and establishing a National Infrastructure Bank, there is very little support for increasing the federal gas tax or increasing tolls on interstate highways and bridges.

#### Voters love it and spending turns don’t apply

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

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

American voters are open to several funding streams for national transportation projects: With overwhelming support for transportation and infrastructure improvements, Americans are open to several funding streams. Seventy-eight percent encourage more private investment and 72% of voters support imposing penalties on projects that go over budget or exceed their deadline. Sixty percent of voters support establishing a National Infrastructure Bank, 59% support issuing new transportation bonds and 58% support eliminating subsidies for American oil companies that drill in other countries. Only 27 percent support increasing the gas tax, although almost half of all respondents believe it increases annually (it has not increased since 1993).

### Public Transportation/Mass Transit

#### Public transportation funding uniquely popular and not perceived as wasteful spending

**S.G.A. ’11** (Smart Growth America, Virginia Report, Feb

<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/smart-transportation-virginia.pdf>)

Public transportation is popular with voters November 2010 National Poll by Hart Research Associates: 73% of those polled rated “the number of jobs created in the long term that would remain in [my] community” as the most important factor in developing the state transportation plan. 61% regardless of their party affiliation (and 57% of Independents) said they would feel more positively about a governor who favors a plan that “provides more choices such as buses, carpools, light rail, van service, and commuter rail.” 64% said “buses, carpools, light rail, van service, and commuter rail were a good or very good value for the cost.” March 2010 National Poll by Public Opinion Strategies and Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates: 66% of respondents agreed they would like more transportation options available to them. 69% agreed their community would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system.

#### Overwhelming public support for mass transportation funding – independent voters and dem base love it but GOP doesn’t backlash

**Pew, 8** (Pew Research Center, 3/6, http://www.people-press.org/2008/03/06/public-sends-mixed-signals-on-energy-policy/)

As in recent years, specific policies that address both energy and the environment draw overwhelming support. Nine-in-ten Americans favor requiring better auto fuel efficiency standards, while substantial majorities also support increased federal funding for alternative energy (81%) and mass transportation (72%). Cont… Other energy policies are more divisive. Somewhat more independents (76%) and Democrats (73%) than Republicans (65%) favor increased funding for mass transit, including subway, rail and bus systems. Increased funding for mass transit also wins greater support from people living in urban (73%) and suburban areas (74%) than among those living in rural areas (62%).

#### Voters love it – perception of spending waste is *because* lack of focus on public transportation

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

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

But Americans want changes in the way the Federal government invests in infrastructure and makes policy. Two-thirds of respondents favored 9 of 10 reforms tested in the survey, with 90 supporting more accountability and certification that projects are delivered on time and fit into a national plan. In terms of priorities, a vast majority (80 percent) believe the country would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system and 57 percent believe that “safer streets for our communities and children” should be the one of the top two priorities if more money is to be invested in infrastructure.

#### Voters love public transportation investments – it’s a top priority

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

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

 Voters’ top priorities for additional infrastructure investments are safer streets and having more transportation options.Voters’ top goal by far is “safer streets for our communities and children”—57% say this should be one of the top-two priorities if more money is invested in infrastructure. This is the top choice for most major subgroups of the electorate. The second-highest priority for voters overall at 32% is “more transportation options.” But there is a socioeconomic difference here—for voters in lowerincome households the second-highest priority (at 37%) is “less money spent out-of-pocket on transportation.” In addition, 85% agree that “spending less time in traffic would improve quality of life, make communities safer, and reduce stress in people’s daily lives.” Moreover, the vast majority also believe the country (80%) and their own community (66%) would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system.

#### Overwhelming bipartisan public support for public transportation infrastructure

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

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

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

### 2NC Funding Mechanism Link

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

Berstein Research, 12(Sanford C. Bernstein is widely recognized as Wall Street’s premier sell-side research firm. Our research is sought out by leading investment managers around the world, and we are annually ranked at the very top of acknowledged arbiters. In independent surveys of major institutional clients, Bernstein's research is ranked #1 for overall quality, industry knowledge, most trusted, best detailed financial analysis, major company studies, most useful valuation frameworks, best original research, and most willing to challenge management. In Institutional Investor’s 2010 annual client survey, the leading survey by which analysts in our industry are evaluated, 100% of our U.S. Analysts were recognized as among the best in their respective fields -- more than any other firm on Wall Street, 2/3, <http://www.fraternalalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Washington-Research-2012-Preview-Transportation-Funding.pdf>)

Expected passage of a long-term aviation financing bill next week gives ground transportation advocates

cause for hope, but that's likely a red-herring. The politics surrounding how to pay for infrastructure

financing simply remain too hot to handle in an election year. President Obama has run away from any

discussion of increasing the 18.4 cents per gallon federal gasoline tax, while Republicans won't support a

tax increase of any kind to pay for new spending, even if some groups are willing to pay additional taxes.

Those views are generally consistent with a voting public that wants to spend more on transportation

infrastructure – but does not want to foot the bill out of their own wallets.

#### Forces gas Tax Hikes – causes massive public backlash on key issue

Grant, 12(David, Staff Writer, CSM, Christian Science Monitor, 5/8, <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/2012/0508/Transportation-bill-not-yet-passed-already-blasted-by-critics>)

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

#### Dem funding mechanisms still spun as tax increases

Berstein Research, 12(Sanford C. Bernstein is widely recognized as Wall Street’s premier sell-side research firm. Our research is sought out by leading investment managers around the world, and we are annually ranked at the very top of acknowledged arbiters. In independent surveys of major institutional clients, Bernstein's research is ranked #1 for overall quality, industry knowledge, most trusted, best detailed financial analysis, major company studies, most useful valuation frameworks, best original research, and most willing to challenge management. In Institutional Investor’s 2010 annual client survey, the leading survey by which analysts in our industry are evaluated, 100% of our U.S. Analysts were recognized as among the best in their respective fields -- more than any other firm on Wall Street, 2/3, <http://www.fraternalalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Washington-Research-2012-Preview-Transportation-Funding.pdf>)

The Senate Package: The "Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century (MAP-21)" Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee Chairwoman Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and ranking member James Inhofe (R-OK) were early out of the gates last year expressing bipartisan support for their approach, which seeks to do the minimum to keep pace with inflation for the next two years while avoiding the need for another HTF bailout along the lines of the $35 billion of general fund taxpayer dollars injected since 2008. Three committees have now approved their portions of the bill: EPW and Senate Commerce (highway safety) late last year and Senate Banking (mass transit) on Thursday. A fourth, the Finance Committee, has yet to act, which is a crucial step because Finance is the only panel with authority to raise the $13 billion needed to keep the HTF afloat through 2013 (unless Senate Democrats had a change of heart and decided to go the medical malpractice route, which goes through a different committee). Finance has been meeting for weeks on a hodgepodge of funding offsets, which we are told range from eliminating the ability of paper companies to amend prior tax returns to claim the $1.01 per gallon cellulosic biofuels credit for the "black liquor" fuel they produce to reclaiming or denying passports of U.S. citizens accused of owing back taxes. Senate Republicans oppose most of these items as tax increases and are instead backing oil and gas drilling revenues and spending cuts, including from the Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing loan program and canceling unspent stimulus funds. Thus the Finance Committee may end up with a partisan bill, which lessens the chances for winning 60 votes on the floor – which could throw the whole enterprise into doubt. The underlying Senate bill provisions would:

#### GOP funding mechanisms undermines obama’s support with environmentalists

CBS News, 12(5/14, http://ryofillingstation.com/pdfs/RYO%20FEDERAL%20News%20Clips%2005.14.12.pdf)

Democrats denied their motivation was producing fodder for campaigns. But they accused House Republicans of doing just that with a highway bill that requires construction of the Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada to the Texas Gulf Coast, which Obama and many Democrats have opposed for environmental reasons. "We ought to quit taking jabs at one another to score political points," said Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va. The tactic has been given the nickname "poison pill" because it sometimes causes the demise of the legislation to which the provision is attached.

#### That shreds him with his base

Fitzgerald 12(Thomas, Columnist @ Philadelphia Enquirer, Daily Herald, 2/18, l/n)

Obama has also grabbed opportunities to reassure key elements of the Democratic base. He recently refused permission for the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada to Texas, cheering environmentalists; pushed for more federal student loans and lower college tuition, issues popular with the young voters who were vital to his 2008 election; and has taken a more confrontational approach toward GOP leaders in Congress.

### Plan = gas tax hike

#### Plan forces gas tax hike and increased user fees – ensures massive public backlash

Detroit News, 8 (5/20, lexis)

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

### Gas tax = political suicide

#### Gas taxes are political suicide – swamps all turns

Rafey, 10(William, Staff Writer, Harvard Political Review, 6/1, http://hpronline.org/united-states/how-to-pass-a-gas-tax/)

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

### 2NC Turn Shield – Perceived Ineffective

#### Media Turn Shield – Aff is reported to public as unpopular earmark or another bureaucratic failure.

A.G.C. ‘11

(“THE CASE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE & REFORM: Why and How the Federal Government Should Continue to Fund Vital Infrastructure in the New Age of Public Austerity” – THE ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA – AGC’s Case for Infrastructure & Reform in based in large part on comments from leaders, including those who participated in a March 2, 2011 panel discussion hosted by the association and The Weekly Standard, including Reason Foundation’s Robert Poole, Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton, Oklahoma Congressman James Lankford and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Bruce Josten. May 19th – http://www.agc.org/galleries/news/Case-for-Infrastructure-Reform.pdf)

Adding to Americans’ frustration, most of what they learn about the federal government’s role in transportation and other infrastructure investments comes from media coverage of the proliferation of earmarks. Imagine the frustration most motorists and other taxpayers must feel when learning that the money they are paying into the Highway Trust Fund is being used to fund projects in far away parts of the country not because of need, but because some politician sits on a committee. It is hard to find fault with a commuter who asks “why should I pay more in gas taxes” while stuck in traffic on an old and aging bridge on their way to work in Cincinnati, even as residents of Alaska get a new and seemingly unneeded bridge. While earmarks still account for a relatively small portion of the total amount invested in transportation projects nationwide, they have become a significant and debilitating problem when it comes to flood control, levy and lock and dam projects funded by the Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps and Bureau of Reclamation both conduct comprehensive reviews with merit-based criteria and public participation, and usually require local cost-sharing. Yet the Congressional practice of earmarking Corps and Bureau funds for projects favored by certain elected officials means that many vital projects languish, despite the fact they have already been vetted and are needed to protect communities or facilitate maritime commerce. These earmarks have done little to reassure taxpayers of the federal government’s ability to make wise infrastructure investment decisions. Even when their money isn’t being diverted to earmarked projects or unrelated programs, many taxpayers have become jaded by a federal regulatory process that takes years to make basic decisions about whether new projects can proceed. Worse, that inefficient regulatory process also adds tremendous costs in delays and new paperwork requirements. The review process has become so out of control that the average highway project, for example, now takes 13 years to go from concept to completion. Some water and flood protection projects can take up to 20 years to complete, meanwhile, primarily because of the substantial regulatory burdens and the slow pace of funding.

#### History Turn shield. Specific turns don’t matter – public opposes new programs based on failed history of Federal involvement

A.G.C. ‘11

(“THE CASE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE & REFORM: Why and How the Federal Government Should Continue to Fund Vital Infrastructure in the New Age of Public Austerity” – THE ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA – AGC’s Case for Infrastructure & Reform in based in large part on comments from leaders, including those who participated in a March 2, 2011 panel discussion hosted by the association and The Weekly Standard, including Reason Foundation’s Robert Poole, Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton, Oklahoma Congressman James Lankford and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Bruce Josten. May 19th – http://www.agc.org/galleries/news/Case-for-Infrastructure-Reform.pdf)

While we clearly would like Congress and the Administration to act on each of the reform recommendations we have provided, what is even more important is that they fundamentally rethink our current and in many ways deeply flawed approach to infrastructure investments. Even if we weren’t on the brink of a new era of federal austerity, the fact is that our federal infrastructure programs have become so convoluted, unfocused and/or ineffective that public support for funding them has declined precipitously. That a nation obsessed with traffic and commuting patterns would chronically resist federal gas tax increases is a clear indication that most Americans no longer believe that the people who built the Interstate system can make it better.

### Perceived Ineffective

#### Perception of prior failures and lack of performance measures ensure mass voter backlash

Corless, 10

(James Corless, Campaign Director, Transportation for America, 10/28, http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2010/10/obama-infrastructure-a-top-pri.php?comments=expandall#comments)

According to polls, many voters this year are angry and lack confidence in how Washington is spending our money. As Skinner and Mineta point out, we have been forced to bail out our nation’s Highway Trust Fund for several years because our revenue stream hasn’t aligned with infrastructure needs. We have also continued to spend federal transportation dollars without any performance measures or accountability. Both must be addressed and would be if we follow through on the recommendations of Skinner and Mineta, as well as President Obama’s blueprint.

#### Public has lost faith in the process used in Federal infrastructure projects.

A.G.C. ‘11

(“THE CASE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE & REFORM: Why and How the Federal Government Should Continue to Fund Vital Infrastructure in the New Age of Public Austerity” – THE ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA – AGC’s Case for Infrastructure & Reform in based in large part on comments from leaders, including those who participated in a March 2, 2011 panel discussion hosted by the association and The Weekly Standard, including Reason Foundation’s Robert Poole, Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton, Oklahoma Congressman James Lankford and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Bruce Josten. May 19th – http://www.agc.org/galleries/news/Case-for-Infrastructure-Reform.pdf)

Many taxpayers have lost confidence in the federal government’s ability to invest their infrastructure dollars wisely because those investment decisions have become increasingly politicized. Frustration with funding shortfalls and the current approach to selecting projects has increased because the number of earmarked projects has grown exponentially, often placing political priorities above maintenance and capacity needs. Worse, since many earmarks only cover a small portion of the cost of projects, these earmarks actually reduce the total amount of money officials can use to finance construction projects while the earmarked funds sit unused. In other words, many earmarks are an ineffective way to build federally-funded infrastructure projects. Congress and the Administration must instead establish a system that allows federal, state and local officials to accurately assess and address documented infrastructure priorities.

#### Voters oppose infrastructure spending – they don’t trust the government to do it well

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

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

A large majority of voters see room for improvement in how the government spends money on infrastructure and they endorse a host of reforms in this area. 64% of voters say that how the government currently spends money on building and maintaining our transportation infrastructure is inefficient and unwise, including one in four (26%) who says it is very inefficient. Just 32% say the government currently spends efficiently and wisely. Republicans (72% unwise) and independents (67% unwise) are particularly adamant that this is the case, though 56% of Democrats say that current spending is unwise as well

## Link Insulators – Post Transportation Bill

### Transportation Bill is Status Quo

#### **The transportation bill was stripped of all controversial measures and just continues existing projects.**

O’Keefe 6/29

[Ed O'Keefe](http://www.washingtonpost.com/ed-okeefe/2011/02/02/ABqNUZE_page.html) Congress passes two-year transportation bill 06/29/2012 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%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), who chairs the [House Transportation Committee](http://transportation.house.gov/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).

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.

#### The current transportation bill is a result of back room deals that defends the status quo of transportation.

Laing 7/2

Keith Laing - 07/02/12 Highway bill negotiators like Ike http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/235885-highway-bill-negotiators-like-ike

Some transportation advocates, however, are less than enamored with the system of funding transportation with dwindling gas tax revenue that was put in place under Eisenhower and continued in the new legislation.
Revenue collected by the 18.4 cents-per-gallon gas tax goes into the Highway Trust Fund, but as cars become more efficient, less money goes into the pot to fund road and transit projects. The gas tax, which has not been increased in 1993, brings in about $36 billion per year for transportation projects. The legislation approved last week by Congress will spend more than $50 billion each year.
“Though at the last possible second, we are pleased Congress has averted a shutdown, and the associated loss of jobs — but this is literally no way to run a railroad,” Washington, D.C.-based Transportation For America group said in a statement on agreement, which covers the shortfall through tax loopholes and fee increases.
“As the result of backroom maneuvering around election-year politics, the end result looks exactly like what it is: A stopgap representing the last gasp of a 20th century program that has run out of steam,” T4A continued.
Obama is expected to quickly sign the bill to avert an interruption in transportation funding.

#### The transportation bill is perceived ONLY as a highways bill – it was purposefully stripped of controversial issues.

Laing 6/29

Keith Laing Transit union says highway bill will raise public transportation fares for riders 06/29/12 http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/235607-transit-union-says-highway-bill-will-raise-public-transportation-fares-for-riders

The bill continues Congress’s love affair with highways. When the Senate passed its first version of the transportation bill in March, some advocates [cheered the fact](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/the-senate-tries-to-make-highway-spending-a-bit-more-rational/2012/03/14/gIQAcEhUCS_blog.html?wprss=rss_ezra-klein) that it contained measures to encourage mass transit — like money to keep cash-crunched bus and train systems operating. But most of those reforms, Tanya Snyder [notes](http://dc.streetsblog.org/2012/06/28/conference-bill-freezes-transit-funding-wastes-opportunities-for-progress/), have been stripped out of the new bill. House and Senate negotiators also [cut money](http://dc.streetsblog.org/2012/06/28/transpo-bill-states-can-spend-bikeped-funds-on-left-turn-lanes/) for biking and pedestrians. And state highway agencies will get more discretion over how to spend congestion and air quality funds.

The bill, grouses Transportation for America’s James Corless, “doesn’t begin to address the needs of a changing America in the 21st century.” More and more Americans [are taking](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/is-public-transportation-habit-forming/2012/05/18/gIQAFw1WYU_blog.html?wprss=rss_ezra-klein) public transportation, but Congress isn’t readjusting its focus.

### New Roads/Ports

#### **Ports and new roads were left out of the transportation bill.**

Plumer 6/29

Brad Plumer June 29, 2012 Highway bill showdown: Five things to know http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/wp/2012/06/29/highway-bill-showdown-five-things-to-know/

5) Two obscure — but important! — reforms got left out of the final bill. The original Senate transportation bill [did two things](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/the-senate-tries-to-make-highway-spending-a-bit-more-rational/2012/03/14/gIQAcEhUCS_blog.html?wprss=rss_ezra-klein) that may seem minor but were actually quite significant, says Joshua Schank of the Eno Center for Transportation. For one, the bill shifted more money to fixing existing roads rather than building new ones. (Analysts have [long argued](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/should-we-fix-old-roads-instead-of-building-new-ones/2011/10/14/gIQAnOBsjL_blog.html) that it’s more cost-effective to repair the roads we already have, but state and local politicians prefer new projects that come with shiny ribbon-cuttings.) That earlier version also would’ve established a new [coordinated policy](http://t4america.org/blog/2011/12/14/senate-committee-takes-positive-steps-for-freight-multimodalism-performance-and-safer-streets/) that linked up freight and ports. But these provisions have been cut from the final bill.

### Mass Transit

Transportation bill is a death blow for mass transit – the plan will not be perceived the same way.

Laing 6/29

Keith Laing Transit union says highway bill will raise public transportation fares for riders 06/29/12 http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/235607-transit-union-says-highway-bill-will-raise-public-transportation-fares-for-riders

A union for employees of the public transportation system called the $105 billon highway bill a "death blow" to mass transit that will result in higher fares for riders.
The Washington, D.C.-based Amalgamated Transit Union said the compromise between the House and Senate on a long-sought surface transportation spending bill will limit public transit systems from using federal money that had traditionally had been used for new construction to help pay for operations.
The result will be higher fares for mass transit riders, ATU President Larry Hanley said Friday.
"This transportation bill is a death blow to public transportation; it not only does nothing to address the American mass transit crisis, but will make it much worse,” Hanley said in a statement released by the union.

“It’s actually a tax increasing bill that will impose hidden taxes on commuters and transit riders by raising fares while forcing cash-strapped transit systems to cut more service,” he continued.

The ATU said the original transportation bill that was approved earlier this year by the Senate had a provision dealing with the capital funding requirements for public transit systems. But the language did not survive the contentious conference negotiations between the upper chamber and the House, the union said.
The transit union is also taking issue with the elimination of a provision in the Senate's version of the transportation bill that would have restored a $230 tax credit for commuters who take public transit to work. The benefit, which was included in the 2009 economic stimulus, expired at the beginning of 2012. The credit has since been reduced to its original $125.
Hanley said neglecting to restore the $230 benefit would stifle public transportation ridership.
"More and more Americans are relying on public transportation to get to and from work, school, the doctor and other daily tasks and this bill will hit them right in the pocket,” he said. “We urge Congress not to pass this failed legislation which continues to starve mass transit and further weaken our economic recovery.”

### Win for Republicans

#### Provisions separate the transportation bill which was a win for republicans from the plan.

Goldfuss 6/29

Christy Goldfuss [Public Lands Team](http://thinkprogress.org/author/public-lands-team/) [Analysis: Cutting Red Tape In Transportation Bill Means Cutting You Out Of The Environmental Review Process](http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2012/06/29/508689/analysis-cutting-red-tape-in-transportation-bill-means-cutting-you-out-of-the-environmental-review-process/)

on Jun 29, 2012 http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2012/06/29/508689/analysis-cutting-red-tape-in-transportation-bill-means-cutting-you-out-of-the-environmental-review-process/?mobile=nc

Stories about the recent [House transportation bill](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d112:hr4348:" \o "bill" \t "_blank) will likely focus on what was not in the package: the Keystone XL pipeline and coal ash regulations.

However, environmentalists, right-to-know advocates, and community organizers need to take a close look at the section that discusses “Accelerated Decision Making.”  For the first time, but likely not the last, conservative politicians in the House won a major victory in this small section of the bill by including their “streamlining” language, which simply means curtailing the public’s ability to comment on the impacts of transportation projects for communities — including on water, air, and public safety.

### New Spending

#### **The bill didn’t increase spending – plan will be new spending on transportation and will continue to be a fight.**

Harvey 6/30

Ellie Harvey Desert Sun Washington Bureau Highway legislation cheered Jun. 30, 2012

http://www.mydesert.com/article/20120630/NEWS01/206300315/Highway-legislation-cheered?odyssey=mod|newswell|text|Frontpage|s

The agreement will keep funding at current levels, with some adjustment for inflation, and extend through to the end of the 2014 fiscal year.

One reason the bill does not extend further is because of the difficulty in agreeing on funding. Roads, bridges and mass-transit projects have mostly been paid for through user fees, particularly the 18.4 cents per gallon federal gas tax which hasn't increased since 1993.

But revenues haven't kept up with demand, in part because of inflation and because vehicles have become more fuel efficient so less tax revenue is generated for miles traveled.

The bill will now go to the president, who is expected to sign it into law.

In addition to highway funding, the bill also includes provisions that prevent the interest rates on federal student loans from increasing and that reauthorize the federal flood insurance program.

Additional measures — such as speeding up approval for the Keystone XL oil pipeline and blocking increased regulation of coal ash — were dropped from the legislation during negotiations.

While pleased to see a result, highway groups will continue to seek more federal investment. Kavinoky said they now had 27 months to “fight for sustainable, predictable and growing funding” for transportation.

“The fight starts now,” she said.

## \*\*\*Link Insulators\*\*\*

### Obama push = normal means

#### Normal means is Obama push – only way plan can pass

Wytkind, 10

Ed Wytkind, President, Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, 10/27, http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2010/10/obama-infrastructure-a-top-pri.php?comments=expandall#comments

But today’s political stalemate is unlike any we’ve seen in recent history. The knee-jerk reactions to the Columbus Day meeting from a handful of congressional leaders – while not a surprise to anyone – were an illustration of a chronic problem in Washington that has derailed action on critically needed bills to invest billions in our nation’s surface, aviation and maritime transportation system. It’s clear that we’re going to need the Administration’s leadership if we’re going to do anything worth doing.

#### Past experience and Obama priorities prove

Van Beek, 10

Steve Van Beek, Chief of Policy and Strategy and Director, LeighFisher, 10/28, <http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2010/10/obama-infrastructure-a-top-pri.php?comments=expandall#comments>

President Obama has devoted more White House attention to transportation policy than we have seen from the White House in 50 years. In addition, the Miller Center report, well summarized by Greg Principato, is only the latest report by an esteemed group of transportation leaders documenting the problems of our current policies and recommending solutions to fix them. Few disagree with the notions that our current policies are failing us and than we need a new national transportation policy. Indeed, the stack of good policy reports sitting on my bookshelf is easily over a foot high. Whether we are considering the surface or the FAA authorization--or policies governing maritime, rail, livability or any other issue of transportation policy--the problem is not knowing what we need to do, the problem is doing it. While we have advocates and analysts of various stripes on this blog, I would bet that 90% of the participants would agree on 85% of what needs to be done on transportation policy. Sure, vested interests and advocates will be as they always are, results focused. Depending on where they sit, they will be concerned about their company's bottom line, the interests of members in their organization or association and/or the case they advocate. Thus, while the industry will continue to debate parts of the authorizations, ultimately those issues will be resolved as they always are--in committee, on the House and Senate floors, and through the bicameral reconcilation process. The problem is not finding a magic formula for policy, or practicing alchemy to find the necessary resources to enact the policy, but the task is figuring out the politics. What we need is the collective will and leadership to enact long-term authorizations and policies. How do we move the process forward? Based on past experience, we need the Obama Administration to lay out detailed policy and funding plans (or at the very least set boundaries for what it is prepared to accept) and we need committee and party leaderships that are willing to work together in a bipartisan manner to find solutions. Fortunately, this highly charged electoral season will soon be in the rearview mirror. Then our elected representatives need to do what we elect them to do: legislate.

#### Their premise is backwards – Obama knows transportation faces opposition, but DOES get involved in pushing.

Freemark ‘12

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic –Feb 14th – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/02/14/the-presidents-budget-full-of-ambition-short-on-congressional-support/

The executive branch’s proposed spending for FY 2013 would greatly expand spending on transit and intercity rail, but it faces a hostile Congress. It brings good news, however, for five California rail projects and new light rail lines for Charlotte, Honolulu, and Portland. The White House has introduced a budget — and a reauthorization proposal — that would significantly increase investment in transportation infrastructure over the next six years. Though the legislation as currently designed will not be passed into law because of reluctance from Congress, the Obama Administration’s continued efforts to expand funding for sustainable mobility options are to be praised. Over the course of the next six years, the Administration proposes significant expansions in transit and rail spending, increasing those programs from 22.9% of the overall DOT budget for surface transportation in fiscal year 2013 (and 21% in actual spending in FY 2011) to 35.7% of the budget in FY 2018. See table below. Though expenditures on highways would increase significantly as well, it would be in public transportation modes that the real expansion would be made. Significant spending on intercity rail — almost $50 billion over six years — as well as new transit capital projects ($21 billion) and state of good repair (SOGR, at $32 billion) would be the most important contributions of the program. In addition to revenues from the fuel tax (which no one seems willing to advocate increasing), the White House proposes to pay for its transportation bill by reducing the size of the Overseas Contingency Operations fund, which is used to support armed operations abroad. Because of the decision to pull out of Iraq and Afghanistan, the amount of money needed for this purpose is lessened, and thus the possibility of expanding spending on transportation. Most of the President’s proposal is unlikely to see the light of day in the House of Representatives, controlled by Republicans newly hostile to the idea of using Highway Trust Fund revenues to pay for transit projects. Yet their proposal would create a $78 billion funding shortfall in the Highway Trust Fund over the next ten years according to an analysis by the Congressional Budget Office. That’s with $0 committed to transit! The Administration proposal, on the other hand, is fully funded (or at least accounted for\*) and would transform the Highway Trust Fund into the much more reasonably titled Transportation Trust Fund; the priorities of each piece of legislation are very clear. The defection of several House Republicans away from their own party’s transportation bill suggests that the legislation may not even get out of their chamber. At this point, the Senate’s bipartisan, mostly status-quo-extending two-year transportation reauthorization bill is now the most likely of all three proposals to be official government policy by the end of the spring. But even it faces the strong possibility of being ditched in favor of a simple extension of the existing bill, which will expire on March 31 according to the current law. Nonetheless, the Obama Administration’s plans for this expansion in transit funding, which mirror similar proposals from previous years, are a reminder of the ambitions for improved transportation that are possible in this country but continue to be derailed by political forces hostile to the idea of investing in the nation’s infrastructure. This is a serious proposal to significantly improve the state of the nation’s rail and bus systems — if we choose to take it.

#### Obama will draw himself into transportation legislation – he wants to show election contrast.

Freemark ‘11

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – February 8th, 2011 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2011/02/08/the-white-house-stakes-its-political-capital-on-a-massive-intercity-rail-plan/)

Whatever the immediate success of the President’s proposal, Mr. Obama is making evident his plan to promote himself as the candidate for a renewed America, one in which the future is won through public investment in essential infrastructure. This represents a very real contrast to the political posturing of his Republican opponents, who have been staking their political cause on being opposed to government spending of almost any type. Mr. Biden concluded his speech with the following: “If we do not take this step now, if we do not seize the future, you tell me how America is going to have the opportunity to lead the world economy in the 21st Century like we did in the 20th. We cannot settle. We are determined to lead again. And this is the beginning of our effort to, once again, lead the future.”

### Obama gets credit

#### Obama gets involved and disproportionately targets funds to key political states

Bilotkach, 10

Volodymyr, Department of Economics, University of California, Irvine, October, <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~vbilotka/Draft_September10.pdf> (the october date is correct even though the web address says September)

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

#### Obama will play the largest role and voters love it

Bilotkach, 10

Volodymyr, Department of Economics, University of California, Irvine, October, <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~vbilotka/Draft_September10.pdf> (the october date is correct even though the web address says September)

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

### Obama = Credit/Blame

#### Obama gets credit and blame among independent voters -

NSOR, 11 (North Star Opinion Research, Resurgent Republic, Dr. Whit Ayres, president of North Star Opinion Research, co-founded Resurgent Republic with former RNC Chair Ed Gillespie and Impacto Group CEO Leslie Sanchez. North Star partners with Resurgent Republic to conduct surveys and focus groups on popular issues and trends that help shape public debate over the proper role of government, 11/8, <http://www.resurgentrepublic.com/research/voters-believe-america-is-worse-off-than-when-obama-took-office>)

Resurgent Republic conducted a survey of 1000 American voters October 30 through November 2, 2011, with full results available here. Following are key highlights pertaining to President Obama’s perception among Independent voters: If President Obama's reelection campaign is a referendum on the incumbent, as are almost all reelection campaigns, then he remains in deep trouble a year out from the election, because Independents believe the country is worse off than when he was inaugurated. Cont… Republicans and Independents think Barack Obama and the Democrats control Washington, while Democrats think Republicans in Congress are in control. In yet another indicator of the low esteem with which Washington is held in the country, each party views the other one as in control. Republicans view Obama and the Democrats as controlling Washington by 67 to 15 percent, while Democrats view Republicans as in control by 55 to 26 percent. Independents split more evenly, but still view Obama/Democrats in control by 39 to 34 percent.

### Obama Popularity Key

#### Obama Popularity key and can still swing

**Cook, 12 (**Charlie, Cook Political Report, National Journal, 4/12, <http://cookpolitical.com/node/12364>)

When a president runs for reelection, his job-approval ratings are more significant than the trial heats. Voters who approve of the job a president is doing are very likely to vote to reelect him. Voters who disapprove are very likely to support the president’s opponent. Obama’s job ratings have ranged in recent weeks from as low as 44 percent to as high as 50 percent. The RealClearPolitics average and the Huffington Post/Pollster.com trend estimate show Obama’s approval rating at 48 percent and his disapproval score at 47 percent.

#### Only Obama’s approval rating matters – Romney is irrelevant

Cook, 12(Charlie, Cook Political Report, National Journal, 3/29, http://cookpolitical.com/node/12313

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

#### Obama Popularity key – but can still shift

Silver, 12(Nate, 5/15, chief pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center. Regarded as top-level pollster based on distinct mathematical models <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/05/15/a-30000-foot-view-on-the-presidential-race/>)

Although we are getting to the point where these national polls are at least worth a passing glance, it is still also worth paying attention to Mr. Obama’s approval rating. These have a history of predicting electoral outcomes at least as closely as head-to-head polls in the early stages of the race, especially for incumbent presidents. Mr. Obama’s approval ratings have not moved all that much. For the last month or two, they have been essentially even. Right now, in the RealClearPolitics average, 48.3 percent of Americans approve of the job that Mr. Obama is doing, and 48.6 percent disapprove. A president can get re-elected with numbers like those. Obviously, he can also lose. But the fact that Mr. Obama’s approval ratings are close to even means that it should not be surprising that the numbers in his matchup against Mr. Romney are getting closer to even, too. I am not a purist who says that candidates and campaigns make no difference. That said, the most reliable benchmark in the past of when presidential results deviate from those predicted by approval ratings is when one of the candidates has a relatively “extreme” ideology, like Barry M. Goldwater or George S. McGovern. Mr. Romney does not qualify as an extremist by the various measures we can look at that attempt to quantify this objectively — neither does he qualify as a moderate. Instead, he is a “generic Republican,” who might run fairly close to the outcomes predicted by Mr. Obama’s approval ratings. Mr. Romney also went through a period where his favorability ratings were quite poor. However, they have since improved to about even, possibly because his job has been less complicated since the effective end of the Republican primary campaign. It is not uncommon for favorability ratings to shift over the course of a campaign, particularly once the primaries end

### Liberal Policies Help Obama

#### **Enacting liberal policy boost Obama’s reelection chances—Latino voters, educated people, the youth**

Hogarth '12

 Paul Hogarth is the Managing Editor of Beyond Chron, San Francisco's Alternative Online Daily, , "Obama's Re-Election Playbook Stark Contrast to Clinton's " 6/21/12www.huffingtonpost.com/paul-hogarth/obamas-reelection-campaign\_b\_1612010.html AD 6/27/12

Which is where Obama is today. Facing an "enthusiasm gap" among progressives and diligent advocacy from gay people and Latinos, the president made two bold moves in the past month. On May 9th, he endorsed marriage equality -- having shunned the opportunity to do so for years. And on June 15, eighteen months after the DREAM Act was filibustered in the Senate, he issued an executive order halting the deportation of DREAM-Act eligible youth. He did this after his administration had deported more undocumented immigrants than George Bush -- but it was well received. What's remarkable about these moves are not just that they are "liberal," and would please the president's base -- when he should be worried about moderate "swing" voters. But they are also politically popular, a wise move as he faces re-election in November. More than 50 percent of Americans now support gay marriage, and a whopping 64 percent supported his move on immigrant youth -- to the point that it's put Mitt Romney in an awkward situation. Obama's re-election team now understands that pleasing progressives will help his re-election, which could not be a more welcome contrast with Bill Clinton's re-election strategy in 1996. For the past four decades, Democrats and progressives have been haunted by the ghost of George McGovern, which has poisoned every political discussion. Don't be "too liberal," we are warned, because we might lose those voters in the "middle" -- because after all, America is a "center-right" country. Not only does this temper the enthusiasm of progressives, but it also excuses every time a Democratic politician betrays us on a policy matter. The message is also extremely demoralizing -- it tells the Left that we are "small" and "powerless," so we should sit down, shut up and let the "grownups" who know what they're doing just govern this nation. But here's the catch. We are not a center-right country, and Obama has learned that to side with progressives is now the popular thing to do. As he faces re-elction, Obama will not co-opt Republican issues to win the Bubba vote in Missouri and West Virginia -- but has realized that America's new political base is the fast-growing Latino vote in swing states like Colorado and Nevada, the secular "creative class" in Virginia and North Carolina's Research Triangle and young people who have not bothered to vote since 2008. That is the political center.

### Econ Hurts Romney

#### Economy doesn’t hurt Obama—independents blame Republicans

Meacham '12

John Meacham, executive editor at Random House, is the author of the forthcoming Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power to be published this November," Obama's 'Pottery Barn' Strategy," 6/18/12 ideas.time.com/2012/06/18/obamas-pottery-barn-strategy/AD 6/27/12

“You break it, you own it.” Colin Powell never called it the “Pottery Barn rule,” not least because Pottery Barn doesn’t have such a rule, but he did use the phrase in a conversation with President George W. Bush in the run-up to the Iraq war. The general turned Secretary of State’s argument is that rebuilding a post–Saddam Hussein Iraq could prove an immense, possibly overwhelming task for the U.S. that it could never disown. Powell was right, and one wonders whether the Obama re-election campaign may be on the right track as it seeks to apply the you-break-it-you-own-it rule to Bush and the American economy. Hardly a day goes by without President Obama or his surrogates arguing that it takes longer than four years to recover from an economic crisis so long in the making. The not-so-subtle point: we are still living in a world broken by the policies of the 43rd President and thus cannot justly fire the 44th in 2012 to get to the 45th. (MORE: The Wimpy Recovery) I have long thought that such a case was a political nonstarter — that Americans don’t care as much about the past as they do about the present and the future, and that Obama’s refrain about what he called (in remarks at the Bush-portrait unveiling at the White House recently) the “breathtaking” scope of the financial crisis he inherited sounded too defensive. People want a President who fixes things, not a President who whines about the task at hand. The numbers, however, suggest that I may well be wrong about this. In a new Gallup survey, Americans blame Bush more than Obama for the economy, 68% vs. 52%. Most tellingly, according to Gallup: “Independents are substantially more likely to blame Bush (67%) than to blame Obama (51%) for the nation’s economic problems, a finding that no doubt provides some comfort to the Obama re-election campaign. And fewer independents blame Obama now than did so last September (60%).” (MORE: Meacham: The Myth of Partisanship) Until November, then, we are going to hear Mitt Romney talking about Barack Obama and Barack Obama, perhaps only implicitly, talking about the Pottery Barn rule: that the Republicans broke the economy and still own it. The President’s arguments will drive Republicans somewhat mad; the GOP will respond to Obama by calling him a whiner or a wimp for refusing to take full responsibility for the economic state of the nation. The Gallup figures suggest, though, that at least a number of independents may think Obama has a point. And if those independents are voting in the right swing states, it’s just possible that Obama’s Pottery Barn strategy may work.

## Swing States

### Florida Not Key – General

#### Florida isn’t as valuable as it appears—easier ways to win

Silver, June 7th—master at polling data

(Nate Silver, master at polling data, June 7, 2012, Tampa Bay Times, “Forecaster sees Fla as likely Mitt Romney country”, http://www.tampabay.com/blogs/the-buzz-florida-politics/content/forecaster-sees-fla-likely-mitt-romney-country)

Taken by itself, however, Florida may be a less valuable prize than usual. Right now, the polls there show almost an exact tie. But the model views Florida as leaning toward Mr. Romney, for several reasons. In addition, the fundamentals somewhat favor Mr. Romney in Florida. The state has been somewhat Republican-leaning in the past, and its economy is quite poor. Mr. Romney has raised more money than Mr. Obama there, and its demographics are not especially strong for Mr. Obama. The model considers these factors in addition to the polls in each state. In the case of Florida, they equate to Mr. Romney having about a 60 or 65 percent chance of winning it, and Mr. Obama probably has easier paths to 270 electoral votes

### **Florida Key – Obama**

#### Florida win guarantees Obama second term

Munzenrieder, June 5th

(Kyle Munzenrieder, Miami New Times, June 5, 2012, “Latest Florida Poll: Obama 50%, Romney 46%”, http://blogs.miaminewtimes.com/riptide/2012/06/latest\_florida\_poll\_obama\_50\_r.php)

Florida is once again shaping up to be the biggest battleground of the 2012 election, and many election prognosticators have pointed out it's would be nearly impossible for President Barack Obama to win Florida and still lose the general election. Though a poll in May showed Mitt Romney with a six point lead in the Sunshine State, two polls taken since then, including one released today, show Obama with a four-point lead.

#### Florida is easiest way for Obama win, but he’s losing now—economy key to increasing approval

Dwyer, 12

(Devin Dwyer, staff writer, January 11, 2012, ABC News, “Obama Faces Steep Climb in Florida Campaign”, http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/01/obama-faces-steep-climb-in-florida-campaign/)

President Obama’s top re-election campaign strategists say winning Florida in November would be the “easiest way” to the 270 electoral votes needed to clinch a second term. But winning Florida itself is shaping up to be anything but easy, as a new Quinnipiac University poll shows. Fifty-four percent of registered Florida voters disapprove of Obama, well above the national average, while 52 percent say he does not deserve a second term. During a September visit to Florida, Vice President Joe Biden addressed the uphill battle he and Obama face in the state, telling WLRN voters are “understandably” looking at the race as a referendum on the economy. “There’s a lot of people in Florida that have good reason to be upset because they’ve lost jobs. Even though 50 some percent of the American people think the economy tanked because of the last administration, that’s not relevant,” Biden told WLRN’s Phil Latzman.

#### Obama will lose Florida if he doesn’t fix the economy and add jobs soon

Man, May 13th

(Anthony Man, staff writer, May 13, 2012, Sun Sentinel, “Economy is No. 1 election issue for Florida voters”, http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2012-05-13/news/fl-economy-jobs-election-20120512\_1\_florida-voters-job-outlook-swing-voters)

Election 2012 is all about the economy — especially jobs — the one issue with the power to determine if President Barack Obama or Republican Mitt Romney wins Florida's critical electoral votes and, perhaps, the presidency. From 2010 to today, the Florida unemployment rate has come down more than 2 percentage points, "In normal times, this would be great," the economist said. "In normal times, if we put this variable in the [election forecasting] model, Obama would win Florida for sure. "But there's another factor in play: A state unemployment rate higher than 8 percent produces the "grumpy voter effect," Cheng said. "Despite Florida's relatively strong recovery in the last two years, given that Florida unemployment figures will still be very high — and we believe at the time of the election it will still be about 9 percent — we believe this grumpy voter effect will kick in."

### Florida Key – Romney

#### Florida is key to Romney presidency—can’t obtain enough electoral votes without it

Dorning, May 22nd

(Mike Dorning, staff writer, May 22, 2012, Bloomberg, “Obama Prospects Improve as Swing State Economies Improve”, http://mobile.bloomberg.com/news/2012-05-23/obama-prospects-improve-as-swing-state-economies-improve)

Nine states switched from supporting Republican President George W. Bush in 2004 to Democrat Obama in 2008. Leaving out Indiana, which both sides say is leaning Republican after supporting Obama four years ago, the remaining eight are again shaping up as the central election battleground. Those eight states -- Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia -- have a combined 101 electoral votes. Romney must win at least 79 of those electoral votes to prevail if all other states run true to their 2004 and 2008 partisan preferences. Must Take Florida Obtaining those 79 electoral votes is a daunting task for Romney, in part because it is impossible for him to achieve without claiming Florida. Winning all the other states would still leave him seven votes short. And even with Florida, losing Ohio and any one of the other smaller states -- New Mexico, Iowa or Nevada -- keeps him shy of the 79 figure.

#### Romney needs Florida to win the Presidency

Smith, June 1st

(ADAM C. SMITH, TAMPA BAY TIMES POLITICAL EDITOR, June 1, 2012, Miami Herald, “Five things to watch in the 2012 presidential campaign”, http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/05/30/2824700/five-things-to-watch-in-the-2012.html)

Look at that map, and current polling, and it’s clear Obama has far more room for error than Romney. How so? Obama could lose both mega-battleground states of Florida and Ohio (combined 47 electoral votes) and still have multiple paths to the 270 electoral votes needed to win. And if Romney loses Florida, where polls currently show a dead heat, it’s all over. Based on historical precedent, come October the contest could well shift dramatically for or against Obama’s re-election.

### Florida Not Key - Obama

#### Obama can win without Florida.

Silver 6/19

Nate Silver June 19, 2012 Hispanic Voters Less Plentiful in Swing States http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/19/hispanic-voters-less-plentiful-in-swing-states/

Mr. Obama could certainly win Florida – we give him about a 35 percent chance of doing so — but these simulations find that he usually has easier paths to the victorious 270 electoral votes. The president’s polling and the “fundamentals” factors that the model considers are more favorable to Mr. Obama’s in each of the eight states that appear above Florida on the tipping point list. Most of the time that he wins states like Virginia, Ohio and Colorado, for instance, Mr. Obama will already have a winning map unless he takes some unexpected losses elsewhere.

Moreover, many of the Hispanics in Florida are Cuban-Americans, and they do not always behave like the predominantly Mexican-American population of the Southwest, or the Hispanic populations of the Northeast, which include many Puerto Ricans and Dominicans.

### New Mexico and Arizona Not Key

#### New Mexico and Arizona not key – Hispanic voters.

Silver 6/19

Nate Silver June 19, 2012 Hispanic Voters Less Plentiful in Swing States http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/19/hispanic-voters-less-plentiful-in-swing-states/

The model also doesn’t think much of [New Mexico as a tipping point state](http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/presidential-geography-new-mexico/). It really wasn’t close at all in 2008, and polls there have shown Mr. Obama with a double-digit lead at a time when he is barely ahead of Mitt Romney nationally. Mr. Obama could lose New Mexico in a landslide, but it just doesn’t meet the definition of a tipping point state. Even the broader term “swing state” probably mischaracterizes it somewhat.

Nor does the model think that Arizona is a tipping point state. If has a fairly large Hispanic population, but the white population there is old and quite conservative. Arizona is something of the opposite of New Mexico – a state Mr. Obama could win this year, but probably only in a landslide where it does not provide the decisive electoral votes.

##  Voting Blocks

### Black Vote-Obama losing

#### Obama quickly losing black vote, ad and polls prove

Wright 6/15, Crystal, staffwriter for washingtonpost.com. “Barack Obama, a lost president and desperate candidate”. (June 15 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/therootdc/post/barack-obama-a-lost-president-and-desperate-candidate/2012/06/15/gJQAkbGPfV\_blog.html)

This is the worst of times for President Obama. He’s a president on the ropes, up for re-election in the worst economy since the Great Depression with no successes to run on and a Supreme Court that may rule this month that his signature initiative Obamacare is unconstitutional. And just when you think Obama can’t get any worse... well, he does. President Barack Obama speaks at Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Thursday, June 14, 2012. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster) (Carolyn Kaster - AP) With nothing left in his arsenal and desperate to save his job, Obama has resorted to pandering to black voters, whom he largely has ignored during his presidency. Obama is losing ground with black voters among the 95 percent of blacks who voted for him in 2008. Outraged over Obama’s support of gay marriage, the Coalition of African American Pastors said they would not support him in 2012. A new poll found Romney would get 20 percent of the black vote in North Carolina if the election was held today. So what does Obama do to keep blacks happy? He launches a slow jam radio ad this week with a deep voiced black man urging African Americans to show Obama “We’ve got your back.” The ad is insulting on many levels. Not only is it void of any message but the subtext is all Obama has to do is throw blacks an ad filled with R&B music and blacks will vote for him...The ad is particularly problematic when you take it’s words to heart. With black unemployment at 13.9 percent, black wealth plummeting compared to whites and more blacks plagued by foreclosures, it doesn’t look like America’s first black president “has your back.”

### Hispanic Vote Key

#### Latinos most influential minority vote

West 6/22, Paul, staffwriter for the Los Angeles Times, “Latino voter enthusiasm, a key indicator for Obama, trending up.” (June 22, 2012, http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/22/news/la-pn-obama-naleo-latino-enthusiasm-poll-20120622)

If minority groups turn out at levels at least as high as four years ago, they could play a decisive role in this year's presidential election. If they don’t, Obama could well lose. Latinos are the nation's largest minority group, but they register to vote and turn out at lower levels than whites or blacks. By some estimates, only about half of the nations eligible Latinos are registered, and the percentage of those who are signed up has been shrinking. In national polls, Obama enjoys a lopsided advantage -- better than 2-to-1 -- over Republican candidate Mitt Romney among Latinos. In an appearance Thursday before the National Assn. of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials annual convention, Romney accused the president of taking Latino voters for granted. Obama is to address the group at midday Friday. Many Latinos live in states that aren't competitive in the presidential race. Those states are either reliably Democratic (California, New York and Illinois) or Republican (Texas and, probably, Arizona). Three states where Latinos could hold the balance of power include Florida, the biggest battleground in the country, and the swing states of Colorado and Nevada. There is also a fast-growing Latino population in Virginia, another 2012 battleground. A new Latino Decisions poll, completed Thursday, shows that Obama continues to hold a very wide lead among Latino voters in those states, as well as Arizona. The opinion survey also found that Obama's recent decision to stop deportation of some young illegal immigrants had boosted Latino enthusiasm for his candidacy. An earlier report from the same pollsters -- the University of Washington's Matt Barreto and Stanford University's Gary Segura -- tracked initial gains from Obama's announcement. As reports of the decision spread over English- and Spanish-language news media, Latino support for the policy shift increased, the poll found. Perhaps most significantly, when Latino voters in the five states were asked how they felt about voting in this year's presidential election, 60% of the poll respondents described themselves as "very enthusiastic." In addition, 48% said they felt more motivated to vote in 2012 than they did four years ago, while 29% said they had been more enthusiastic back in 2008. That represents a shift from a poll earlier this year, and a likely boost for Obama. In January, 38% of Latino respondents said they were more enthusiastic about 2012, while 46% said they had been more enthusiastic about the last presidential election.

### Hispanics - Romney

#### The GOP is taking steps to ensure future Hispanic voters

Davis 6/21, Julie Herschfeld, staffwriter for Bloomberg, “GOP takes affirmative action to woo Hispanics”. (June 21st, 2012. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-06-22/obama-s-race-for-swing-voters-with-romney-tight-in-poll.html>)

GOP takes affirmative action to woo Hispanics – Some Republicans understand the importance of the Latino vote, both now and especially in the future, and are trying to groom a strong group of future Hispanic political leaders, reports TheDC’s Alex Pappas: “Manuel Castaneda is running for a seat in the Oregon House of Representatives, but Republicans in Washington already have high hopes for the candidate and others like him. The Mexican-born owner of a landscaping business from Washington County is one of 114 Hispanics involved in the Future Majority Project, an effort of veteran GOP strategist Ed Gillespie’s Republican State Leadership Committee. ‘There are certainly future congress members, future attorneys general, future governors, and future U.S. Senators and maybe even a president in there,’ Matt Walter, the political director of the Republican State Leadership Committee, told The Daily Caller.”

### Hispanics - Obama

#### Hispanics overwhelmingly support Obama

Easley 6/18

[http://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/233229-obamas-hispanic-support-surges-with-new-deportation-policy Jonathan Easley staff writer for The Hill.com](http://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/233229-obamas-hispanic-support-surges-with-new-deportation-policy%20Jonathan%20Easley%20staff%20writer%20for%20The%20Hill.com) 06/18/12

President Obama’s decision to change to his administration's deportation policies has energized Hispanic voters in five critical swing-states that have large Latino populations. In Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Nevada and Virginia, 49 percent of Latino voters said the policy made them more enthusiastic about Obama, compared to 14 percent who were less enthusiastic, according to a Latino Decisions-America’s Voice poll conducted over the weekend. Obama announced on Friday that his administration would stop deporting illegal immigrants who come to the country at a young age and meet certain requirements. Ahead of Obama's announcement, polls showed presumptive GOP nominee Mitt Romney narrowing the gap with the president in those five states. Obama led Romney by 13 points in Colorado, according a Public Policy Polling survey from early April, but the three most recent polls in that state showed the candidates in a statistical tie. In Nevada, a state the president won by 12.5 points in 2008, Obama's lead has slipped from 8 points in a recent PPP poll to 5 points, according to the Real Clear Politics average of polls. And Obama’s lead in Virginia had been cut in half, from 6 points to 3, according to the RCP average. Obama already had a massive lead among Hispanics overall, leading Romney by 34 points, 61 percent to 27, in a NBC News/Wall Street Journal/Telemundo poll released late last month. Even if Obama has hit a ceiling with Hispanic support, the Latino Decisions-America's Voice poll indicates the policy change could help rally Hispanic voters to the polls in an election where voter turnout could decide the results in several states. Some immigrant activist groups had been critical of the record number of deportations under the Obama administration, and a Latino Decisions-Univision poll released earlier this year showed Obama was suffering from an enthusiasm gap with the group. At the time, 53 percent of Latino voters said they were less enthusiastic about voting for Obama than they were in 2008. After Friday’s announcement, Romney offered support for easing deportations but said he believed the decision could make it more difficult to win immigration reform. “I believe the status of young people who come here through no fault of their own is an important matter to be considered and should be solved on a long-term basis so they know what their future would be in this country,” Romney said at a campaign stop in New Hampshire. On Sunday, the presumptive GOP nominee said Obama's announcement was an election-year ploy. "I think the timing is pretty clear," he said on CBS's "Face the Nation." He also avoided taking a clear stance on the policy. “Well, it would be overtaken by events if you will, by virtue of my putting in place a long-term solution with legislation which creates law that relates to these individuals such that they know what their setting is going to be, not just for the term of a president but on a permanent basis,” Romney said. He declined to say if he'd leave Obama's policy in place while he worked out his own. Romney is against the DREAM Act, which is overwhelmingly popular among Hispanics — 87 percent support it, according to the poll — and has praised Arizona’s controversial immigration law, which the Obama administration is suing the state over. The poll found that these positions made 59 percent of Hispanic voters in the five swing-states less enthusiastic about Romney.

#### Hispanics will push Obama over for the win- Hispanic voters Support Obama

White 6/25 journalist and writer specializing in liberal politics, and progressive issues and perspectives. http://usliberals.about.com/b/2012/06/25/hispanics-favor-obama-over-romney-will-likely-decide-election.htm

Hispanic citizens have never been more influential in American politics. In 2012, Hispanic voters are likely to decide the 2012 presidential election... that is, if they are energized to vote. Today's Supreme Court ruling on Arizona's discriminatory, largely unconstitutional immigration law should be just the ticket to drive Hispanic voters to the polls in November. Explains the Wall Street Journal about the one element of Arizona's bigoted law not struck down by SCOTUS: "... the court upheld for now the law's directive that state and local police check the immigration status of people they stop when they suspect them of lacking authorization to be in the U.S... The court left open the possibility that the surviving provision could be challenged depending on how it is applied. It acknowledged concerns that the provision could lead to abuses, such as prolonged detention of arrestees while their status was being checked." The surviving provision ensures that Arizona authorities will continue racial profiling of Hispanics. It also forces all Hispanics in the state, even those born in America, to carry extensive ID at all times, or risk deportation. Such measures are required of no other ethnic groups in the United States. For the past decade, Hispanics have been the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. Per the 2010 Census, Hispanics comprise a politically powerful percentage of many of the fourteen 2012 battleground states, including: Nevada - 26.5% of Nevada population Colorado - 20.7% of Colorado population Florida - 22.5% of Florida population New Mexico - 46.3% of New Mexico population Two other battleground states... Virginia and North Carolina... have experienced very rapid growth of Hispanic populations. And with today's SCOTUS ruling, Democrat's fondest political dreams for the Southwestern U.S. may come to fruitition: traditionally Republican red-state Arizona may turn Democratic blue in November, due to its burgeoning Hispanic population. Hispanics now comprise almost 30% of all Arizona state residents. To further motivate Hispanic voters to actively support his reelection bid, President Obama signed an Executive Order last week temporarily implementing portions of the DREAM Act. The President's order will halt for two years deportation of about 800,000 to 1 million Hispanics under age 30 who are either attending college or working, who have no criminal records, and who meet certain other criteria. Hispanic-Americans have long advocated for the DREAM Act, and were frustrated with President Obama when Congress narrowly failed to pass DREAM Act legislation in December 2010. To the delight of the White House, "... more than eight in 10 Latinos approved of the president's action, most of them strongly," per a Gallup/USA Today poll released today. In contrast, Mitt Romney, who campaigned for the Republican party presidential nomination by opposing the DREAM Act and advocating for "self-deportation" of 12 million undocumented workers and their families, has done little to reach-out effectively to the concerns of Hispanic-Americans. In fact, Gov. Romney's staunchest immigration-related stance, to date, has been to advocate for a border fence to be built along the entirety of the U.S.-Mexico border... a policy abhorrent to the Hispanic community. In the 2008 election, Barack Obama was victorious because he won the Hispanic vote in four states that historically had voted Republican in presidential races. In 2012, Hispanic voters are again likely to decide the 2012 presidential election... and it appears that President Obama is again their overwhelming choice. Understandably so.

#### Strange garners positive attention from Latino population over DREAM Act

Serwer 6/22, Andrew, Reporter for MotherJones, NYT and WashPost. “Obama Immigration Speech: Latinos Should Blame Republicans for Blocking Immigration Reform.” (6/22/12 http://www.motherjones.com/mojo/2012/06/obama-immigration-speech-naleo)

It was President Obama's turn to address the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials on Friday, the day after Mitt Romney spoke to the same group. Obama emphasized his commitment to passing the DREAM Act and comprehensive immigration reform. He reminded the audience that he voted for President George W. Bush's immigration reform bill as a senator, and that the bill had been scuttled by immigration restrictionists from Bush's own party. The president's reception at NALEO was very warm—he drew several standing ovations. His defense of his decision to exempt DREAM Act-eligible unauthorized immigrants from deportation was well-received. "They are Americans in their hearts, in their minds, in every single way but on paper—and all they want is to go to college and give back to the country they love," Obama said. "Lifting the shadow of deportation and giving them a reason to hope was the right thing to do." Obama didn't mention Romney by name, but he did refer to his rival's pledge to veto the DREAM Act. "Your speaker from yesterday has a different view," Obama said. "In his speech, he said that when he makes a promise to you, he’ll keep it. Well, he has promised to veto the DREAM Act, and we should take him at his word." The president also directly blamed Republican partisanship for the collapse of immigration reform efforts. Here's the key section of his speech: In the face of a Congress that refuses to do anything on immigration, I’ve said that I’ll take action wherever I can. My Administration has been doing what we can without help in Congress for more than three years. And last week, we took another step. On Friday, we announced that we’re lifting the shadow of deportation from deserving young people who were brought to this country as children. “We should have passed the DREAM Act a long time ago. It was written by members of both parties. But when it came up for a vote two years ago, Republicans in Congress got together and blocked it.” The bill hadn’t really changed. The need definitely hadn’t changed. The only thing that had changed, apparently, was politics. This is not an entirely accurate portrayal of events. Republicans did band together to block the DREAM Act, including several former co-sponsors of previous versions of the bill. But they were joined by skittish centrist Democrats. The final vote was 55 to 41, with five Senate Democrats joining the opposition. Had Obama delivered the votes of his own party, the DREAM Act would have passed. And if Republicans who previously supported the legislation hadn't decided it was terrible after Obama supported it, it would have passed. The president has a big advantage over Romney with Latinos, but his task is arguably harder. With little progress on reform but a verbal commitment to policies Latino voters prefer, Obama has to seriously energize Latino voters to have a chance at retaining the Oval Office. Romney, on the other hand, doesn't have to win a majority of the Latino vote—he just has to convince enough of them he wouldn't be that bad.

#### Obama greatly preferred by Latino voters, thanks to immigration bill

West 6/22, Paul, staffwriter for the Los Angeles Times, “Latino voter enthusiasm, a key indicator for Obama, trending up.” (June 22, 2012, http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/22/news/la-pn-obama-naleo-latino-enthusiasm-poll-20120622)

In national polls, Obama enjoys a lopsided advantage -- better than 2-to-1 -- over Republican candidate Mitt Romney among Latinos. In an appearance Thursday before the National Assn. of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials annual convention, Romney accused the president of taking Latino voters for granted. Obama is to address the group at midday Friday. Many Latinos live in states that aren't competitive in the presidential race. Those states are either reliably Democratic (California, New York and Illinois) or Republican (Texas and, probably, Arizona). Three states where Latinos could hold the balance of power include Florida, the biggest battleground in the country, and the swing states of Colorado and Nevada. There is also a fast-growing Latino population in Virginia, another 2012 battleground. A new Latino Decisions poll, completed Thursday, shows that Obama continues to hold a very wide lead among Latino voters in those states, as well as Arizona. The opinion survey also found that Obama's recent decision to stop deportation of some young illegal immigrants had boosted Latino enthusiasm for his candidacy. An earlier report from the same pollsters -- the University of Washington's Matt Barreto and Stanford University's Gary Segura -- tracked initial gains from Obama's announcement. As reports of the decision spread over English- and Spanish-language news media, Latino support for the policy shift increased, the poll found. Perhaps most significantly, when Latino voters in the five states were asked how they felt about voting in this year's presidential election, 60% of the poll respondents described themselves as "very enthusiastic." In addition, 48% said they felt more motivated to vote in 2012 than they did four years ago, while 29% said they had been more enthusiastic back in 2008. That represents a shift from a poll earlier this year, and a likely boost for Obama. In January, 38% of Latino respondents said they were more enthusiastic about 2012, while 46% said they had been more enthusiastic about the last presidential election. In the new poll, Romney's best showing among Latinos was in Florida, which has a large, Republican-leaning population of Cuban Americans. Obama's lead among Latino registered voters in Florida was 16 percentage points -- 53% to 37% -- similar to the results of another statewide poll this week from Quinnipiac University, which also found increased enthusiasm among Latinos. In the other states surveyed, Latino voters favored Obama over Romney in Colorado by 70% to 22%, and in Nevada by 69% to 20%. In Virginia, where they make up just 5% of the electorate, Obama had a 59%-28% lead over Romney among Latino voters.

### SuperPacs

#### **Voters are not persuaded by criticisms of campaign finance.**

Cillizza 6-12-12 [Chris,political reporter, “How many fundraisers is too many for President Obama?” Washington Post http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/post/president-obama-fundraiser-in-chief/2012/06/12/gJQAVAQ8XV\_blog.html]

President Obama will attend six fundraisers today in Maryland and Pennsylvania, a series of cash collection events that bring his total number of fundraisers held for his reelection bid up to 160, according to figures maintained by CBS News’ Mark Knoller. That, again according to Knoller, is more than double the 79 events that President George W. Bush had held at this same time in the 2004 presidential race. President Barack Obama waves before speaking at the Fox Theater in Redwood City, Calif., Wednesday, May 23, 2012. The president spoke at various fund-raising events in Colorado and California Wednesday. (AP Photo/Jeff Chiu)Republicans have seized on Obama’s rapid fundraising pace as evidence that he is far more dedicated to raising money and winning reelection than to performing the actual job for which he was elected in 2008. In a Politico op-ed earlier this year commemorating Obama’s 100th fundraiser since coming into office, Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus wrote: On average, one can reasonably say attending a fundraiser takes two hours out of the president’s schedule. So, in total, the president has likely spent at least 200 hours, or five standard workweeks, filling his campaign coffers since April. While this line of attack is one both sides use when they don’t control the White House, there are two reasons why the only people Republicans are likely to sway with the fundraiser-in-chief hit are members of their own base. One is logistical; the other is historical. Let’s start with logistics. Comparing what Bush raised — or how many events he held to raise it — to what Obama is currently doing is misleading. Remember that while Bush raised and spent north of $270 million in the primary season — aka until he was formally chosen as the Republican nominee at the GOP national convention — he accepted public financing for those two-plus months between, roughly, Labor Day and Election Day. Obama, on the other hand, opted out of public financing for the general election in 2008 — the first presidential candidate to do so since the system was put in place following the scandal of President Richard Nixon and Watergate. In the 2008 election, Obama collected better than $750 million — a pace he and his campaign have said they expect to equal in 2012 when both Obama and former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney opt out of public financing. (That dual move, by the way, ensures the end of the public financing system as we know it.) Obama will need to raise roughly three times as much as Bush did in 2004 simply to equal what he collected in 2008. That he has done twice as many fundraising events as Bush to date then is not all that surprising. (The rightness of Obama’s decision to opt out of public financing — both in 2008 and 2012 — is a different conversation for another blog post.) Then there is the simple fact that trying to run a campaign on how much money the other guy (or gal) is raising and spending rarely works The people who care about the origins of all the money washing around in the political system are people in the two parties’ bases — although most of those people are gathered in the Democratic base at this point. Persuadable voters — unaffiliated and independents — don’t follow politics closely enough to be all that interested in who raised what from whom. That reality is why the Obama White House’s efforts to turn the 2010 midterm elections into a referendum on conservative super PAC spending didn’t come close to working. Why? Because people in the middle don’t vote on campaign finance; they think there is too much money flowing through the system on both sides and tend not to single out one party for blame. That goes double for a presidential election where the pricetag is expected to soar north of $2 billion. Undecided voters are likely to conclude that both parties are spending too much time raising money and that nothing will change no matter who wins. They’ll move on and vote on what they view to be more pressing issues like the economy, jobs and the debt. Is that somewhat depressing? Yes. But it makes it much, much harder for Republicans to score any genuine political points with the ideological middle by attacking President Obama’s aggressive fundraising schedule.

### Independent/Undecided Voters Important

#### Obama’s small lead comes from minorities and independents, recent polls shows

Liptak 6/26, Kevin, a political contributor for CNN Politics. “Poll: Obama, Romney race still tight.” (6/26/2012, http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2012/06/26/poll-voters-tepid-on-romney-business-background/)

 (CNN) – President Barack Obama holds a slight advantage over his Republican rival Mitt Romney, according to a poll released Tuesday, though Americans' views on the economy continue to put a damper on the president's bid for a second term in the White House. Overall, the NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll showed Obama edging Romney nationally, with 47% of registered voters saying they back the incumbent Democrat and 44% backing his Republican rival. The 3-point margin was within the poll's sampling error. Obama's edge nationally was bolstered by strong leads among women, minorities and independents. The president led Romney 52%-39% among women, 52%-35% among Latinos ages 18 to 29 and 40%-36% among independents. Romney was ahead among white voters, 53%-38%, and men, 48%-43%. The economy, which voters consistently rate the most important issue, remains a problem for Obama. Fifty-three percent say they disapprove of Obama's handling of the economy, and 33% say Obama's policies have hurt the economy. Another 32% say the president's economic policies haven't made any difference, and 32% say they've helped. In all, 61% of the respondents said they thought the nation was headed in the wrong direction, which was up three points from an NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll last month. A subset of registered voters in battleground states were questioned about Romney's business background, with the results indicating the former Bain Capital executive is struggling to turn his private equity experience into an asset for his campaign. The survey showed 33% of voters in 12 battleground states saying what they had read or heard about Romney's business background negatively influenced their view of the candidate, compared with 18% who said the information led them to view Romney more positively. The remainder either felt they didn't have enough information about Romney's private equity career or that the information didn't make a difference. The battleground states included in the NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll were Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin. President Barack Obama's campaign, eager to discredit his Republican rival's business credentials, has used attack ads in some of those states to paint Romney as a corporate raider who eliminated jobs and closed plants during his tenure as chief executive of Bain Capital. Romney's campaign argues the Obama attacks don't take into account Bain's successes. Those attack ads might be having an effect on Romney's favorability rating in the swing states. Some 30% of the battleground-state voters said they viewed Romney favorably in the poll, compared to 36% who viewed him favorably one month ago. Nationally, Romney's favorability hasn't taken such a hit. He holds a 33% favorably rating nationally, compared with 34% last month. The NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll was conducted nationally by telephone from 1,000 voters between June 20-24. The sampling error was plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

#### Independent voters will decide the election

Walsh 6/25, Kenneth, staffwriter for U.S. News and World Report. “Obama Adviser: Independents Will Decide Election.” (June 25, 2012, http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/Ken-Walshs-Washington/2012/06/25/obama-adviser-independents-will-decide-election)

A senior strategist for President Obama says the November election will be decided by 15 per cent of the electorate--swing voters who haven't firmly made up their minds whether to support Obama or Republican challenger Mitt Romney. Such voters are "waiting to be persuaded," and much of the effort by Team Obama during the four months until Election Day will be devoted to courting them, the aide says. In the end, Romney's approach to the economy, the Number One issue, won't go over well with the swing voters, the aide predicts. "On the core economic issue, he has a philosophy that if a guy like Mitt Romney does well, then America will do well," but the aide said that this theory has been proven wrong over the years. Romney is a multi-millionaire who co-founded a highly successful private-equity firm. [See a collection of political cartoons on the 2012 campaign.] The adviser's view about swing voters was buttressed by a new Associated Press/GfK poll. It found that 27 percent U.S voters remain "persuadable" by either Obama or Romney and they are in no hurry to make a final decision on which candidate to support. The poll found that 47 per cent of registered voters plan to vote for Obama and 44 per cent plan to vote for Romney, a statistical tie. But those totals include the 27 per cent who identify themselves as "persuadable"--people who say their current leaning isn't strong and could change by Election Day. The persuadables tend to be independents rather than Democrats or Republicans, the poll indicated, and 17 per cent of the persuadables said they consider themselves supporters of the conservative Tea Party.

#### Independent and undecided voters will influence election results, polls say

Kellam & Ageista 6/25, associated press, St. Louis Today online. “Undecided voters may sway presidential election.” (6/25/12, http://www.stltoday.com/news/national/undecided-voters-may-sway-presidential-election/article\_dc8621e3-d94f-5a89-8629-8bb9710eed90.html)

They shrug at President Barack Obama and Republican challenger Mitt Romney. They're in no hurry to decide which one to support in the White House race. And they'll have a big say in determining who wins the White House. One-quarter of U.S. voters are persuadable, according to an Associated Press-GfK poll, and both Obama and Romney will spend the next four months trying to convince these fickle, hard-to-reach individuals that only he has what it takes to fix an ailing nation. It's a delicate task. These voters also hate pandering. "I don't believe in nothing they say," says Carol Barber of Ashland, Ky., among the 27 percent of the electorate that hasn't determined whom to back or that doesn't have a strong preference about a candidate. Like many uncommitted voters, Barber, 66, isn't really paying attention to politics these days. She's largely focused on her husband, who just had a liver transplant, and the fact that she had to refinance her home to pay much of his health bill. "I just can't concentrate on it now," she says before adding, "If there were somebody running who knows what it's like to struggle, that would be different." John Robinson, 49, a general contractor from Santa Cruz, Calif., is paying a bit more attention but is just as turned off by both candidates. "I'm just bitter about everybody. They just keep talking and wavering," said Robinson, a conservative who backed the GOP nominee in 2008, Arizona Sen. John McCain, but is undecided between Obama and Romney. "There's nothing I can really say that's appealing about either one of them." To be sure, many of the 1 in 4 voters who today say they are uncommitted will settle on a candidate by Election Day, Nov. 6. Until then, Obama and Romney will spend huge amounts of time and money trying to win their votes, especially in the most competitive states that tend to swing between Republicans and Democrats each presidential election.

#### Swing Voters key – contrary claims based on flawed studies

Eberly, 12

Todd Eberly, a political science professor at St. Mary’s College of Maryland, Center For Politics.org, 5/12/12

But what if the number of independent voters is greater than 10%, or even greater than 20%? Suddenly, winning a majority of independent voters becomes more important. In a recent report written for the centrist Democratic organization Third Way, I examined whether or not leaners are indeed independent. For my research, I used the 2000-2004 panel study conducted by the American National Election Studies (ANES). I selected the panel study for a simple reason: It’s one of the few studies available that tracked the same group of voters across multiple elections. That’s important. Most studies of voting and partisanship capture only a snapshot of a point in time and allow researchers to measure partisanship only during a given election cycle. Such snapshots would be fine if partisanship were permanent and not subject to change. That is very much the view of partisanship taken by those who consider independent voters to be a myth. In my research for Third Way, I compared the partisan voting loyalty of Democrats and Republicans by looking at their partisan vote choice across three House elections (2000, 2002 and 2004) compared to their strength of partisanship in 2000. Survey respondents were classified as being strong, weak or independent partisans (leaners). I found that weak and independent partisans are less loyal to party in the short term and especially across time. While roughly 90% of strong partisans voted the party line in 2000, approximately a quarter of weak and independent partisans crossed party lines that year. In 2002 and 2004, strong and weak partisans held steady at roughly 90% and 75% loyalty, but independent partisans were more volatile — especially independent Democrats. In 2002, 46% of those who identified as an independent Democrat in 2000 voted Republican. The share was 38% in 2004. I also found that independent partisans were far more likely to switch their partisan identification over time — so 2000’s independent Democrat could well be 2004’s independent Republican. That’s something a non-panel series could not account for. The study suggested that during a given election period independent partisans are as loyal to party as their weak partisan peers, but that loyalty wanes over time. To me, a voter who switches his or her partisan vote choice from one election cycle to the next is not a loyal partisan — rather, that voter is an independent voter. My findings have been criticized largely based on my selection of the 2000-2004 data series. Some contend that the events of Sept. 11 and the subsequent War on Terror made that time period unique and therefore unrepresentative. Unfortunately there is no other comparable data set exploring the same respondents across multiple elections. In a recent post challenging the findings contained in the Third Way report, Alan Abramowitz examined the 2008-2009 panel study and compared the partisan loyalty and partisan vote choice of respondents in the 2008 presidential election. Abramowitz came to the same conclusion as did I in my Third Way report: that independent partisans behave much like their more partisan peers in a given election. Unfortunately, the 2008-2009 panel survey does not allow one to follow partisanship or partisan loyalty across multiple elections. As such it is not a useful data source for the study of partisan loyalty and the presence of independent voters. Additionally, I researched partisan loyalty by examining House elections, because it allows one to study multiple elections across a relatively short timeframe. To address concerns about the 2000-2004 data, I conducted additional analyses with that data source and with the 1992-1997 panel survey by ANES. Having already demonstrated that leaners are less loyal to party over time, I wanted to focus on estimating the number of true independent voters in the electorate. Based on my study for Third Way, I placed the number at approximately 25% of the electorate, which is a number also endorsed by Linda Killian in her book, The Swing Vote. I compared the 1994 and 1996 as well as the 2002 and 2004 partisan vote choice to the choice made in 1992 and 2000 respectively. In other words, what share of the folks who voted Democratic in 1992 voted Republican in 1994 or 1996? What share of folks voting Republican in 2000 voted Democrat in 2002 and 2004? As I am interested in two-party vote shares, I limited my study to only those who voted for one of the two parties in each of the elections covered. Of those who voted for a Democrat in the 1992 House elections, 25% opted to vote Republican in 1994 and 24% opted to vote Republican in 1996. Among Republicans, 12% voted for a Democrat in 1994 and 21% voted for a Democrat in 1996. Based on the two-party vote shares in each election, nearly 19% of those voting in 1992 and 1994 changed their partisan vote choice. The overall share was closer to 23% between 1992 and 1996. When looking at the more recent era, of those who voted for a Democrat in the 2000 House elections, 16% voted Republican in 2002 and 21% voted Republican in 2004. Among Republicans, 11% voted Democrat in 2002 and 21% voted Democrat in 2004. Both panel series show that partisan loyalty declines over time, and that Democratic voters are less loyal than Republican voters. Consistent with the findings of the Third Way report, both panel series show that partisan loyalty is weakest among weak, but especially among independent, partisans (most defections came from independent partisans). Much is made of surveys by Gallup and Pew that suggest that a plurality of voters are independents — perhaps as much as 40%. This is simply incorrect. But so too are arguments that independent voters make up less than 10% of the electorate. The stability of a partisan coalition is dependent upon sustained loyalty across elections, but roughly 20% of the voting electorate are not loyal partisans (and that share would grow if I expanded my study to include folks who opted to not vote — as non-voters could hardly be considered loyal partisans). In an era of closely matched political parties and relatively narrow two-party vote shares, winning and maintaining the support of that 20% is crucial.

### Base/Turnout Key – o/w swing voters

#### Turnout key – not swing voters

Abramowitz, 12

(Alan, Senior Columnist, Center For Politics.org, Prof Poli Sci @ Emory, 5/31, <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/buying-a-presidential-election-its-not-as-easy-as-you-think/>

The airwaves in the eight or 10 states that will decide the outcome of the 2012 presidential election will soon be saturated with ads supporting and opposing Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, all aimed at persuading a small group of undecided voters — less than 10%, according to most recent polls. These undecided voters are much less interested in the presidential election than those who have already chosen sides. When the ads come on, they generally ignore them. Moreover, undecided voters are not stupid, and they’re generally skeptical about the messages that they see on TV. As a result, the net impact of all of this advertising is likely to be minimal. Research by political scientists and evidence from 2012 polls in the battleground states suggests that the parties and candidates would do better to focus their efforts in these states on mobilizing their supporters rather than trying to persuade uncommitted voters. But I’ll have more to say about that in my next article.

#### Comparative ev – base key for Obama in key battleground states – not swing voters

Abramowitz, 6/7/12

Alan I. Abramowitz, Senior Columnist, Center for politics, 6/7/12 <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/>

Despite the closeness of the presidential race, the Obama and Romney campaigns find themselves in very different strategic situations in the battleground states. For the Romney campaign, a strategy focused on persuading and mobilizing registered but undecided voters looks promising given the negative views of President Obama held by most swing voters. In contrast, for the Obama campaign, a strategy focused on mobilizing supporters who are not currently registered seems to hold more promise than one emphasizing persuasion of undecided voters.

#### Specifically true for dems

**Cook, 12** (Charlie, Cook Political Report, National Journal, 5/24, <http://cookpolitical.com/node/12537>)

Starting with 44 percent, Democrats need to win the support of only about half of the 15 percent in the middle. Republicans, coming from a much smaller share of the independent and nonaligned slice of voters to win, need all 15 percent to reach a majority. In short, it’s a lot more important for Republicans to extend beyond their base than it is for Democrats. Conversely, Democrats have to worry about getting out the vote among some of their strongest groups. Overall, 81 percent of respondents rate themselves as 8’s, 9’s, or 10’s in terms of interest in this election, meaning they are very likely to vote. Obama won 66 percent of the 18-to-29-year-olds in 2008; only 64 percent indicated to Hart and McInturff’s interviewers that they were 8’s, 9’s, or 10’s for this November’s election. Obama won 67 percent of the Hispanic vote last time; only 68 percent in the survey were 8’s, 9’s, or 10’s. Among African-Americans, Obama won 95 percent of the vote; 83 percent were 8’s, 9’s, or 10’s, meaning that African-Americans are significantly more interested in this election than the other two groups. The poll has an enormous amount of data, and very little of it pushes toward a strong conclusion in favor of either Obama or Romney. More evidence that a tight race is in the offing.

### (Dem) Base Key/AT: decline in turnout inevitable

#### Minimizing decline in Dem base turnout is key

Tomasky, 11

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

The base vote can still emerge in large numbers, but the dominant factor this time won’t be hope and change. Instead, the factors will be fear of the other side, state and local political conditions (think of how motivated Democrats are to regain control of their politics in Wisconsin), and demographic changes that are still redounding to the Democrats’ benefit. And because we elect presidents by states, the place to assess Obama’s prospects is on the ground. Wake County, N.C.; Arapahoe County, Colo.; Franklin County, Ohio—these are representative base Democratic counties. They are in swing states, which means the president will need a big vote in these places to offset a presumed high conservative turnout in other parts of these states. And they are counties that have only recently become solidly Democratic, because of demographic changes. “Obama’s majorities in these counties are not secure,” says Ruy Teixeira, coauthor of the 2002 book The Emerging Democratic Majority, which predicted the bluing of states like then-red Colorado. “He needs a full-bore mobilization effort in these counties to get his supporters out and develop the margins he needs to carry swing states like Ohio, Colorado, and North Carolina.” Cont… That’ll be about the strongest argument Obama can make to base voters: it could, and will, be a lot worse if you don’t vote for me. That’s true, and fear is usually a pretty good motivator in politics. But it still isn’t what people were hoping for, and it seems inevitable that some percentage of the most loyal Democrats will stay home. In these three counties and others like them, that percentage will be the difference between reelection and retirement.

### AT: Base/Turnout Key

#### Turnout not key – close election guarantees turnout even if voter enthusiasm is low

**Silver, 12** (Nate, NYT Blogs, chief pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center. Regarded as top-level pollster based on distinct mathematical models 2/6, lexis)

It should be remembered, however, that Republicans have the turnout advantage in November because their voters tend to come from demographic groups (like older Americans and wealthier Americans) who vote more frequently. This usually manifests itself in the fact that polls of likely voters show somewhat more favorable results for Republicans than polls of registered voters. The safest default assumption is probably that this gap will exist again, but that it will amount to a more typical value like 2 or 3 percentage points than the 6-point "enthusiasm gap" that existed in 2010. Or it could be that the middling enthusiasm for Mr. Romney will only make much difference if he appears to be in trouble by November. Democratic turnout was quite poor, for instance, in 1984 for Walter Mondale, a candidate who has some parallels to Mr. Romney. However, it was clear that Ronald Reagan was going to win that election anyway; low Democratic turnout contributed to Reagan's margin of victory, but strong turnout would not have reversed the result. On the other hand, Democrats had somewhat limited enthusiasm for John Kerry in 2004 - but that election was much closer, and they did not have any major problems in getting their voters to the polls. In other words, perhaps if Mr. Obama appears poised for a 6- or 7-point victory by November based on the economic fundamentals, Republican voters may feel that their vote makes little difference anyway and some of them will stay home as a protest, expanding Mr. Obama's victory margin to 8 or 9 points instead and making it look prettier in the Electoral College. But I'm more skeptical that this will matter much in an environment in which the election will be very close and every vote could make a difference.

### AT: (GOP) Base Key – Independents Key

#### Strict opposition to spending or taxes backfires – alienates swing voters

Cook, 12

(Charlie, Cook Political Report, National Journal, 5/1, <http://cookpolitical.com/node/12442>)

Veteran Democratic pollster Stan Greenberg offers up an alternative view. Noting the polls of his own firm and plenty of others, Stan points to signs that, while the Democratic Party’s brand has it’s own issues with favorable-unfavorable and positive-negative gaps (different pollsters test these things in various ways), invariably, the GOP has higher unfavorables and negatives than favorables and positives. Likewise, this applies to comparisons of “Democrats in Congress” and “Republicans in Congress.” It would seem that, in the minds of independents (and to a lesser extent in those of others), Democrats have not covered themselves in glory. The GOP brand has taken on considerably more water. Greenberg’s theory is that it is not one thing but the combination of factors. In some states, notably in Wisconsin and Ohio, actions by Republican governors and state legislatures pushed way too far. They took positions and pushed policies that looked extreme to many non-ideological independent voters, sometimes rubbing moderate Republicans the wrong way as well. Then there is Washington, where Greenberg argues that Republicans -- particularly Budget Chairman Paul Ryan and his budget, nearly universally embraced by fellow party members in Congress -- come across as too ideological or too harsh. Finally, there was the overheated rhetoric in the 20 or 21 Republican presidential debates. It was a conversation clearly aimed at the party base but overheard by other voters, who found much of the talk more than a little exotic for their tastes. Each of the eight GOP presidential contenders, in an August debate sponsored by Fox News, said they would not go along with a budget proposal that included $10 in spending cuts for every $1 of tax increases. Positioning that far to the right is way too out there for most independent voters, who respond well to the suggestions of balanced approaches to deficit reduction. While I don’t buy into Greenberg’s argument of a potential Democratic wave, if any kind of partisan wave is likely to develop -- barring some cataclysmic political, military, or economic development at home or abroad -- it sure seems more likely to break in favor of the Democrats, as he's suggesting, as a result of a backlash against Republicans going too far to the right. I don’t yet see signs that the Republicans’ obsession with their conservative base has reached a tipping point that will create a Democratic wave. But if I were a Republican leader, I’d at least consider the possibility.

#### Spending opponents not key, they already hate Obama – and the issue only alienates more important swing groups

**Cook, 12** (Charlie, Cook Political Report, National Journal, 4/19, <http://cookpolitical.com/node/12401>)

The messaging and signals emanating from Republican presidential candidates, as well as from elected officials in Washington and in state capitals, seem to be aimed at only conservative, white men. This is a group that once dominated the electorate but is now considerably smaller than a majority. The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press released a poll of 2,373 registered voters, culled from a larger group of 3,008 adults, interviewed April 4-15. Among all registered voters, President Obama led presumptive Republican nominee Mitt Romney by just 4 percentage points, 49 percent to 45 percent, down from a 12-point lead, 54 percent to 42 percent, a month ago. In the survey, respondents rated the importance of 18 issues and then indicated their preference between Obama and Romney. Not too surprisingly, Obama did best with those who rated the environment as very important; he led that group by 39 percentage points. He also won the folks who picked education as very important by 22 points, birth control by 19 points, and health care by 15 points. See a pattern here? Romney prevailed among those who picked the budget deficit as very important, winning them by 19 points, and among those who named Iran, by 14 points. Those kinds of issues are very different from birth control and health care. The relevance of all of this comes through when you look at key demographic breakouts from the trial heat between Obama and Romney. Overall, Obama led among women by 13 points: 53 percent to 40 percent. Romney was ahead among men by 6 points: 50 percent to 44 percent. Given that women generally make up 51 to 52 percent of the electorate, whenever Republican candidates lose women by more than they win among men, they can skip ordering the champagne for election night. In all but the most unusual cases, a Republican needs to win among men by a wider margin than a Democrat does among women. But it gets really interesting when you break the genders down by age: under 50 versus over 50. Among all women 50 and older, Obama beat Romney by 7 points, 50 percent to 43 percent. Among all women under 50, though, Obama prevailed by 18 points, 56 percent to 38 percent. That’s an 11-point difference in the president’s lead between the younger and older groups of women. Among men, Obama actually led among those under 50 by 1 percentage point: 47 percent to 46 percent. But Romney prevailed among men 50 and older by 11 percentage points, 53 percent to 42 percent. So, a 12-point difference in Obama’s standing between the younger and older men. When you make the same comparisons among just white voters, the contrast is even starker. Romney’s support came overwhelmingly from white men, a group he carried by 26 points, 60 percent to 34 percent. In comparison, the Republican had an advantage of just 5 points among white women, 49 percent to 44 percent. The age difference among white women was considerably less important than that among all women. Among white women 50 and older, Romney defeated Obama by 7 points, 50 percent to 43 percent. Among white women under 50, he won by 3 points, 48 percent to 45 percent, for only a 4-point difference between younger and older groups of women. Among white men, Romney won the under-50 cohort by 13 percentage points, 53 percent to 40 percent. Among white men 50 and older, he prevailed by 27 percentage points, 61 percent to 34 percent. That’s a 14-point difference. Taking all of this into consideration and then adding that Obama led by 40 points among Hispanic voters, 67 percent to 27 percent, and by 93 points among African-Americans, 95 percent to 2 percent, it’s clear that, assuming these groups turn out in numbers approaching 2008, it’s women under 50 who are the demographic that either will or won’t put Obama over the top in the general election. Democrats hope to make the case that Republicans have tailored their priorities for white men, particularly white men over 50, to such a degree that they seem to deliberately exclude women voters, especially younger women. Other polling shows real deterioration for Romney among independent women—most specifically, those under 50.

#### Base support inevitable – appealing to them backfires

Cook, 12

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

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

### Fundraising Key

#### Fundraising key- primaries and 2008 prove

**FDL, 2-17**-2012 <http://elections.firedoglake.com/2012/02/17/obama-campaign-boasts-of-impressive-january-fundraising-figures/>

The Obama campaign is boasting of some impressive campaign figures for the month of January. On twitter, the campaign claims to have raised just over $29.1 million for the campaign, DNC and other relevant committees. The powerful Obama fundraising apparatus, which was an important force in 2008 election, appears to be functioning very well. The Obama team will clearly have the money to be on par or to even outspend the eventual Republican nominee. I think this is relevant because Mitt Romney’s success in the Republican primary so far has relied heavily on radically outspending his rivals. Romney and his allies won Florida but only after outspending Newt Gingrich and his allies by an incredibly five to one margin. When the Romney campaign decided not to completely flood the zone with campaign spending in the early February states it allowed Rick Santorum to score a surprise triple win. If Romney does manage to regain the lead in Michigan it will be in part because of his team spending dramatically more in the state than Santorum can afford to. This hugely outspending your rivals can work in the GOP primary for Romney given the pathetic fundraising of his rivals, but it is simply not going to be an option in the general when he finally faces someone with a very competent fundraising machine.

#### Super PACs mean fundraising key

**USA Today, 3-8**-2012 <http://www.cnbc.com/id/46668882/Obama_Tops_Recent_Presidents_at_Fundraisers>

President Obama has attended 191 fundraisers for himself and others, far exceeding the fundraising pace of presidents going back to Jimmy Carter as he drives to stockpile money for his re-election, according to new data compiled for USA TODAY. The fundraising push comes as Obama's campaign has rebuffed requests from congressional Democrats to transfer campaign funds from the Democratic National Committee to bolster the party's efforts to retake the House and maintain control of the Senate. His campaign is in talks with former President Bill Clinton to join him at fundraising events in the months ahead. By comparison, President George W. Bush had headlined 134 fundraisers at this point in his first term, according to an analysis by Brendan Doherty, a political scientist at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., and the author of the forthcoming book "The Rise of the President's Permanent Campaign." Doherty maintains records on presidential activity back to the Carter administration. Obama has surpassed the record 173 fundraisers Bush headlined during his entire first term, Doherty's numbers show. More than 10 months remain in Obama's first term. The rising cost of campaigns and the explosion of new super PACs that can raise and spend unlimited money from corporations, unions and individuals help drive the pace, experts say. "This election raises the possibility that someone will come and drop $10 million, $20 million or $50 million in the race," said Jonathan Krasno, a Binghamton University political scientist. "Politicians are at full, hyper-red alert." Your Money Your Vote - A CNBC Special Report Super PACs raised more than $126 million from Jan. 1, 2011, to Jan. 31 this year, and a recent USA TODAY analysis found that nearly 25% of the money came from five wealthy individuals. "We are in a whole new world here," campaign adviser David Axelrod said Wednesday. "We would be insane not to be worried about that." Obama campaign manager Jim Messina said he expected Republican-aligned outside groups to spend more than $500 million to attack the president. Republicans, who have seized on the heavy schedule to deride Obama as "campaigner in chief," say the pace is a sign of money trouble for Obama. "Fundraising is definitely his No. 1 priority," said Republican National Committee spokeswoman Kirsten Kukowski. "They are worried they don't have the fundraising advantage he once had because enthusiasm is down on his side."

### AT: Fundraising key

#### Campaign contributions not key – multiple reasons

Abramowitz, 12

(Alan, Senior Columnist, Center For Politics.org, Prof Poli Sci @ Emory, 5/31, <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/buying-a-presidential-election-its-not-as-easy-as-you-think/>

Buying a Presidential Election? It’s Not as Easy as You Think It looks like it’s going to be another tough season for long-suffering fans of the Chicago Cubs. Two months into the 2012 baseball season, the Cubs are mired in last place in the National League’s Central Division with one of the worst records in Major League Baseball. But the patriarch of the family that owns the Cubs, billionaire investor Joe Ricketts, has had more on his mind lately than the Cubs’ problems. It seems that he’s been busy with another major project — stopping Barack Obama from winning a second term in the White House. A few weeks ago it was revealed that Ricketts, who made a fortune as the founder of the online brokerage firm TD Ameritrade, was preparing to spend $10 million on an advertising campaign reminding voters in battleground states about Obama’s relationship with fiery Chicago pastor Jeremiah Wright. After stories about the proposed ad campaign appeared in the media, it was almost universally panned by political commentators on the right as well as the left, and Ricketts announced that he would not be funding it. But that didn’t mean that he was giving up on his goal of defeating President Obama. It turns out that Ricketts is providing major financial support for another anti-Obama venture. This time it’s a film being made by the conservative writer Dinesh D’Souza, attacking the president for an anti-colonial worldview that he supposedly inherited from his Kenyan father. Like the Jeremiah Wright ad campaign, D’Souza’s line of attack has been criticized as inaccurate, misleading and downright silly by prominent conservative commentators, including the Washington Post’s George Will. One sign of just how little support there is for D’Souza’s claims in mainstream conservative circles is the fact that the only candidate to make the Obama as anti-colonial Kenyan claim during the Republican primary campaign was Newt Gingrich. One might simply dismiss Joe Ricketts’ behavior as the quixotic quest of a lone wolf with more money than he knows what to do with. But Ricketts’ actions are far from unique. He is one of a small but growing group of conservative billionaires who have taken advantage of lax campaign finance rules reinforced by recent Supreme Court decisions to pour millions of dollars into the 2012 presidential campaign. The Democrats have their own wealthy sugar daddies, of course, but there are fewer of them and, so far at least, they have been much less willing to open their wallets to help reelect the president. During the recent Republican primary campaign, billionaire casino magnate Sheldon Adelson almost single-handedly kept Newt Gingrich’s floundering campaign afloat for several months by donating tens of millions of dollars to a pro-Gingrich Super PAC. Another billionaire, financial investor Foster Friess, gave several million dollars to a SuperPAC supporting Rick Santorum, helping the former Pennsylvania senator emerge as Mitt Romney’s main challenger for the GOP nomination. And of course, Romney himself benefited from millions of dollars donated to his own SuperPAC, much of it from a handful of extremely wealthy supporters. In the end, the Republican contest turned out the way most political experts expected it to from the beginning: The candidate with the broadest support from Republican voters and the most endorsements by GOP officeholders, Mitt Romney, locked up the nomination well before the end of the primaries. All of the millions of dollars spent by billionaire-funded SuperPACS, most on negative ads attacking other Republican candidates, probably had little impact on the final outcome. So what can we expect from all of the spending by SuperPACs and their billionaire donors in the general election? No doubt much of it will be wasted on negative advertising campaigns and propaganda like the aborted Jeremiah Wright ads or the Obama as anti-colonial Kenyan film. Such messages appeal mainly to a small group of conservatives who don’t need to be convinced to vote against Barack Obama. But not all of those running these SuperPACs are political amateurs or ideologues. Republican campaign guru Karl Rove has his own Super PAC that has raised millions of dollars from a relatively small number of wealthy conservative donors. Rove has already launched a multi-million dollar ad campaign in a number of swing states attacking the President’s economic record by highlighting the continued suffering of ordinary Americans more than three years after Obama took office. Rove’s message is much more likely to resonate with swing voters in key battleground states such as Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin. But despite the clever messaging, the Rove Super PAC’s anti-Obama campaign is also likely to have little or no impact on the outcome of the election. That’s because the tens of millions of dollars that they are spending on television ads in the swing states is coming on top of hundreds of millions of dollars already being spent on TV ads in these states by the candidates themselves, party organizations, labor unions, liberal and conservative organizations and wealthy individuals. The airwaves in the eight or 10 states that will decide the outcome of the 2012 presidential election will soon be saturated with ads supporting and opposing Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, all aimed at persuading a small group of undecided voters — less than 10%, according to most recent polls. These undecided voters are much less interested in the presidential election than those who have already chosen sides. When the ads come on, they generally ignore them. Moreover, undecided voters are not stupid, and they’re generally skeptical about the messages that they see on TV. As a result, the net impact of all of this advertising is likely to be minimal.

### AT: Independent/Swing Voters Key

#### Undecided swing voters not key – prefer our ev – specific to key battle ground states

Abramowitz, 6/7/12

Alan I. Abramowitz, Senior Columnist, Center for politics, 6/7/12 <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/>

These findings raise an important question for the Obama and Romney campaigns. In deciding how to allocate money and other resources, how much emphasis should they give to mobilizing potential supporters versus persuading undecided voters? The answer to this question depends on the characteristics and political attitudes of two key groups of voters in the battleground states: unregistered supporters and undecided registered voters. In order to compare the potential payoffs of a strategy emphasizing mobilization compared with a strategy emphasizing persuasion, I analyzed data from a March 20-26 Gallup Poll in 12 key battleground states: Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin. This was the most recent battleground state polling data available for analysis. A total of 1,046 adults were interviewed on landline and cellular telephones, including 871 registered voters. Swing voters: Unhappy with Obama but unenthusiastic about voting One important finding from Gallup’s March swing state poll is that there were relatively few swing voters in these swing states. Among registered voters, 49% supported Barack Obama and another 1% indicated that they leaned toward Obama, while 41% supported Mitt Romney and another 2% leaned toward Romney. The March 20-26 survey was conducted at a time when Mitt Romney was still battling with Rick Santorum for the Republican nomination. Now that Romney has locked up the GOP nomination, Obama’s lead in these battleground states may very well be smaller. What is striking, however, is that as early as March, relatively few registered voters were unwilling to state a preference in a Romney-Obama contest. Even combining leaners with the undecided, swing voters made up less than 10% of the electorate in these 12 states.

#### They won’t vote and appeals from Obama only backfire

Abramowitz, 6/7/12

Alan I. Abramowitz, Senior Columnist, Center for politics, 6/7/12 <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/>

The data in Table 1 show that compared with voters supporting a candidate, swing voters were disproportionately white and female. They were also much more likely to describe themselves as completely independent and much less likely to describe themselves as Democrats or independents leaning toward the Democratic Party. But the most dramatic differences between swing voters and voters supporting a candidate involved their opinions about President Obama and their enthusiasm about voting in 2012. Swing voters had much more negative opinions of President Obama’s job performance than other voters. In fact, their opinions were almost as negative as those of Romney supporters. Only 11% of swing voters approved of Obama’s job performance compared with 6% of Romney voters. In contrast, 92% of Obama voters approved of the president’s job performance. But while swing voters were similar to Romney voters in their evaluation of President Obama’s job performance, they were much less enthusiastic about voting. Only 19% of swing voters described themselves as extremely or very enthusiastic about voting in 2012 compared with 47% of Romney supporters and 50% of Obama supporters. And 58% of swing voters described themselves as not too enthusiastic or not at all enthusiastic about voting compared with only 27% of Romney supporters and 21% of Obama supporters. These findings suggest two different conclusions about the likely results of efforts by the Obama and Romney campaigns to persuade swing voters to support their candidate. From the standpoint of the Obama campaign, efforts at persuading swing voters are likely to be unproductive and could even backfire. These voters have a decidedly negative view of the president and are very unlikely to vote for him. The best the Obama campaign can hope for is that most of these swing voters will not bother to turn out in November.

#### Comparative ev – base key for Obama in key battleground states – not swing voters

Abramowitz, 6/7/12

Alan I. Abramowitz, Senior Columnist, Center for politics, 6/7/12 <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/>

Despite the closeness of the presidential race, the Obama and Romney campaigns find themselves in very different strategic situations in the battleground states. For the Romney campaign, a strategy focused on persuading and mobilizing registered but undecided voters looks promising given the negative views of President Obama held by most swing voters. In contrast, for the Obama campaign, a strategy focused on mobilizing supporters who are not currently registered seems to hold more promise than one emphasizing persuasion of undecided voters.

#### Independent swing voters are a myth – consensus of studies

Abramowitz, 12

(Alan, Senior Columnist, Center For Politics.org, Prof Poli Sci @ Emory, 4/12, <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/are-independent-leaners-closet-partisans-or-true-independents/>)

This is an important issue because according to almost all recent surveys, the large majority of independent voters lean toward one of the two major parties. In the 2008 American National Election Study, for example, about three-fourths of independent voters leaned toward a party, and the vast majority of those leaning independents voted for the candidate of the party they leaned toward. It is this sort of finding, repeated in many surveys of voters in many different elections, that has led political scientists, including myself, to conclude that most independent leaners are closet partisans rather than true independents. And, indeed, there are good reasons to be skeptical about the conclusions of the Third Way study.

#### “Swing” voters won’t swing

Abramowitz, 12

(Alan, Senior Columnist, Center For Politics.org, Prof Poli Sci @ Emory, 4/12, <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/are-independent-leaners-closet-partisans-or-true-independents/>)

An examination of the results of the ANES 2008-2009 panel surveys shows that first, the vast majority of independent leaners, and especially of independent Democrats, continued to identify with the party they originally leaned toward more than a year and a half after the initial interview in January 2008. In August 2009, 82% of respondents who were independent Democrats in January 2008 continued to identify with or lean toward the Democratic Party, while 73% of independent Republicans continued to identify with or lean toward the Republican Party. Only 5% of both groups of leaners had switched to the opposing party. Moreover, the vast majority of respondents who leaned toward a party in January 2008 ended up voting for that party’s presidential candidate in November 2008, even though the identities of the presidential candidates were far from certain in January. Nevertheless, 87% of independent Democrats ultimately voted for Barack Obama while 82% of independent Republicans ultimately voted for John McCain. Independent Democrats and Republicans were actually more loyal to their party’s presidential candidates than weak Democrats and Republicans in 2008 –only 80% of weak Democrats and only 78% of weak Republicans ultimately voted for their party’s presidential candidates. The reason for the high rate of loyalty of those independent leaners is not hard to find: Both groups of independent leaners generally shared the dominant ideological orientation of the party they leaned toward. Independent Democrats were quite liberal and independent Republicans were quite conservative. In fact, independent Democrats were more liberal than weak Democrats while independent Republicans were more conservative than weak Republicans. About three of five (59%) of independent Democrats placed themselves on the liberal side of the ideology scale compared with 50% of weak Democrats, while 74% of independent Republicans placed themselves on the conservative side of the scale compared with 72% of weak Republicans. These results from the ANES 2008-2009 panel survey reinforce the findings of many other surveys of American voters — Americans who identify themselves as independents but who indicate that they lean toward one of the two major parties generally think and behave more like partisans than like true independents. They tend to maintain their party preference over a long period of time, they tend to vote overwhelmingly for the party that they lean toward, and they tend to hold ideological orientations consistent with their party preference. Independent Democrats, in particular, lean toward the liberal side of the ideological spectrum and would not be likely to defect from Democratic candidates who take progressive positions. That is why they voted overwhelmingly for Barack Obama in 2008 and are very likely to do so again in 2012.

### AT: Hispanics Key

#### Most of the Hispanic vote is in California and Texas – they aren’t in contention.

Silver 6/19

Nate Silver June 19, 2012 Hispanic Voters Less Plentiful in Swing States http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/19/hispanic-voters-less-plentiful-in-swing-states/

However, almost 40 percent of the Hispanic vote was in one of just two states – California and Texas – that don’t look to be at all competitive this year. The fact that Democrats are winning clear majorities among Hispanics is one reason that California is no longer competitive, of course. And perhaps Texas will become more competitive in another 8 or 12 or 16 years. (Although note that many Hispanics in Texas have been there for generations and might not be thought of as immigrant communities.) But voters in these states just aren’t likely to sway the Electoral College outcome in 2012.

#### **Hispanics aren’t a key population in the two most contentious states – Virginia and Ohio.**

Silver 6/19

Nate Silver June 19, 2012 Hispanic Voters Less Plentiful in Swing States http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/19/hispanic-voters-less-plentiful-in-swing-states/

The way that the [FiveThirtyEight presidential forecasting model](http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/07/election-forecast-obama-begins-with-tenuous-advantage/) measures the competitiveness of a state is through what it calls the [tipping point index](http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/04/27/arizona-is-probably-not-a-swing-state/). This is a measure of the likelihood that a state will make the marginal difference in the election, giving a candidate the decisive 270th electoral vote.

The list of tipping point states is narrower than you might expect. The relative order of the states just doesn’t change very much from election to election, especially when an incumbent is running again and we know what voters thought about him four years earlier.

Many states might be competitive, meaning that they might plausibly be won by either candidate, but most of their electoral votes would be superfluous in an election that truly came down to the last vote. The tipping point index accounts both for how close a state is relative to the national trend, and how many electoral votes it has.

Right now, the model thinks that the odds are about 50/50 that one of just two states, Virginia and Ohio, will play the tipping point role. Each of these has a below-average number of Hispanic voters.

#### Hispanic voters can’t sway the electoral college.

Silver 6/19

Nate Silver June 19, 2012 Hispanic Voters Less Plentiful in Swing States http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/19/hispanic-voters-less-plentiful-in-swing-states/

On the whole, if you take a weighted average of the Hispanic turnout in each state based on its tipping point index, it comes out to about 6 percent, less than the 9 percent Hispanic turnout throughout the country as a whole. That means a Hispanic voter is somewhat less likely to swing the Electoral College outcome than if they were evenly distributed (as a share of the population) throughout all 50 states.

### EPA Bad—Jobs

#### EPA bad in sqo- kills American jobs

Carlson 4/28

New EPA Regulations: Bad for Jobs, Good for the Environment [cscarlson](http://www.benzinga.com/users/cscarlson) March 28, 2012 12:20 PM <http://www.benzinga.com/general/politics/12/03/2451578/new-epa-regulations-bad-for-jobs-good-for-the-environment#ixzz1z93nMBBy>

Today the EPA revealed important regulatory measures, dubbed the New Source [Performance](http://www.benzinga.com/general/politics/12/03/2451578/new-epa-regulations-bad-for-jobs-good-for-the-environment) Standards (NSPS), which puts further restrictions on greenhouse gas emissions for energy plants. The NSPS regulations will only affect energy plants that are yet to be built, and gives current operational plants a thirty year time span to reduce emissions to the levels set by the NSPS. While the EPA maintains that the U.S Clean Air Act saved more than 160,000 lives in 2010 alone, critics of the new regulations argue that putting stricter controls on coal plants will increase energy costs and kill hundreds of [jobs](http://www.benzinga.com/general/politics/12/03/2451578/new-epa-regulations-bad-for-jobs-good-for-the-environment). U.S. Rep Ed Whitefield had this to say[s], "Affordable, reliable electricity is critical to keeping and growing jobs in the United States and such a standard will likely drive up energy prices and threaten domestic jobs." Representative Whitefield is not alone in his criticisms of the EPA, and is joined by the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity's CEO Steve Miller. In a press release today Miller announced the following: "Unfortunately, the EPA continues to ignore the real impact their rules will have on American families and [businesses](http://www.benzinga.com/general/politics/12/03/2451578/new-epa-regulations-bad-for-jobs-good-for-the-environment) by driving up energy prices and destroying jobs. “This is another, in a series of new regulations, written by EPA to prevent the U.S. from taking advantage of our vast coal resources that are responsible for providing affordable electricity for America’s families and businesses. This latest rule will make it impossible to build any new coal-fueled power plants, and could cause the premature closure of many more coal-fueled power plants operating today." Despite the outrage of American energy [companies](http://www.benzinga.com/general/politics/12/03/2451578/new-epa-regulations-bad-for-jobs-good-for-the-environment), it is difficult to dismiss the hundreds of thousands of lives saved by EPA regulatory efforts. In a 1997 EPA report to Congress a few crucial numbers shed a bit of humanitarian light on the issue. According to the 1997 EPA Report, the first 20 years of Clean Air Act programs, from 1970 –1990, led to the prevention in the year 1990 of: 205,000 premature deaths 672,000 cases of chronic bronchitis 21,000 cases of heart disease 843,000 asthma attacks 189,000 cardiovascular hospitalizations Lisa Jackson, the EPA Administrator, went before Congress last week urging Representatives to look at the big picture. She readily admitted that while some restrictions may stunt short term [job](http://www.benzinga.com/general/politics/12/03/2451578/new-epa-regulations-bad-for-jobs-good-for-the-environment) creation, they will inevitably save lives in the long haul.

### Romney Will Change regs

#### Romney win blocks EPA regs

**Williams, 12** (Jean, Environmental Policy, 5/31, Examiner, <http://www.examiner.com/article/a-romney-administration-would-intensify-the-world-s-climate-extremes>)

Nonetheless, a Mitt Romney presidency would strive for Republican control in congress and the senate, which would guarantee that carbon emissions management would grind to a halt. They have vowed to dismantle the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), because any laws that aim to guard water and air from the ramifications of greenhouse gas pollution is in direct opposition to GOP vested interests. Environmentalists believe the Republican Party is not concerned about the possibility of impending atmospheric destruction or the survival of planet Earth for future generations, but are essentially controlled by what corporate billionaires and big oil companies want for their daily existence now.

#### Romney and the Republicans will overturn EPA regulations

Geman, The Hill, 2012

Geman, Ben. “Federal court upholds Obama EPA’s climate change regulations.” The Hill. June 26, 2012. http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/234779-federal-court-upholds-epas-climate-change-regulations

Republicans who have battled EPA over the rules vowed to press forward with their efforts to reverse them through legislation. "This 'big win' for the Obama EPA is a huge loss for every American, especially those in the heartland states which rely on fossil fuel development and the affordable energy that comes with it," said Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla), the ranking member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. "EPA's massive and complicated regulatory barrage will continue to punish job creators and further undermine our economy.” The decision is a defeat for a suite of industry groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Mining Association, the National Association of Manufacturers and others that challenged various aspects of EPA’s climate rules. States including Texas and Virginia also filed legal challenges against the rules. “Today’s ruling is a setback for businesses facing damaging regulations from the EPA,” said National Association of Manufacturers CEO Jay Timmons in a statement on behalf of a number of groups, such as the American Petroleum Institute, the American Frozen Food Institute, the American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers and others. He said the groups will be “considering all of our legal options when it comes to halting these devastating regulations.” "The debate to address climate change should take place in the U.S. Congress and should foster economic growth and job creation, not impose additional burdens on businesses,” the groups said. EPA and the Transportation Department have set joint carbon emissions and mileage standards for model years 2012-2016 and are crafting rules for future years. EPA has also begun Clean Air Act permitting for some large new and modified stationary emissions sources on a case-by-case basis, and recently proposed first-time national standards for new power plants. The court ruled that the endangerment finding and the tailpipe rules are “neither arbitrary nor capricious,” and that EPA’s interpretation of the governing Clean Air Act provisions is “unambiguously correct.” The judges also found that none of the petitioners had standing to challenge the tailoring rule or EPA’s policy on the timing of emissions regulations. David Doniger, of the Natural Resources Defense Council, called the ruling a “huge victory for our children's future.” “The court upheld the agency's careful determination, based on a mountain of scientific evidence, that carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping pollutants threaten our health and our planet,” said Doniger, a senior attorney with the group. But the decision is likely not the end of the fight over EPA’s climate rules. In addition to potential appeals, Capitol Hill Republicans are seeking to overturn or limit EPA’s power to regulate greenhouse gases, measures that have stalled in the Senate but could gain more traction if Republicans see gains in the fall elections. In addition, Mitt Romney supports nullifying EPA’s power to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act.

#### Romney will change EPA regs- money

MittRomney.com 6/5

<http://www.mittromney.com/issues/regulation> 6/5/12

Multiple factors contribute to America’s faltering performance. But a major part of the problem over successive presidencies, and one that the Obama administration has sharply exacerbated, is the regulatory burden on the economy. Regulations function as a hidden tax on Americans, with the federal government’s own Small Business Administration placing the price tag at $1.75 trillion annually—much higher than the entire burden of individual and corporate income taxes combined. How did we reach this state of affairs? A look across the landscape shows that federal agencies today have near plenary power to issue whatever regulations they see fit. Though most are nominally controlled by the president, in actual practice agencies are frequently able to act autonomously with little or no presidential oversight. The end result is an economy subject to the whims of unaccountable bureaucrats pursuing their own agendas. A new regulation can suddenly transform a profitable investment into an unprofitable one or render employees unproductive. This produces uncertainty with all its attendant economic ills. Obama's Failure President Obama’s expansive agenda has brought the costs of excessive regulation into high-resolution focus. A number of his major initiatives like Dodd-Frank and Obamacare represent a quantum increase in the scale of the regulatory burden on the American economy. Bizarrely, in the face of our economic travails, the most active regulator is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Obama administration’s war on carbon dioxide—what Time magazine has called “the most far-reaching environmental regulatory scheme in American history”—is the highest-profile EPA effort. But the EPA also continues to issue endless new regulations touching on countless other forms of economic activity—regulations that drive up costs, hinder investment, and destroy jobs. In late August of 2011, Cass Sunstein, the White House’s regulatory czar, wrote an op-ed for the Wall Street Journal proudly announcing the results of an “unprecedentedly ambitious government-wide review” of regulations. The total annual savings? Approximately $2 billion. To put in context just how small this savings is, compare it to the more than $9 billion in new regulatory costs proposed or implemented by the Obama administration in just the prior month. Even worse, compare it to the estimated $1.75 trillion in regulatory costs that the federal government itself estimates are borne by the American economy each year. If the Obama administration can do no better than a one-tenth-of-one-percent reduction in regulation, it is past time to give up hope that they will ever understand the severity of our economic crisis and the need for fundamental reform. Mitt's Plan Mitt Romney will treat regulatory costs like other costs: he will establish firm limits for them. A Romney administration will act swiftly to tear down the vast edifice of regulations the Obama administration has imposed on the economy. It will also seek to make structural changes to the federal bureaucracy that ensure economic growth remains front and center when regulatory decisions are made. Eliminate Undue Economic Burdens One of the greatest problems with the federal bureaucracy is that each incoming presidential administration leaves in place much of what its predecessor constructed. The result is layer upon layer of often unnecessary or inconsistent regulation. President Obama has compounded this problem with unprecedented federal power grabs over wide swaths of the economy. Obama-era laws and regulations must be rolled back, and pre-existing ones must be carefully scrutinized. Repeal Obamacare Repeal Dodd-Frank and replace with streamlined, modern regulatory framework Amend Sarbanes-Oxley to relieve mid-size companies from onerous requirements Initiate review and elimination of all Obama-era regulations that unduly burden the economy Reform Environmental Regulation As president, Mitt Romney will eliminate the regulations promulgated in pursuit of the Obama administration’s costly and ineffective anti-carbon agenda. Romney will also press Congress to reform our environmental laws to ensure that they allow for a proper assessment of their costs. Ensure that environmental laws properly account for cost in regulatory process Provide multi-year lead times before companies must come into compliance with onerous new environmental regulations Adopt Structural Reforms An agency may be able to conceive of ten different regulations, each imposing costs of $10 billion while producing at least as much in social benefit. Moving forward might sound like a great idea to the typical regulator. But imposing those regulations, no matter what the social benefits, has a similar effect to raising taxes by $100 billion. Regulatory costs need to be treated like the very real costs they are.

### Congress will overturn Regs

#### The upheld EPA regulations anger Republicans into working against them

Geman, The Hill, 2012

Geman, Ben. “OVERNIGHT ENERGY: For EPA, court win feeds GOP anger” The Hill. June 26, 2012. http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/234947-overnight-energy-for-epa-court-win-feeds-capitol-hill-anger

The idea that everybody loves a winner isn’t really true. Not when it comes to the Environmental Protection Agency, and not on Capitol Hill. The agency’s big court victory Tuesday against industry challenges to its climate rules will likely intensify ongoing Capitol Hill attacks against greenhouse gas regulations and other EPA policies. Here's where it unfolds for the balance of the week: On Wednesday the House Appropriations Committee will mark up fiscal 2013 spending legislation that seeks deep cuts in EPA’s budget. It also targets specific EPA policies with provisions — draft report language would prevent use of funds for greenhouse gas permitting.

#### Republicans will attempt to oppose EPA regulations

Geman, The Hill, 2012

Geman, Ben. “OVERNIGHT ENERGY: For EPA, court win feeds GOP anger” The Hill. June 26, 2012. http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/234947-overnight-energy-for-epa-court-win-feeds-capitol-hill-anger

Already, Tuesday’s sweeping court rejection of state and industry challenges to EPA's power to regulate greenhouse gases is feeding fresh GOP calls for legislation to nullify EPA’s authority. Republicans allege that climate regulations will harm the economy, and some members of the GOP caucus also dispute climate science. Right now those bills most likely can’t get any further than the House, where they have already passed. But this week’s battles are a precursor to higher stakes fights that will occur if Republicans take the Senate and the White House.

### 2NC AT: Dems block

#### EPA has discretion – doesn’t require congress

**Institute for 21st Century Energy, 9** (Institute for 21st Century Energy, US Chamber of Commerce, 4/21, http://energyxxi.org/sites/default/files/ClimateChange101.pdf

Massachusetts vs. EPA: Supreme Court decision that held that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the authority to regulate CO2 under the Clean Air Act from new automobile tailpipes if the agency finds that CO2 emissions endangers public health or welfare. However, the Court did not require EPA to regulate.

#### If Romney wins Congress will be GOP enough to block EPA regs

Kevin **Drum**, Blogger, Mother Jones,**1-17**-2012 <http://motherjones.com/kevin-drum/2012/01/president-romney-vs-president-obama-cage-match>

Karl Smith doesn't care if Mitt Romney is a liar, a cad, or a prick. He just wants to know what concrete things would be different under a Romney presidency compared to an Obama Presidency. My list is so conventional that I'm afraid it's pretty boring, but here goes. All of this is based on the assumption that if the electorate is pro-Republican enough to elect Romney, it will also be pro-Republican enough to give Republicans control of the Senate. Obamacare gets repealed via reconciliation. And even if that turns out not to be possible, it will be gutted enough to make it all but dead in practice. The judicial system gets packed with a lot more conservative, business-friendly judges. The Bush tax cuts are made permanent. Corporate tax rates are cut substantially. There's a slim chance that this would be done via a 1986-style tax reform bill that's a net positive, but since Republicans wouldn't need any Democratic help to pass it, probably not. The estate tax might very well be eliminated. Overall, for reasons of basic arithmetic, spending cuts will be much smaller than Romney and the GOP are promising, and the deficit will be substantially higher than it would be under Obama. We might stay in Afghanistan significantly longer than we would otherwise — though I'm not sure about this. Tightening of environmental regs would come to a halt. (Though it's unclear how much of the existing regulatory infrastructure would get rolled back. Probably not that much.) If another financial crisis hits, Romney would be very constrained in how he could deal with it. (So would Obama, but probably somewhat less so.) Although congressional Republicans will be less successful than they'd like at slashing social welfare programs, they'll still make some cuts. Life will get tougher for the poor. The NLRB would become toothless once again.

## \*\*\*Obama Bad - EPA Regs Bad\*\*\*

### EXT: REGS KILL ECON

#### EPA REGULATIONS TANK THE ECONOMY – snowball effect freaks out market.

**WSJ 9 [**“Business Fumes Over Carbon Dioxide Rule” – Dec 7 -- http://online.wsj.com/article/SB126013960013179181.html]

Officials gather in Copenhagen this week for an international climate summit, but business leaders are focusing even more on Washington, where the Obama administration is expected as early as Monday to formally declare carbon dioxide a dangerous pollutant. An "endangerment" finding by the Environmental Protection Agency could pave the way for the government to require businesses that emit carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases to make costly changes in machinery to reduce emissions -- even if Congress doesn't pass pending climate-change legislation. EPA action to regulate emissions could affect the U.S. economy more directly, and more quickly, than any global deal inked in the Danish capital, where no binding agreement is expected. Many business groups are opposed to EPA efforts to curb a gas as ubiquitous as carbon dioxide. An EPA endangerment finding "could result in a top-down command-and-control regime that will choke off growth by adding new mandates to virtually every major construction and renovation project," U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Thomas Donohue said in a statement. "The devil will be in the details, and we look forward to working with the government to ensure we don't stifle our economic recovery," he said, noting that the group supports federal legislation. EPA action won't do much to combat climate change, and "is certain to come at a huge cost to the economy," said the National Association of Manufacturers, a trade group that stands as a proxy for U.S. industry.

#### SPILLS OVER TO ALL SECTORS.

**Kreutzer and Campbell 8**. [David W., Ph.D.,Senior Policy Analyst for Energy Economics and Climate Change, and Karen A., Ph.D., Policy Analyst in Macroeconomics, Center for Data Analysis at The Heritage Foundation, CO2-Emission Cuts: The Economic Costs of the EPA's ANPR Regulations, http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/cda08-10.cfm]

In addition to increasing the costs of energy use, regulating GHGs through the Clean Air Act will expand the EPA's authority to unprecedented levels. The ANPR will likely: Trigger the Prevention of Signifi cant Deterioration (PSD) program, which could require permits for large office and residential build ings, hotels, retail stores, and other similarly sized projects; Regulate the design of manufac turing plants; Regulate the design of airplanes; Lower speed limits below current levels; Impose speed restrictions on ocean-going freighters and tankers; Export economic activity to less-regulated coun tries, thereby compromising the U.S.'s ability to compete in the global economy; and Transform the EPA into a de facto zoning author ity, granting the agency control over thousands of previously local or private decisions, affecting the construction of schools, hospitals, and com mercial and residential development. These regulations are just a small sample of the areas into which the ANPR would expand the EPA's authority.

#### Tanks the economy

-GDP hit

-short and long-term unemployment

- energy price spikes

**Kreutzer and Campbell 8**. [David W., Ph.D.,Senior Policy Analyst for Energy Economics and Climate Change, and Karen A., Ph.D., Policy Analyst in Macroeconomics, Center for Data Analysis at The Heritage Foundation, CO2-Emission Cuts: The Economic Costs of the EPA's ANPR Regulations, http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/cda08-10.cfm]

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) foreshadows new regulations of unprecedented scope, magnitude, and detail. This notice is not just bureaucratic rumination, but could very well become the law of the land. Jason Grumet, a senior environmental advisor to Barack Obama, has promised that a President Obama would "initiate those rulings." These rulings offer the possibility of regulating everything from lawn-mower efficiency to the cruising speed of supertankers. Regardless of the chosen regulatory mechanisms, the overall eco nomic impact of enforced cuts in carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions as outlined in the ANPR will be equivalent to an energy tax. By expanding the scope of the 1990 amendment to the Clean Air Act (CAA), the EPA will severely restrict CO2 emissions, thereby severely restrict ing energy use.[[1]](%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn1) Specifically, the EPA would use the CAA to regulate emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) from a vast array of sources, including motor vehicles, boats and ships, aircraft, and rebuilt heavy-duty highway engines.[[2]](%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn2) The regulations will lead to significant increases in energy costs. Fur thermore, because the economic effect of the pro posed regulations will resemble the economic effect of an energy tax, the increase in costs creates a correspondingly large loss of national income. Using the CAA to regulate greenhouse gases will be very costly, even given the most generous assumptions. To make the best case for GHG regula tion, we assume that all of the problems of meeting currently enacted federal, state, and local legislation have been overcome.[[3]](%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn3)Even assuming these unlikely goals are met, restricting CO2 emissions by 70 per cent will damage the U.S. economy severely: Cumulative gross domestic product (GDP) losses are nearly $7 trillion by 2029 (in infla tion-adjusted 2008 dollars), according to The Heritage Foundation/Global Insight model (described in Appendix A). Single-year GDP losses exceed $600 billion (in inflation-adjusted 2008 dollars). Annual job losses exceed 800,000 for several years. Some industries will see job losses that exceed 50 percent.

### IMPACT: MANUFACTURING INTERNAL

#### REGULATIONS COLLAPSE THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR

**Kreutzer and Campbell 8**. [David W., Ph.D.,Senior Policy Analyst for Energy Economics and Climate Change, and Karen A., Ph.D., Policy Analyst in Macroeconomics, Center for Data Analysis at The Heritage Foundation, CO2-Emission Cuts: The Economic Costs of the EPA's ANPR Regulations, http://www.heritage.org/Research/EnergyandEnvironment/cda08-10.cfm]

Nevertheless, the net impact on a CO2-con strained economy is negative, since GDP is never higher than in the baseline scenario. Higher energy costs decrease the use of carbon-based energy in the production of goods, incomes fall, and demand for goods subsides. GDP declines in 2020 by $332 billion, in 2025 by $528 billion, and in 2029 by $632 billion. The aggregate income loss for the 20-year period is $6.8 trillion. All figures have been adjusted for inflation to reflect 2008 prices. This slowdown in GDP is seen more dramatically in the slump in manufacturing output. Again, the manufacturing industry benefits from the initial investment in new energy production and energy-efficient capital, but the manufacturing sector's declines are sharp thereafter. Indeed, by 2029, manufacturing output in this energy-sensitive sector will be 27 percent below what it would be if the ANPR proposals are never applied. In 2029, the manufacturing output is $1.48 trillion less than the baseline output; that is, when compared to the economic world without the CAA regulation of CO2. This is equivalent to losing more than 80,000 manufacturing firms. Aggregate manufacturing loss from 2010 to 2029 is $10.9 trillion.

### MANUFACTURING IMPACT – AUTO INDUSTRY

#### AUTO INDUSTRY MANUFACTURING KEY TO CONVENTIONAL READINESS.

**Gallagher 6** (Paul -- an economic analyst and editor for Executive Intelligence Review -- EIR – June 9th -- http://www.larouchepub.com/eirtoc/2006/eirtoc\_3325.html)

Auto production plants which are being idled in the United States this year and next—a total of nearly 80 million square feet of capacity full of very diverse and capable machine tools—are also being rapidly sold off at auctions, and their unmatched machine-tool capabilities lost to the national economy. Rather than simply being "idled" with the possibility of workforces returning and work resuming, these plants are disappearing under auctioneers' hammers almost as fast as they are shut down. A list of 65 major auto plants shutting down, and their capacities which may be lost, was featured in EIR, May 12, 2006 and in the LaRouche PAC pamphlet, Economic Recovery Act of 2006. The pattern of auctions, of which two examples are shown here, makes clear that the automakers and major auto supply producers, seeing at least 65-70 of their plants as unutilized capacity, do not plan or expect that capacity to come back into use for production of automobiles; rather, underutilization will continue to grow by outsourcing under conditions of rampant globalization. The pattern also presents a challenge to Congress to act fast to save this huge unutilized chunk of the auto sectors' machine-tool design and production capability, and use it for missions more urgent to the nation's economy than producing cars and light trucks to fill the ranks of lengthening traffic jams across the country. Lyndon LaRouche has proposed, and his LaRouche PAC is mobilized to get through Congress, a Federal Public Corporation to adopt the capacity the automakers are discarding, and use it to help build a new national infrastructure from high-speed rail lines to electric power. `No Longer Required' EIR's investigation shows that three major auto plants, closed within six months or less, were auctioned off in their entirety in the second half of May; and a fourth auction, in late April, sold off machinery for production of electrical systems from four different plants of Delphi Corporation: in Rochester, New York; Athens, Alabama; and Dayton and Moraine, Ohio. The complete plant contents auctioned were the General Motors transmission plant in Muncie, Indiana, hammered away in a three-day sale May 16-18; the metal stamping and machining plant known as "Chrysler machine," sold off in Toledo, Ohio on May 24-25; and the Delphi electrical systems plant in Irvine, California, auctioned on May 23. The Toledo plant's auction sale notice is shown in the illustration, marked "no longer required" by Chrysler. The featured machines in the sale included some of the largest and most capable metal presses used in the auto industry. The case of Muncie Manual Transmissions LLC, "one of the largest gear manufacturers in North America," is shown here in the auction company's brochure. Its illustrations make clear that most of the machines in this plant are quite new, built and bought since 1995. Virtually all of its machinery was auctioned off from May 16-18. "The building will be empty now," said one person present, and GM's plan is to demolish it immediately. That plant has some 600,000 square feet of production space, and had 300 remaining production workers before being closed. The workforce had recently used about 500 major machine tools in the plant; many had a replacement value of $500,000-1,000,000 each. All sold, according to the auction brochure, and the entire plant full of machinery apparently brought about $30 million. So a rough estimate might be that the machine tools were sold for 15 cents on the dollar of their replacement value for production. It is no secret that the purchasers at these auctions include other U.S. firms, scrap outfits, and foreign firms employing machine tools, including for production for export to the United States. People in the business indicate that the pace of these sales has been brisk for more than a decade; but the size of the auctions has definitely grown in the past two years or so, with large plants like this going under the hammer. "We also see a lot of aerospace tools" from Boeing and other companies, said one. As for the city of Muncie, it has been told to hope that the GM jobs that were lost, will be matched by new jobs gained—from a Sallie Mae "center for debt management"! Machine tools and productive skills will be "no longer required" there. Dissipation of Bankrupt's Assets In Delphi's case, a full 25 out of its 33 auto parts and supply plants in the country are on the management's list to close down or sell; in addition, others, like the Irvine electrical systems plant, have been closed in recent months. The management under CEO Steve Miller, who was brought in last year to declare the company bankrupt, are flouting the principles of bankruptcy by hiding the accounts of the company's outsourced foreign operations (already 75% of its total work!) while bankrupting and trying to liquidate only the U.S. capacity. On May 28, calls to the lawyers for parties contesting Delphi's filing in New York Federal bankruptcy court, found that with the exception of the UAW's lawyer, none of those attorneys was aware that the productive assets of the "bankrupt" company were being auctioned off. Sources say that the UAW has attempted to protest and stop the auctions of Delphi's plant and equipment in the court, but has been unable to do so. The attorney representing Delphi's shareholders said that the actions would not be permitted unless Delphi had sought and received permission from Judge Robert Drain to sell the machines. None of the attorneys knew whether Delphi had gotten Drain's approval, nor could this be learned from the judge's clerk. In any case, it is clear that the intention of Delphi's management is "globalization by bankruptcy," and that critical productive machinery of the "bankrupt" company is being dissipated—a violation of at least the spirit of the law—through auctions to other firms, other divisions, and other countries, because it does not intend to emerge from bankruptcy to produce again in the United States. And vital high-technology productive machine tools and other capacity of the U.S. national economy, essential for producing the infrastructure of productivity, are being lost. Had Congress already acted along the legislative lines LaRouche is calling for, this capacity could have been purchased by a Federal Public Corporation and saved for use in the critical purposes of building a new national economic infrastructure, and creating skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled employment. Another month's set of U.S. auto sales reports came in on June 2 and showed the urgent need to diversify the "product" of the auto industrial sector in this way, as it will not come back to building more autos for sale. Ford's U.S. sales through May are 3.3% below a year ago; Daimler-Chrysler's, 4.1% down; Ford-Volvo's 6.3% down; GM's, 4.6% down; Nissan's, 8.4% down. Toyota, Hyundai, and Mazda's sales are still up for the year, but the overall national trend is down. Total sales of cars and light trucks fell from a 16.7 million annual rate last May, to a 16.3 million rate this May, and the annual sales rate for January-May 2006 as a whole, is only 16.4 million units, compared to 16.9 million for all of 2005, and 17.1 million in 2004. Use It or Lose It International Association of Machinists president Thomas Buffenbarger charged in a Washington, D.C. speech May 15, "We have lost the ability to manufacture the means of our prosperity," and now Congress has given away "the ability of this country to defend itself" by outsourcing its machine-tool production in aerospace-defense and auto. Every week that Congress delays emergency legislation to save this remaining industrial power, more of it is lost, irretrievably. Auto skilled trades workers, machinists, and others among America's dwindling base of industrial production workers, realize that the loss of machine-tool and other skilled engineering employment in the United States, could end technological progress in our economy, and ruin our national security. In LaRouche PAC's one-hour documentary DVD on retooling and saving the auto industry, "Auto and World Economic Recovery," the auto unionists and Midwest elected officials interviewed all stressed the potential threat: The United States could find itself in a war, needing new munitions and related industrial production, with effectively all of our machine-tool design and production capability exported to other nations. These nations may not be allies, in part because of their exploitation by the very same low-wage outsourcing which made them the repositories of the machine tools now being auctioned off from Rochester, Toledo, and Irvine.

#### READINESS CHECKS NUCLEAR CONFLICT WITH CHINA AND OTHERS.

**Record 95** (JEFFREY prof , Department of Strategy and International Security @ USAF Air War College -- Parameters, Autumn, pp. 20-30. http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/parameters/1995/record.htm

In terms of training, sustainability, and weaponry, it is always better to be ready and modern than unready and obsolete. What Congress does not look at, because it is constitutionally incapable of doing so in a coherent fashion, is the broader and far more critical question: Ready for what? What exactly should we expect our military to do? Against whom do we modernize? Have we correctly identified future threats to our security and the proper forces for dealing with those threats? Are we breathlessly and blindly pursuing modernization for its own sake, or are we tying it in with the quality and pace of hostile competition? These are the questions I would like to address. Informed line-item judgments on readiness and modernization hinge on informed judgments at the level of strategy, whose formulation is the responsibility of the Executive Branch. Our present strategy portends an excessive readiness for the familiar and comfortable at the expense of preparation for the more likely and less pleasant. Introducing Realism Into Our Assessments The basis of present strategy is the Administration's Bottom-Up Review, a 1993 assessment of US force requirements in the post-Soviet-threat world. The assessment concluded, among other things, that the United States should maintain ground, sea, and air forces sufficient to prevail in two nearly simultaneous major regional contingencies. For planning purposes the assessment postulated another Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (and Saudi Arabia's eastern province) and another North Korean invasion of South Korea--two large and thoroughly conventional wars fought on familiar territory against familiar Soviet-model armies. Congressional and other critics rightly point to disparities between stated requirements for waging two major wars concurrently and the existing and planned forces that would actually be available. Shortfalls are especially pronounced in airlift, sealift, and long-range aerial bombardment. Critics also note that the Bottom-Up Review more or less ignores the impact of Haiti- and Somalia-like operations on our capacity to fight another Korean and another Persian Gulf war at the same time. Few in Congress or elsewhere, however, have questioned the realism of the scenario. How likely is it that we would be drawn into two major wars at the same time? What are the opportunity costs of preparing for such a prospect? The prospect of twin wars has been a bugaboo of US force planners since the eve of World War II--the only conflict in which the US military was in fact called upon to wage simultaneously what amounted to two separate wars. Chances for another world war, however, disappeared with the Soviet Union's demise. Moreover, two points should be kept in mind with respect to World War II. First, the two-front dilemma came about only because of Hitler's utterly gratuitous declaration of war on the United States just after Pearl Harbor--a move that has to go down as one of the most strategically stupid decisions ever undertaken by a head of state. Had Hitler instead declared that Germany had no quarrel with the United States, and therefore would remain at peace with it, President Roosevelt would have been hard put to obtain a congressional declaration of war on Germany, or, with one, to pursue a Germany-first strategy. Second, during World War II the United States was compelled to pursue a win-hold-win strategy against Germany and Japan, respectively, even though we spent 40 percent of the GNP on defense, placed 12 million Americans under arms, and had powerful allies (unlike Germany or Japan). We sought to--and did--defeat Germany first, while initially remaining on the strategic defense in the Pacific. In the decades since 1945, US planners persisted in postulating scenarios involving at least two concurrent conflicts, even though we have never had the resources to wage two big wars at the same time. Recall that the Vietnam conflict was a "half-war" in contemporary US force planning nomenclature. More to the point, our enemies have without exception refused to take advantage of our involvement in one war to start another one with us; not during the three years of the Korean War, the ten years of the Vietnam War, or the eight months of the Persian Gulf crisis of 1990-91. States almost always go to war for specific reasons independent of whether an adversary is already at war with another country. This is especially true for states contemplating potentially war-provoking acts against the world's sole remaining superpower. In none of the three major wars we have fought since 1945 did our enemies, when contemplating aggression, believe that their aggressive acts would prompt war with the United States. If prospects for being drawn into two large-scale conventional conflicts at the same time are remote, prudence dictates maintenance of sufficient military power to deal quickly and effectively with such conflicts one at a time. And for this we are well prepared. Our force structure remains optimized for interstate conventional combat, and it proved devastating in our last conventional war, against Saddam Hussein's large--albeit incompetently led--Soviet-model forces. Though most national military establishments in the Third World, which today includes much of the former Soviet Union, are incapable of waging large-scale conventional warfare, the few that are or have the potential to do so are all authoritarian states with ambitions hostile to US security interests. Among those states are Iran, Iraq, Syria, a radicalized Egypt, and China. Russia can be excluded for probably at least the next decade. Russia's conventional military forces have deteriorated to the point where they have great difficulty suppressing even small insurrections inside Russia's own borders. The humiliating performance of the Russian forces in Chechnya reveals the extent to which draft avoidance, demoralization, disobedience, desertion, political tension, professional incompetence, and the virtual collapse of combat support and combat service support capabilities have wrecked what just a decade ago was an army that awed many NATO force planners. China is included not just as a potential regional threat but as a potential global threat. We need to be wary of today's commonplace notion that the United States is the last superpower, that we will never again face the kind of global and robust threat to our vital security interests once posed by the Soviet Union, and before that, the Axis Powers. The present planning focus on regional conflict should not blind us to the probable emergence over the next decade or two of at least one regional superpower capable of delivering significant numbers of nuclear weapons over intercontinental distances and of projecting conventional forces well beyond their national frontiers. China comes first to mind. China's vast and talented population and spectacular economic performance could provide the foundation for a military challenge in Asia of a magnitude similar to that posed by the growth of Japanese military power in the 1930s. Our capacity for large-scale interstate conventional combat is indispensable to our security. It served us well in Korea and the Persian Gulf, where we continue to have vital interests threatened by adversaries who have amassed or are seeking to amass significant, and in the case of North Korea, vast amounts of conventional military power.

#### That causes extinction

Straits Times -2K 6-25-00.

Conflict on such a scale would embroil other countries far and near and -- horror of horrors -- raise the possibility of a nuclear war. Beijing has already told the US and Japan privately that it considers any country providing bases and logistics support to any US forces attacking China as belligerent parties open to its retaliation. In the region, this means South Korea, Japan, the Philippines and, to a lesser extent, Singapore. If China were to retaliate, east Asia will be set on fire. And the conflagration may not end there as opportunistic powers elsewhere may try to overturn the existing world order. With the US distracted, Russia may seek to redefine Europe's political landscape. The balance of power in the Middle East may be similarly upset by the likes of Iraq. In south Asia, hostilities between India and Pakistan, each armed with its own nuclear arsenal, could enter a new and dangerous phase. Will a full-scale Sino-US war lead to a nuclear war? According to General Matthew Ridgeway, commander of the US Eighth Army which fought against the Chinese in the Korean War, the US had at the time thought of using nuclear weapons against China to save the US from military defeat. In his book The Korean War, a personal account of the military and political aspects of the conflict and its implications on future US foreign policy, Gen Ridgeway said that US was confronted with two choices in Korea -- truce or a broadened war, which could have led to the use of nuclear weapons. If the US had to resort to nuclear weaponry to defeat China long before the latter acquired a similar capability, there is little hope of winning a war against China 50 years later, short of using nuclear weapons. The US estimates that China possesses about 20 nuclear warheads that can destroy major American cities. Beijing also seems prepared to go for the nuclear option. A Chinese military officer disclosed recently that Beijing was considering a review of its "non first use" principle regarding nuclear weapons. Major-General Pan Zhangqiang, president of the military-funded Institute for Strategic Studies, told a gathering at the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars in Washington that although the government still abided by that principle, there were strong pressures from the military to drop it. He said military leaders considered the use of nuclear weapons mandatory if the country risked dismemberment as a result of foreign intervention. Gen Ridgeway said that should that come to pass, we would see the destruction of civilisation.

### MANUFACTURING IMPACT - ECON IMPACT

#### THE IMPACT IS ECONOMIC COLLAPSE

**VARGO 3.** [Franklin, National Association of Manufacturers, “CHINA'S EXCHANGE RATE REGIME AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE U.S. ECONOMY” Federal News Service, 10-1, Lexis]

I would like to begin my statement with a review of why manufacturing is vital to the U.S. economy. Since manufacturing only represents about 16 percent of the nation's output, who cares? Isn't the United States a post-manufacturing services economy? Who needs manufacturing? The answer in brief is that the United States economy would collapse without manufacturing, as would our national security and our role in the world. That is because manufacturing is really the foundation of our economy, both in terms of innovation and production and in terms of supporting the rest of the economy. For example, many individuals point out that only about 3 percent of the U.S. workforce is on the farm, but they manage to feed the nation and export to the rest of the world. But how did this agricultural productivity come to be? It is because of the tractors and combines and satellite systems and fertilizers and advanced seeds, etc. that came from the genius and productivity of the manufacturing sector. Similarly, in services -- can you envision an airline without airplanes? Fast food outlets without griddles and freezers? Insurance companies or banks without computers? Certainly not. The manufacturing industry is truly the innovation industry, without which the rest of the economy could not prosper. Manufacturing performs over 60 percent of the nation's research and development. Additionally, it also underlies the technological ability of the United States to maintain its national security and its global leadership. Manufacturing makes a disproportionately large contribution to productivity, more than twice the rate of the overall economy, and pays wages that are about 20 percent higher than in other sectors. But its most fundamental importance lies in the fact that a healthy manufacturing sector truly underlies the entire U.S. standard of living -because it is the principal way by which the United States pays its way in the world. Manufacturing accounts for over 80 percent of all U.S. exports of goods. America's farmers will export somewhat over $50 billion this year, but America's manufacturers export almost that much event month! Even when services are included, manufacturing accounts for two-thirds of all U.S. exports of goods and services. If the U.S. manufacturing sector were to become seriously impaired, what combination of farm products together with architectural, travel, insurance, engineering and other services could make up for the missing two-thirds of our exports represented by manufactures? The answer is "none." What would happen instead is the dollar would collapse, falling precipitously -- not to the reasonable level of 1997, but far below it -and with this collapse would come high U.S. inflation, a wrenching economic downturn and a collapse in the U.S. standard of living and the U.S. leadership role in the world. That, most basically, is why the United States cannot become a "nation of shopkeepers."

### MANUFACTURING IMPACT - HEG IMPACT

#### MANUFACTURING IS KEY TO HEG – innovation, leadership, readiness.

**VARGO 3.** [Franklin, National Association of Manufacturers, “CHINA'S EXCHANGE RATE REGIME AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE U.S. ECONOMY” Federal News Service, 10-1, Lexis]

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#### Decline in Hegemony causes multiple great power wars

Kagan 8--senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Robert, “End of Dreams, Return of History”, To Lead the World, 2008, p. 44-5.

People who believe that a multipolar order would be preferable to the present American predominance often succumb to a basic logical fallacy. They believe that the international order the world enjoys today exists inde- pendently of American power. They imagine that in a world in which Ameri- can power was diminished, the aspects of international order that they like would remain in place. But that is not the way it works. International order does not rest on ideas and institutions. It is shaped by configurations of power. The international order we know today reflect the distribution of power in the world since World War II, and especially since the end of the cold war. A different configuration of power, a multipolar world, in which the poles were Russia, China, the United States, India, and Europe, would produce its own kind of order, with different rules and norms reflecting the interests of the powerful states that would have a hand in shaping it. Would that interna- tional order be all improvement? Perhaps for Beijing and Moscow it would. But it is doubtful 'that it would suit the tastes of enlightenment liberals in the United States and Europe. The current order, of course, not only is far from perfect but also offers no guarantee against major conflict among the world s great powers. Even under the umbrella of unipolarity, regional conflicts involving the large powers may erupt. War could erupt between China and Taiwan and draw in both the United States and Japan. War could erupt between Russia and Georgia, forcing The United States and its European allies to decide to intervene or suffer the consequences of a Russian victory. Conflict between India and Pakistan remains possible, as does conflict between Iran and Israel or other .Middle Eastern states. These, too, could draw in other great powers, includ- ing the United States. Such conflicts may be unavoidable no matter what policies the United States pursues. But they are more likely to erupt if the United States weakens or withdraws from its positions of regional dominance. This is especially true in East Asia, where most nations agree that a reliable American power has a stabilizing and pacific effect on the region. In Europe, too, the departure of the United States from the scene---even if it remained the world's most powerful nation-could be destabilizing. It could tempt Russia to an even more over- bearing and potentially forceful approach to unruly nations on its periphery. In the Middle East, competition for influence among powers both inside and outside the region has raged for at least two centuries. The rise of lslamic fundamentalism does not change this. It only adds a new and more threaten- ing dimension to the competition, which neither a sudden end to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians nor an immediate American withdrawal from Iraq would change. The region and the states within it remain relatively weak. A diminution of American influence would not be followed by a dimi- nution of other external influences. An American withdrawal from Iraq will not return dungs to "normal" or to a new kind of stability in the region. It will produce a new instability, one likely to draw the United States back in again. The alternative to American predominance in the region is not balance and peace. It is further competition. The alternative to American regional predominance, in short, is not a new regional stability. In an era of burgeoning nationalism, the future is likely to be one of intensified competition among nations and nationalist movements. Difficult as it may be to extend American predominance into the future, no one should imagine that a reduction of American power or a retraction of American influence and global involvement will provide an easier path.

### AT: WARMING

#### The impact on overall warming is negligible

**Lieberman 10**. [Ben, JD from George Washington Senior Policy Analyst in Energy and the Environment in the Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation, EPA's Global Warming Regulations: A Threat to American Agriculture, http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2010/04/EPAs-Global-Warming-Regulations-A-Threat-to-American-Agriculture]

Last June, America's Climate Security Act was withdrawn by its Senate supporters after only three days of debate. A Heritage Foundation analysis de tailed the costs of the bill, which included a 29 per cent increase in the price of gasoline, net job losses well into the hundreds of thousands, and an overall reduction in gross domestic product of $1.7 to $4.8 trillion by 2030.[[2]](#_ftn2) At the time of the debate, gasoline was approaching $4 per gallon for the first time in history, and signs of a slowing economy were begin ning to emerge. Economically speaking, the bill was one of the last items on the agenda that Americans wanted, and its Senate sponsors recognized that. Beyond the costs, the bill would have--even assum ing the worst case scenarios of future warming-- likely reduced the earth's future temperature by an amount too small to verify.[[3]](#_ftn3)

#### Other nations won’t model EPA regulations

**Lieberman 10**. [Ben, JD from George Washington Senior Policy Analyst in Energy and the Environment in the Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies at The Heritage Foundation, EPA's Global Warming Regulations: A Threat to American Agriculture, http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2010/04/EPAs-Global-Warming-Regulations-A-Threat-to-American-Agriculture]

The impact on the overall econ omy, as measured by gross domestic product (GDP), is substantial. The cumulative GDP losses for 2010 to 2029 approach $7 trillion. Single-year losses exceed $600 billion in 2029, more than $5,000 per house hold. (See Chart 1.) Job losses are expected to exceed 800,000 in some years, and exceed at least 500,000 from 2015 through 2026. (See Chart 2). Note that these are net job losses, after any jobs created by compliance with the regulations--so-called green jobs--are taken into account. Hardest-hit are man ufacturing jobs, with losses approaching 3 million. (See Chart 3). Particularly vulnerable are jobs in durable manufacturing (28 percent job losses), machinery manufacturing (57 percent), textiles (27.6 percent), electrical equipment and appli ances (22 percent), paper (36 percent), and plastics and rubber products (54 percent). It should be noted that since the EPA rule is unilateral and few other nations are likely to follow the U.S. lead, many of these manufacturing jobs will be out sourced overseas.

#### Causes Carbon leakage and LDC shift – guts econ and competitiveness without reducing CO2

**Institute for 21st Century Energy, 9** (Institute for 21st Century Energy, US Chamber of Commerce, 4/21, http://energyxxi.org/sites/default/files/ClimateChange101.pdf

What would happen if the cap on carbon is too stringent? The price of energy and nearly all consumer goods would skyrocket. Companies could decide to move to a different country that does not regulate carbon dioxide emissions. For instance, if the U.S. were to regulate carbon emissions, an American company may decide to shut down its domestic operations and instead relocate to a country like China or India that does not regulate emissions. So-called “carbon leakage” could undermine the effectiveness of cap and trade because it would harm the U.S. economy by sending jobs overseas and would fail to reduce global emissions, thereby mitigating any environmental benefits to the program.

## \*\*\*Obama Good EPA Regs Good\*\*\*

### EXT: MODELLING

#### U.S. ACTION IS CRUCIAL FOR LEADERSHIP AND FOR OTHER COUNTRIES TO FOLLOW.

**WIRTH et al 03** (Timothy E, President of the UN Foundation – along with C. Boyden Gray and John D. Podesta – also of the UN Foundation, “The Future of Energy Policies,” Foreign Affairs, July/August, p. 132, lexis).

Energy is a common thread weaving through the fabric of critical American interests and global challenges. U.S. strategic energy policy must take into account the three central concerns outlined above -- economic security, environmental protection, and poverty alleviation -- and set aggressive goals for overcoming them. Leadership from Washington is critical because the [U.S.] United States is so big, so economically powerful, and so vulnerable to oil shocks and terrorism. This is a time of opportunity, too -- a major technological revolution is beginning in energy, with great potential markets. And finally, the reality is that where the [U.S.] United States goes, others will likely follow. America's example for good or for ill sets the tempo and the direction of action far beyond its borders and far into the future.

#### AND US CLIMATE POLICY IS MODELLED INTERNATIONALLY.

**Paltsev et al 7** (Sergey, Assessment of US Cap-and-trade proposals, research of MIT’s Joint Program on the Science and Policy of Global Change, a joint center sponsored by the Center for Global Change Science and the Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research, http://tisiphone.mit.edu/RePEc/mee/wpaper/2007-005.pdf)

Also at issue is the equitable sharing of the cost burden of emissions reduction. Such equity concerns are inextricably linked to the strategic objective of getting other countries to mitigate their own greenhouse gas emissions. Poorer countries see a U.S. and developed world that has freely emitted CO2 over the history of fossil use, and are thus responsible for the level of concentrations we see today. And they see economies with far higher incomes that are in a better position to afford the burden of mitigation. Thus, a perception of the U.S. taking on an equitable share of the burden of abatement is probably essential if the U.S. policy is going to serve the strategic goal of moving climate policy forward elsewhere. These issues are well beyond the scope of this analysis but consideration of them is essential in determining the best policy for the U.S.

### EXT: EPA REGS SOLVE WARMING

#### EPA regulations limit industrial pollution – solve warming

**Smith et al 7.** [Brian, Earth Justice, EPA Petitioned to Reduce Global Warming Pollution from Ships, DA 7-15-2010, http://www.earthjustice.org/news/press/007/epa-petitioned-to-reduce-global-warming-pollution-from-ships.html]

The April 2007 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court clearly established that the Clean Air Act gives the EPA authority to address global warming. The EPA must act immediately and issue regulations to limit pollution that contributes to global warming. The petitions filed today begin the process of imposing mandatory regulations on the marine transportation sector. The petitioners asked the EPA to respond within 180 days. The Climate Change Problem The science is unequivocal. Global climate change is real, occurring at an alarming rate with catastrophic consequences, and is caused primarily by human activity. Ships are major sources of greenhouse gas emissions. The global fleet of marine vessels releases almost three percent of the world's carbon dioxide, an amount comparable to the emissions of Canada. Because of their huge number and inefficient operating practices, marine vessels release a large volume of global warming pollutants, particularly carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and black carbon (or soot). Despite their impact on the global climate, greenhouse gas emissions from ships are not currently regulated by the United States government.  In addition, these emissions are not limited under the Kyoto Protocol or other international treaties that address global warming. Ships' Contribution to the Climate Change Problem Global shipping activity has increased by three percent per year for the last three decades and this rate of growth is projected to increase. If fuel use remains unchanged, shipping pollution will increase substantially, potentially doubling from 2002 levels by 2020 and tripling by 2030. "Global warming pollution from ships is a substantial problem. But fortunately, it's one that can be solved," said Danielle Fugere of Friends of the Earth. "Slower speeds, cleaner fuels, better ships -- the steps that the shipping industry must take are clear. It's up to the EPA to ensure these steps are taken." Why We Should Care Climate change is already causing widespread melting of Arctic glaciers and sea ice, shortening the snow season and raising global temperatures.   The resulting sea level rise could eliminate up to 22 percent of the worlds coastal wetlands and as much as 43 percent of U.S. wetlands. Wetlands provide habitat, protect against floods and storm surges and contribute to local economies. Our oceans and freshwater environments, including organisms at the bottom of the aquatic food chain, are already under stress from climate change. Ranges of algae, plankton and fish have shifted in response to changes in water temperature, ice cover, oxygen content, salinity and circulation. If they die off, entire aquatic ecosystems will follow. Among the species that are struggling to adapt to rapidly changing habitats are cold-water fish, such as salmon and cod, polar bears, walruses, seals, whales, caribou, reindeer, corals, turtles and countless species of migrating sea birds. "If we're going to slow the Arctic melt-down and save Arctic species, we must control global warming pollution from ships," said Kassie Siegel, Climate Program Director for the Center for Biological Diversity. "Implementing the solutions in the petition is the first step toward slowing warming and protecting these species' future." Human health is also impacted by climate change caused by global warming pollution. Climate-related illnesses include air-quality related heart and lung disease, heat-stroke, malnutrition, and casualties from fires, storms and floods. "Climate change is threatening ocean life from the Arctic to the tropics. Shipping pollution has been given a free pass so far and it's way past time to fix that," said Dr. Michael Hirshfield, Oceana's Senior Vice President for North America and Chief Scientist.

#### EPA regulation is key to solve warming

**McGowan,** 6/30/**2010** (“Clean Air Act Proving Effective in CO2 Regulation, Lawyers Tell Their Corporate Clients” http://solveclimate.com/blog/20100630/clean-air-act-proving-effective-co2-regulation-lawyers-tell-their-corporate-clients)

Under the Obama administration, the subtext at EPA is that Congress should be crafting climate change legislation but that the agency will move ahead in the meantime, McKinstry explained. While progress was snail-like after the spring of 2007 when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that EPA has the authority to regulate greenhouse gases, the agency picked up the pace after Lisa Jackson took over as administrator. Since issuing the endangerment finding in December 2009—which officially found emissions of mobile sources to threaten human health and welfare—EPA has taken several steps forward with insider-baseball names such as the mobile source rule, the trigger rule, the tailoring rule and the reporting rule. Briefly, these rules mean industrial sources of greenhouse gases will be regulated through a process that rolls out gradually over the coming years. For example, the tailoring rule will require about 550 large industrial manufacturers and landfills to obtain permits for emissions beginning in January 2011, with about 900 additional polluters coming under regulatory review each year thereafter.

### EXT: WARMING – MAND. REPORT RULE SOLVES

#### MANDATORY REPORTING RULE KEY TO LIMIT EMISSIONS – INCENTIVIZES INDUSTRY COMPLIANCE.

**FRENKIL 10**. [David, JD @ George Washington Law, assistant editor of Carbon and Climate Law Review, “Making Sense of EPA’s Climate Regulations” Energy Efficiency & Climate Change Law -- http://www.efficiencylaw.com/2010/02/making-sense-of-epas-climate-regulations/]

Mandatory Reporting Rule This rule establishes an economy-wide system for mandatory reporting of GHGs that provides much broader scope and detail than a previous EPA rule requiring reporting of greenhouse gas emissions from electric generation facilities (see 40 C.F.R. Part 75.13 and 75.64). The EPA anticipates that the new rule will apply to approximately 10,000 facilities that account for approximately 85% of GHG emissions in the United States. Facilities subject to the rule consist of entities from a wide spectrum of industries. The industries with the most number of covered entities include utilities, waste treatment, natural gas suppliers, manufacturers of paper, steel and cement, and oil refineries. These facilities were required to begin emissions monitoring in January 2010. The information accumulated during this mandatory monitoring is required to be submitted in detailed annual reports to the EPA beginning in 2011 and will be made available to the public, while other data submitted to EPA (e.g., production and process data) may be protected under the agency’s procedures governing confidential business information. Although the EPA Mandatory Reporting Rule will provide consistent information among covered entities, many public companies will not qualify for the EPA program because only approximately 10,000 entities will be covered by the new EPA rule. This means that more than 70,000 entities emitting at least 1,000 million tons of GHGs will be without consistent reporting standards. However, this rule is expected to create new opportunities for industry and government policy. (i) New Opportunities for the Private Sector It is expected that such reporting standards will create incentives for these facilities to reduce their GHG emissions because monitoring of a company’s emissions might expose opportunities for reducing energy consumption and, thus, operating expenses. The rule creates an opportunity for many facilities to identify major sources of emissions along with potential emission reduction options. It also prescribes a separate GHG monitoring and reporting methodology for each affected sector. Additionally, many affected facilities will be required to sample and test fuel, or install accurate devices to measure facility output and emissions. The proposed rules regarding New Source Review and Title V Permits, as discussed below, will also provide opportunities for reducing energy consumption, GHG emissions and cost because it requires large emitters to acquire permits that would demonstrate they are using the best practices and technologies to minimize GHG emissions. Further, as with companies that rank high on the EPA’s Toxic Release Inventories (TRI) list, companies that report a high level of GHG emissions under the new EPA rule may face public scrutiny and pressure to reduce emissions. This would certainly create incentives for public companies to improve their management of GHGs because the stock market reacts negatively to evidence of poor environmental management.

### 2NC ENVIRO. LEADERSHIP IMPACT

#### U.S. CLIMATE ACTION KEY TO PREVENT THE COLLAPSE OF OVERALL LEADERSHIP.

**Walter 2** (Norbert, Chief Economist @ Deutsche Bank Group, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9907E7DE1F3CF93BA1575BC0A9649C8B63>)

At present there is much talk about the unparalleled strength of the United States on the world stage. Yet at this very moment the most powerful country in the world stands to forfeit much political capital, moral authority and international good will by dragging its feet on the next great global issue: the environment. Before long, the administration's apparent unwillingness to take a leadership role -- or, at the very least, to stop acting as a brake -- in fighting global environmental degradation will threaten the very basis of the American supremacy that many now seem to assume will last forever. American authority is already in some danger as a result of the Bush administration's decision to send a low-level delegation to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg -- low-level, that is, relative to America's share of both the world economy and global pollution. The absence of President Bush from Johannesburg symbolizes this decline in authority. In recent weeks, newspapers around the world have been dominated by environmental headlines: In central Europe, flooding killed dozens, displaced tens of thousands and caused billions of dollars in damages. In South Asia, the United Nations reports a brown cloud of pollution that is responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths a year from respiratory disease. The pollution (80 percent man-made) also cuts sunlight penetration, thus reducing rainfall, affecting agriculture and otherwise altering the climate. Many other examples of environmental degradation, often related to the warming of the atmosphere, could be cited. What they all have in common is that they severely affect countries around the world and are fast becoming a chief concern for people everywhere. Nobody is suggesting that these disasters are directly linked to anything the United States is doing. But when a country that emits 25 percent of the world's greenhouse gases acts as an uninterested, sometimes hostile bystander in the environmental debate, it looks like unbearable arrogance to many people abroad. The administration seems to believe it is merely an observer -- that environmental issues are not its issues. But not doing anything amounts to ignoring a key source of world tension, and no superpower that wants to preserve its status can go on dismissing such a pivotal dimension of political and economic -- if not existential -- conflict. In my view, there is a clear-cut price to be paid for ignoring the views of just about every other country in the world today. The United States is jettisoning its hard-won moral and intellectual authority and perhaps the strategic advantages that come with being a good steward of the international political order. The United States may no longer be viewed as a leader or reliable partner in policymaking: necessary, perhaps inevitable, but not desirable, as it has been for decades. All of this because America's current leaders are not willing to acknowledge the very real concerns of many people about global environmental issues.

#### U.S. environmental leadership prevents global environmental destruction that risks planetary extinction

**Harris ’01** (Paul G., Lecturer @ Lignan U, Hong Kong And Associate Fellow at the Oxford Center for Environment, Ethics, and Society at Mansfield College, Oxford University, The Environment, International Relations, and U.S. Foreign Policy, p. 241-2)

Environment, Equity, and U.S. Foreign Policy: Normative Implications In addition to promoting U.S. global interests, a more robust acceptance by the U.S. government of international equity as an objective of global environmental policy—and indeed of foreign policy generally—has potentially **beneficial implications for humankind.** Implementation of the equity provisions of international environmental arrangements may reduce human suffering by helping to prevent changes to local, regional, and global environmental commons that would adversely affect people, most notably the many poor people in the economically developing countries who are least able to cope with environmental changes. Insofar as environmental protection policies focus on sustainable economic development, human suffering may be mitigated as developing countries—especially the least-developed countries—are aided in meeting the basic needs of their citizens. Economic disparities within and between countries are growing. At least one-fifth of the world’s population already lives in the squalor of absolute poverty.59 This situation can be expected to worsen in the future. If this process can be mitigated or reversed by international policies focusing on environmentally sustainable economic development, human well-being on a global scale will rise. ‘What is more, international cooperative efforts to protect the environment that are made more likely and more effective by provisions for international equity will help governments protect their own environment and the global environment if they are successful. Insofar as the planet is one biosphere—that it is in the case of ozone depletion and climate change seems indisputable-persons in every local and national community are simultaneously members of an interdependent whole. Most activities, especially widespread activities in the United States and the rest of the industrialized world, including the release of ozone-destroying chemicals and greenhouse gases, are likely to adversely affect many or possibly all persons on the planet. Efforts to prevent such harm or make amends for historical harm (i.e., past pollution, which is especially important in these examples because many pollutants continue doing harm for years and often decades) require that most communities work together. Indeed, affluent lifestyles in the United States, ‘Western Europe, and other developed areas may harm people in poor areas of the world more than they will harm those enjoying such lifestyles because the poor are ill-equipped to deal with the consequences.6° Furthermore, by concerning themselves with the consequences of their actions on the global poor and polluted, Americans and the citizens of other developed countries will be helping their immediate neighbors—and themselves—in the long run. Actualization of international equity in conjunction with sustainable development may help prevent damage to the natural environment worldwide, thereby promoting human prosperity. The upshot is that the United States has not gone far enough in actively accepting equity as an objective of global environmental policy. It ought to go further in doing so for purely self-interested reasons. But there are more than self-interested reasons for the United States to move in this direction. It ought to embrace international equity as an objective of its global environmental policy for ethical reasons as well. We can find substantial ethical justification for the United States, in concert with other developed countries, to support politically and financially the codification and implementation of international equity considerations in international environmental agreements. The United States ought to be a leader in supporting a fair and just distribution among countries of the benefits, burdens, and decision-making authority associated with international environmental relations.61 To invoke themes found in the corpus of ethical philosophy (but without here assuming the burden of philosophical exegesis!), the United States ought to adopt policies that engender international equity in at least the environmental field (1) to protect the health and well-being of the human species; (2) to promote basic human rights universally; (3) to help the poor be their own moral agents (a Kantian rationale); (4) to help right past wrongs and to take responsibility for past injustices (i.e., past and indeed ongoing U.S. pollution of the global environment); (5) to aid the world’s least-advantaged people and countries (a Rawlsian-like conception); (6) and to fhlflll the requirement of impartiality (among other ethical reasons)62—all in addition to the more dearly self-interested justification that doing so will bolster U.S. credibility and influence in international environmental negotiations and contemporary global politics more generally. One might argue, therefore, that the United States ought to be aiding the developing countries to achieve sustainable development because to do so may simultaneously reduce human suffering and reduce or potentially reverse environmental destruction that could otherwise threaten the healthy survival of the human species**.** Insofar as human-caused pollution and resource exploitation deny individuals and their communities the capacity to survive in a healthy condition, the United States, which consumes vastly more than necessary, has an obligation to stop that unnecessary consumption. From this basic rights perspective,63 the U.S. government should also take steps to reduce substantially the emissions of pollutants from within the United States that harm people in other countries.64 The United States ought to refrain from unsustainable use of natural resources and from pollution of environmental commons shared by people living in other countries—or at least make a good effort toward that end—because the people affected by these activities cannot reasonably be expected to support them (we would not be treating them as independent moral agents, to make a Kantian argument65)

### AT: HURTS THE ECONOMY

#### EPA regulations would be phased in – ensures business stability

**NYT** 2/22 **2010**, “E.P.A. Plans to Phase in Regulation of Emissions,” http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/23/business/energy-environment/23epa.html

Facing wide criticism over their recent finding that greenhouse gases endanger the public welfare, top Environmental Protection Agency officials said Monday that any regulation of such gases would be phased in gradually and would not impose expensive new rules on most American businesses. The E.P.A.’s administrator, Lisa P. Jackson, wrote in a letter to eight coal-state Democrats who have sought a moratorium on regulation that only the biggest sources of greenhouse gases would be subjected to limits before 2013. Smaller ones would not be regulated before 2016, she said. “I share your goals of ensuring economic recovery at this critical time and of addressing greenhouse gas emissions in sensible ways that are consistent with the call for comprehensive energy and climate legislation,” Ms. Jackson wrote.

#### EPA regulations will be cost effective – claims of harsh regulation, economic or industry collapse are scare tactics

**Sierra Club 2009**, Q&A for EPA Endangerment Determination, “http://action.sierraclub.org/site/PageServer?pagename=adv\_bigpicture\_endangerment\_qa

This action is part of President Obama's comprehensive clean energy jobs plan. It will help shift U.S. energy production toward cleaner, cheaper sources like the wind and the sun and spur the creation of millions of new clean energy jobs. Building the clean energy economy is the key to getting our economy back on track and reducing our dependence on oil and coal. EPA will only issue the same kind of common sense regulations for carbon dioxide as it has for dozens of other pollutants for decades-regulations that protect both the environment and help grow the economy. In fact, the law only allows EPA to impose regulations that can be implemented on a cost-effective basis. Suggestions that these regulations will bankrupt companies and devastate the economy are merely scare tactics used by people who will say anything to protect Big Oil, Big Coal, and other polluters.

### AT: HURTS CHEM INDUSTRY

#### Emissions limits increase demand for chemical industry products – offsets losses

**CAMPOY 9**. [ANA, journalist, “Chemical makers poised to gain in new cap and trade system” Wall Street Journal – Jun 5]

With legislation pending in Congress that could put a price on greenhouse-gas emissions, the energy-gulping chemical industry is trying to position itself to emerge as an unlikely winner. Chemical makers are one of the biggest energy users among manufacturers, expelling about 5% of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions, according to government data. They face heavy costs under a proposed system to cap emissions that would require the industry to purchase permits to pollute. But a so-called cap-and-trade system would also boost demand for some chemical companies' products, from insulation to solar-panel components, because those products would help others cut back on the energy use. "This is really our sweet spot," said Calvin Dooley, chief executive of the American Chemistry Council, an industry trade group.

## \*\*\*October Surprise Internals\*\*\*

### Obama Will Strike in Oct.

#### Obama would strike Iran

Haaretz '11

Chemi Shalev "Will a U.S. attack on Iran become Obama's 'October Surprise'?" 12/27/11 [www.haaretz.com/blogs/west-of-eden/will-a-u-s-attack-on-iran-become-obama-s-october-surprise-1.403898](http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/west-of-eden/will-a-u-s-attack-on-iran-become-obama-s-october-surprise-1.403898) 6/28/12

As to the substance of American policy, Israelis appear to have persuaded themselves that, despite his vigorous prosecution of the war in Afghanistan and his successful and deadly pursuit of al-Qaida, Obama remains “soft” on Iran and will ultimately back down when push comes to shove. This perception has been fed by Obama’s ill-fated attempt to “engage” with Iran, his initial courtship of the Arab and Muslim world, what is widely perceived as his pro-Palestinian tendencies – and the overall animosity and prejudice directed at the president by many of his detractors. The Republicans are so convinced, in fact, that they are basing much of their foreign policy campaign against Obama on the assumption that he will ultimately capitulate to Tehran. That may be a dangerous assumption on their part. In his speech at the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony in December 2009 – possibly forgotten because of the ridiculously premature or spectacularly misdirected awarding of the prize - Obama spoke of a "just war" which can be waged “as a last resort or in self-defense”. After warning of the danger posed by Iran’s nuclear campaign, he said “those who seek peace cannot stand idly by as nations arm themselves for nuclear war.” In the days after that speech in Oslo, Christian theologian Reinhold Niebuhr was often cited as a source of inspiration for Obama, and it was Niebuhr who wrote, “contemporary history refutes the idea that nations are drawn into war too precipitately. It proves, on the contrary, that it is the general inclination of democratic nations at least to hesitate so long before taking this fateful plunge that the dictator nations gain a fateful advantage over them.” Obama may not want to fall into that pattern. People believe what they want to believe, but Obama has already proven - in Afghanistan, in Libya, in the offensive against al-Qaida, in the drone war in Somalia, Pakistan and Yemen – that he is no pacifist and does not shy way from using military force when necessary. And while he has stuck to his prepared script that “all options are on the table," people who have heard Obama speak about Iran in closed sessions have no doubt that if all else fails, including “crippling” sanctions and international isolation, Obama would order a U.S. attack on Iran, if he was convinced, as he appears to be, that it posed a clear and present danger to America’s national security.

#### An “October Surprise” strike on Iran would clinch the election for Obama

Haaretz '11

Chemi Shalev "Will a U.S. attack on Iran become Obama's 'October Surprise'?" 12/27/11 [www.haaretz.com/blogs/west-of-eden/will-a-u-s-attack-on-iran-become-obama-s-october-surprise-1.403898](http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/west-of-eden/will-a-u-s-attack-on-iran-become-obama-s-october-surprise-1.403898) 6/28/12

But there are other profound drawbacks to an Israeli attack and corresponding advantages to an American offensive. An Israeli attack would rally the Arab and Muslim world behind Iran, strengthen radical Islamists, neutralize potentially sympathetic countries as Saudi Arabia and further distance Turkey from Israel and the West. The U.S. would have no choice but to support Israel, even though such support would inflame animosity toward Washington throughout the Muslim world. An American attack, on the other hand, would restore Washington’s stature and power of deterrence in the Arab world, could unite most of the Sunni monarchies and oil Sheikdoms in tacit assistance, at the very least, for the military effort, could facilitate Turkish neutrality and enable European support, and would sideline the incendiary issue of Israel, just as it did when Jerusalem maintained a “low profile” during the first two Gulf wars. It might also decrease the intensity of a combined Iranian-Hamas-Hezbollah and possibly Syrian counterattack against Israel, and would, in any case, free Israel to defend itself and to effectively deal with such an onslaught. And yes, though hardly devoid of risks, it might very well ensure Barack Obama’s reelection next November. 3. To be sure, despite Republican protestations to the contrary, American voters are ambivalent about a U.S. attack on Iran. In a recent Quinnipiac University Survey, 55 per cent of voters said the U.S. should not take military action against Iran – but 50 per cent would nonetheless support it, if all else fails. And 88 per cent believe that a nuclear Iran posed a serious threat or a somewhat serious threat to American national security. In the end, it would all come down to timing. The closer to elections that an American attack on Iran would take place, the more it would work in Obama’s favor. Though his left wing flank and possibly large chunks of the Democratic Party would not differentiate between Iraq and Iran, would draw historic parallels with the Bush Administration’s bogus evidence of Iraq’s WMD capabilities and would vehemently criticize Obama for “betraying his principles” - Obama would probably sway most independents and even moderate Republicans who would be swept up in the initial, patriotic wave of support for a campaign against a country that the Republican candidates for the presidency have described as America’s number one enemy. And Obama could point out to the American public that contrary to Iraq, no ground troops would be involved in Iran. A significantly earlier attack, however, would be far riskier. The initial patriotic fervor might dissipate and the wider ramifications would begin to sink in, including potential Iranian retaliation against American targets, and, perhaps more significantly, the disruption of oil supplies, an unprecedented spike in oil prices and an ensuing and crippling blow to U.S. economic recovery. If one wants to be absolutely cynical, perhaps Panetta’s one-year deadline was intentionally calibrated with this election timeline. Though there is no basis to suspect Obama of making political calculations, and without detracting from what is sure to be a serious American effort to get sanctions and possibly regime change to do the trick – October would be ideal. That’s the month that Henry Kissinger chose in 1972 to prematurely declare that “peace is at hand” in Vietnam, thus turning Richard Nixon’s certain victory over George McGovern into a landslide; that’s the month that Ronald Reagan feared Jimmy Carter would use in 1980 in order to free the Iran hostages and stop the Republican momentum; and that’s the month that many of Obama’s opponents are already jittery about, fearing the proverbial “October Surprise” that would hand Obama his second term on a platter. Two things are certain: the Republicans, who are now goading Obama for being soft on Iran and beating their own war drums, would reverse course in mid air with nary a blink and accuse the president of playing politics with American lives and needlessly embroiling it in a war which probably could have been avoided if he had been tough on Iran in the first place. And what about the Jewish vote? That would be Obama’s, lock, stock and barrel, including those Jewish voters who cannot forgive him for the Cairo speech, the bow to King Abdullah, the 1967 borders, the lack of chemistry with Netanyahu and that the fact that he has yet to produce evidence that he isn’t, after all, a closet Muslim. And in Israel, no doubt about it, he would be forever revered as the ultimate Righteous Gentile.

#### Obama will strike Iran if he starts to lose the election- prefer our evidence- media reports underestimate this risk

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So when will this war begin. Well, let me put it this way: The Iranians should carefully watch Obama’s poll numbers. If those numbers continue their slide downwards, the Iranians are going get the heck bombed out of them. Americans are extremely reluctant to change Presidents in the middle of a war. Obama knows this and is expected to act accordingly. Some conservative writers and commentators expect that war in the Middle East is currently scheduled for October 2012. That would be the famed “October Surprise.” On the other hand, those in my camp believe the Iranians, in all their hyped-up passion, will do something stupid like firing on a tanker or a US warship or aircraft, or even worse, make an attempt to close the Straits of Hormuz by sewing it with mines and other hazards to maritime traffic. That would be the spark that would bring down the considerable wrath of that naval armada lying off their shores. Then there are the Israelis. They have had enough of Iran’s threats and Iran’s war on Israel by proxy. Israel’s secret war of sabotage in Iran can only deliver limited success at delaying and derailing Iran’s race to build or acquire a nuclear bomb. Israel could decide, at any moment, that enough is enough and launch their fighter-bombers and cruise missiles at Iran’s nuclear facilities. Even if it only buys a few months or a couple of years of breathing space for Israel, it is becoming clear there is no other way to effectively deter Iran from building their coveted Islam Bomb. The situation in the Middle East today is far, far, more dangerous than the US media is reporting. A single spark will ignite a devastating war that will affect practically every nation on earth to some degree or other. Those of us who continue to sound the warning bell of a huge war in the Middle East are being compared to the boy Peter in the story of “Peter and the Wolf.” An article at Haaretz.com noted that those who make such public comparisons seem always to leave out the end of Aesop’s famous tale of the boy who called wolf too much. In the end, the wolf actually DID come — and the sheep were slaughtered. (SOURCE) So, with that ending in mind, I have no concern about continually pointing to those dark, foreboding, clouds gathering in the east. Since the mainstream media seems to be ignoring a certain war to protect Obama’s prospects in the coming election, someone must stand as a watchman on the ramparts and sound the alarm when clouds of dust from the approaching armies of the enemy is sighted and when the sound of distant war drums is heard. Today those dust clouds are clearly seen over the horizon and the pounding of the drums can be heard in the distance — and we are sounding the alarm.

#### October surprise possible- election fate and Jewish vote determine strikes

Paul R. **Pillar**, in his 28 years at the Central Intelligence Agency, rose to be one of the agency’s top analysts. He is now a visiting professor at Georgetown University for security studies. **3-7**-2012 <http://consortiumnews.com/2012/03/07/an-israeli-october-surprise-on-obama/>

The greatest danger the United States (and any peace-loving person in the Middle East) currently faces is that Barak and Prime Minister Netanyahu will spring an October surprise (or a surprise in any month between now and the first Tuesday of November) in the form of an armed attack on Iran. [For more on a historical precedent, see Consortiumnews.com’s “The CIA/Likud Sinking of Jimmy Carter.”] A key consideration for them is the possibly different reactions of a U.S. president facing a fight for reelection (while also facing that political muscle represented at the convention center) and a newly reelected president who knows he never would be running for anything again.

#### Obama will strike Iran if he gets behind in the polls- sees it as his get out of jail free card

Jeremy **Slate**, Bachelor's Degree in Judaism and Catholic Theology, and a Master's Degree in European History, 2-12-**2012** <http://www.jeremyrslate.com/2012/02/art-of-october-surprise.html>

This time of year we are all looking for surprises. However, this Christmas season, I would like you consider a different type of surprise; an October Surprise. This probably conjures up mental images of ghosts, Goblins and pumpkins, but this line of thinking is completely off track. Typically, elections in the US take place the Tuesday after the first Monday in November; making events in October politically expedient. It is fitting the first October Surprise was conducted by Richard Nixon, a very "surprising" individual. Nixon is involved in two October Surprises, the second, in 1972, coining the phrase. In 1968, peace was a real possibility in Vietnam. It caused democrat, Hubert Humphrey to surge past Nixon in the polls. Nixon advisory, Henry Kissinger, spoke to the North Vietnamese, causing them to walk away from the peace treaty. Nixon would benefit again from Vietnam in 1972, when 12 days before the election, peace was announced, once again propelling Nixon to victory. Reagan had his own October Surprise fears due to Jimmy Carter in 1980. Carter believed the Iranian hostages safe return would cement his own campaign. The surprise was not to be; the hostages were not released until January 20, 1981, the day of Reagan's inauguration. In the 2000 election, George W. Bush almost lost the election due to October accusations of DWI. An October 2004 reduction of Saudi oil prices helped to cement Bush's reelection campaign. This is very interesting because there is a new October Surprise on the way. Barack Obama fears he will not win his reelection bid, seeing we is losing to "generic republican" in the polls. Mr. Obama has an ace in the hole, an October Surprise. The United States and Iran have been doing a lot of posturing. There was even a recent Daily Caller article blaming Iran for 9/11. Apparently, that card worked so well with Iraq and Afghanistan, so its being played again with Iran. Obama's Keynesian policies have failed and he is looking for a get out of jail free card. General Wesley Clark warned citizens in 2003 that the ultimate goal of the US was open war with Iran. Obama would even sway some of the war hungry Neo-Cons to his side. Israel will go to war with Iran around August, and the US will come in October to aid. It is important that it happens in October, so the media has no time to cover the story. A sitting president has never lost a reelection campaign during a time of war.

#### More ev

**The Daily Caller, 3-5**-2012 <http://times247.com/articles/trump-predicts-war-as-obama-re-election-strategy>

During an appearance on the “Jay Severin Show” on Boston’s Talk 1200, real estate mogul and media personality Donald Trump predicted that President Barack Obama would start a war with Iran for the sole purpose of winning re-election in November. Trump said starting a war worked for former President George W. Bush, giving him temporary high approval ratings, and he said Obama is almost certainly eyeballing a similar polling bump. “I’m a man that said that Obama will have a war Iran because I think it’s politically a positive for him,” Trump said.

#### More ev

Jason **Ditz** Antiwar.com, 2-17-**2012** <http://news.antiwar.com/2012/02/17/obama-officials-iran-sanctions-will-fail-leading-to-war/>

The new reports come just one day after Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta conceded that Iran isn’t actually developing a nuclear weapon, and DIA chief Lt. Gen. Ronald Burgess said that Iran was unlikely to start any war on their own. Officials say Obama has been telling Israel he wants to “give sufficient time” to the current round of sanctions before starting the war, though they say that in the end the result will start be a war because Iran is “behaving like sanctions don’t matter.” It does seem to have pushed back the start of the war a bit, however, as Panetta had previously predicted Israel would launch an attack between April and June, but Obama advisors are now calling September or October the “sweet spot.” This could mean a literal October surprise, with President Obama either starting a huge war with Iran just ahead of the 2012 presidential election, or having Israel do so and jumping in immediately thereafter. Such a timing for the war could be seen as politically desirable for the president, with several of the Republican candidates condemning him for not being more hawkish against Iran, and likely to center a foreign policy debate on his not starting this particular war.

### AT: Oct. Surprise

#### Obama is likely to threaten Iran but not to strike them.

Watts 6/5, P.H., writer for the American Thinker political blog. “Obama's October Surprise: Will He Use the Military To Sway the Electorate?” (June 5 2012, http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2012/06/obamas\_october\_surprise\_will\_he\_use\_the\_military\_to\_sway\_the\_electorate.html)

President Obama loves distractions. From the phony War on Women to gay marriage to attacks on Romney's Bain career, Obama has engaged in a "look over there" campaign to take the focus off of his dreadful record on the economy. But these manufactured issues seem minor relative to chronic joblessness and serial incompetence, and most have a short shelf life, even in the hands of the sympathetic MSM. If his poll numbers continue to be tepid into October, Obama will need a big distraction to take him through Election Day -- something that will have strong appeal beyond his swooning acolytes. Military action against Iran would fill the bill. I'm not suggesting Obama will make the "gutsy call" to take out Tehran's nuclear facilities; anything that would overtly help Israel is probably off the table. Besides, I think he'd want to try a much softer action, one from which he could extricate himself easily when his purposes had been served. One possibility would be to gin up a kerfuffle over, say, "threatening" actions by the Iranian navy in the Persian Gulf, and mobilize our ships in the area to "protect the world's oil supply." Iran would bluster and threaten, but do little else, saving its apocalyptic chips for a bigger, nuclear play. Meanwhile, back at home, Obama would be portrayed as courageous and resolute, and his surrogates would remind voters that it's not prudent to change leaders in mid-crisis. Romney, as the candidate of the loyal opposition, will have to be at least tacitly supportive. And quiet. After a few weeks, and post-11/6, Obama can declare the crisis to have eased, and unilaterally withdraw most of the ships. Then, Iran would bluster some more, claiming that America blinked first, and both sides would claim victory. In the spirit of Obama's philosophy of never letting a crisis go to waste, he will have manufactured a crisis, benefited from it, and then defused it. Indeed, this scenario is totally in line with the down-and-dirty politics Obama and his crew have practiced for years. Romney needs to be ready in October with some sort of strategy to counter such a Machiavellian ploy. I'm just stumped as to what that could be.

#### Obama will only attack after the elections

Indyk '12

Martin S., VP and Director of Brookings, "What Obama Doesn't Understand About Israel and the Middle East," 5/28/12 [www.brookings.edu/research/interviews/2012/05/28-middle-east-indyk?rssid=LatestFromBrookings&utm\_source=feedburner&utm\_medium=feed&utm\_campaign=Feed%3A+BrookingsRSS%2Ftopfeeds%2FLatestFromBrookings+(Latest+From+Brookings)&utm\_content=Google+Reader](http://www.brookings.edu/research/interviews/2012/05/28-middle-east-indyk?rssid=LatestFromBrookings&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+BrookingsRSS%2Ftopfeeds%2FLatestFromBrookings+(Latest+From+Brookings)&utm_content=Google+Reader) 6/28/12

Will Obama attack Iran, I asked. “‎You can’‎t rule it out,” ‎said Indyk. “‎In my opinion, the chances of Obama ordering a military strike are greater than the chances of Romney doing so. Obama believes he has a mission: he wants to create a world order led by the US and non-proliferation is critical to that. Romney has no such ambitions.” ‎But you convinced me that there is a huge gap between Obama’‎s rhetoric and actions, I said. You convinced me that after ten years and two wars, that American public opinion isn’‎t prepared to open another front in the Middle East. “‎You are making an unfair comparison,” ‎he said. “‎On the Iranian issue, it is not about an abstract vision but rather about policy. Obama is convinced that an Iranian bomb would set off a number arms race in the Middle East that would bring down the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It’‎s true that the American public opinion wouldn’‎t view military action favorably. That is why Obama will order it—‎if he does—‎after the elections.”

#### Romney leading the polls prevents an Israeli strike—he won’t follow through if elected

Wright 6/14

Robert Wright is a senior editor at The Atlantic and the author, most recently, of The Evolution of God, a New York Times bestseller and a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.,"Obama's Drift Toward War with Iran," 6/14/12 [www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/06/obamas-drift-toward-war-with-iran/258433/](http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/06/obamas-drift-toward-war-with-iran/258433/)

The other thing--aside from successful negotiations--that could reduce the chance of an October surprise is if polls show that Mitt Romney is likely to be the next president. Netanyahu would rather America do the bombing, and he has much more confidence in Romney's belligerence than in Obama's. But even in this scenario, Obama has the power to reduce the chances of war. Romney's seeming gusto for bombing Iran may wane once he actually looks war in the eye, and the more diplomatic progress that's been made before he takes office, the easier it will be for him to resist warmongers at home and abroad. In the extreme case--if Obama reached a more thoroughgoing deal that included things like a new, more intrusive inspections regime--then it might be hard for Romney to bomb Iran even if he wanted to.

## \*\*\*Impacts – Iran Strikes\*\*\*

### Strikes Coming Now

#### Israel and the US preparing to strike Iran

Haaretz 6/23

"U.S. blog Business Insider: U.S., Israel continue preparations for strike on Iran nuclear facilities ," 6/23/12 [www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/u-s-blog-business-insider-u-s-israel-continue-preparations-for-strike-on-iran-nuclear-facilities-1.443375#.T-bOAVB5GQE.email](http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/u-s-blog-business-insider-u-s-israel-continue-preparations-for-strike-on-iran-nuclear-facilities-1.443375#.T-bOAVB5GQE.email) 6/28/12

Israel and the U.S. are pushing forward with preparations to jointly strike Iran's nuclear facilities, the U.S. blog Business Insider reported on Saturday. "U.S. defense contracts, an Iranian F-16 acquisition, and Israel's new military preparations suggest that all sides are getting ready for whatever may come," the report says. According to the blog, the U.S navy has recently signed a $338 million contract with defense contractor Raytheon to "provide the Navy with 361 Tomahawk cruise missiles in their most recent configuration. According to the website, the U.S. is either renewing its stock of missiles or planning ahead. "On May 9," the report added, "the U.S. House of Representatives passed the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012, which seeks to "reaffirm the commitment to Israel's security as a Jewish state; provide Israel with the military capabilities to defend itself by itself against any threats... [and] expand military and civilian cooperation." A senior Israeli official recently told Reuters that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has decided to attack Iran before the U.S. elections in November.

#### US contracting to give Israel new weapons necessary in a strike

Business Insider 6/23

"How US and Israel Are Preparing for a Possible Attack on Iran," [www.businessinsider.com/preparations-for-possible-us-israeli-attack-on-iran-2012-6](http://www.businessinsider.com/preparations-for-possible-us-israeli-attack-on-iran-2012-6) 6/28/12

U.S. defense contracts, Israel's new submarine acquisitions and Iranian military exercises suggest that all sides are getting ready for the possibility of military conflict. Among recent U.S. defense contracts that could relate to an Iranian attack, Raytheon was awarded a $338 million contract to provide the Navy with 361 Tomahawk cruise missiles in their most recent configuration. Of those, 238 of the misses will be designed to launch from submarines and the remainder from Navy ships like the Ticonderoga class Arleigh Burke class destroyer currently operating with the 5th Fleet based in Bahrain east of Iran. These are the same missiles that started the Libyan Operation Odyssey Dawn bombing campaign last March when 124 were launched from Navy ships and subs against Qaddafi's missile defense radars and anti-aircraft sites around Tripoli. The U.S. could simply be renewing depleted reserves from that mission, as well as others, or it could be planning ahead for a specific attack. With work on the contract expected to be completed in 2014, this particular batch wouldn't be used in any immediate action, but could replenish reserves spent in any upcoming airstrikes. Taking out radar and aircraft defenses would be one step in an Iranian attack. Another, equally as vital, would be determining where Tehran's fleet of submarines may be parked in the Persian Gulf. There are several ways of locating a sub accurately enough to destroy it, and one of them is using the ERAPSCO sonar buoy. The buoys are a one-time-use asset that gets dropped into the water to work with other buoys pinpointing underwater objects. The Navy just ordered 17,000 of them under a $13 million contract days after the Tomahawk order. The buoys can be used for research as well, but in the face of biting defense cuts, it seems possible the Navy has something mission-focused for them in mind. Their delivery is also expected in early 2014, to potentially replenish supplies used before then. Both of these acquisitions could be part of a standard ordering cycle that we simply have no idea of, but in light of the following developments we thought them worth mentioning. On May 9 the U.S. House of Representatives passed the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012, which seeks to "reaffirm the commitment to Israel's security as a Jewish state; provide Israel with the military capabilities to defend itself by itself against any threats... [and] expand military and civilian cooperation" among other statements of U.S. policy. Former counter-terrorism specialist and CIA military intelligence officer Philip Giraldi wrote that the bill "basically provides Israel with a blank check drawn on the U.S. taxpayer to maintain its 'qualitative military edge' over all of its neighbors combined." (To that end the U.S. is stockpiling an increasing number of weapons in Israel.) The Israeli government has been on lockdown since Netanyahu joined forces with the Kadima party and its Iranian-born leader Gen. Shaul Mofaz. One senior Israeli figure with close ties to the leadership told Reuters that Netanyahu had made the decision to attack Iran before the U.S. presidential election in November so that the move "will bounce the Americans into supporting them." Israel just bought its fourth German-made sub capable of launching nuclear-tipped cruise missiles and German news source Der Spiegel subsequently reported that these are already deployed.

### Romney = Iran Strikes

#### GOP win causes Iran strikes

**Dilek 9-20**-11 (Emine, addicting info, “All Republican Candidates Favor War with Iran” http://www.addictinginfo.org/2011/09/20/all-republican-candidates-favor-war-with-iran/)

All Republican Candidates Favor War with Iran Prepare yourself my fellow Americans. If you elect a Republican President in the 2012 elections, more than likely we will be at war with Iran before his or her Presidency is over. In a disturbing new article written by Trita Parsi, a columnist for Salon.com, he expertly connects the dots on which single foreign policy issue is uniting all GOP candidates: Iran. He writes that when it comes to Arab Spring and all other foreign policy issues, GOP candidates are all over the place. But when it is about Iran, they all agree; USA must be tougher. Parsi asserts that “Republicans will present a narrative that diplomacy was tried and failed, sanctions are tough but insufficient, and the only remaining option is some form of military action. As the memory of the Iraq invasion slowly fades away, Republican strategists calculate, the American public will return to rewarding toughness over wisdom at the ballot boxes.” Although I agree with Parsi’s claim that Iran is the only foreign policy matter that unites all GOP candidates, I do not believe the memory of Iraq invasion is slowly fading. Contrary to his assertion, I believe Americans are fed up with the unending wars.

#### GOP win causes Iran strike

Jon **Swaine**, 11-13-**2011**, “Republican hopefuls would go to war with Iran,” Telegraph, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/republicans/8887247/Republican-hopefuls-would-go-to-war-with-Iran.html>

Republican hopefuls would go to war with Iran Republican presidential hopefuls have promised to go to war to stop Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon, painting Barack Obama's handling of Tehran as the most serious of a string of overseas failures. Mitt Romney, the favourite to clinch the party's candidacy, said that he would direct US forces to pre-emptively strike Iran's nuclear facilities if "crippling sanctions" failed to block their ambitions. "If all else fails, if after all of the work we've done, there's nothing else we could do besides take military action," Mr Romney said at a debate on foreign policy in South Carolina on Saturday night. The former Massachusetts governor's pledge was echoed by Newt Gingrich, the former Speaker of the House of Representatives, who over the weekend rose to second place in some national opinion polls. "You have to take whatever steps are necessary to break its capacity to have a nuclear weapon," said Mr Gingrich, who also proposed covert actions such as "taking out their scientists," to applause. Rick Santorum, a former Senator for Pennsylvania, said the US should support an Israeli intervention. Their remarks came at the end of a week of heightened tensions following the UN nuclear watchdog's confirmation that Iran had acquired the expertise and material required to build its first nuclear weapon. Related Articles The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also acknowledged for the first time that Tehran was conducting secret experiments whose only purpose could be the development of weaponry. As his potential Republican rivals spoke, Mr Obama was being rebuffed by Presidents Hu Jintao of China and Dmitry Medvedev of Russia as he sought international support for sanctions against Tehran. After meetings at an Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) summit in Hawaii, Mr Obama said that Russia had agreed to "work to shape a common response" to Iran's threatening manoeuvres, and that China wanted Tehran to obey "international rules and norms".

#### Romney will strike Iran

National Journal Subscriber, 3-4-2012 <http://www.nationaljournal.com/whitehouse/obama-plays-hawk-in-chief-on-iran-20120304>

On the campaign trail, Republican candidates Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum have both come close to promising U.S. preemptive war against Iran—and soon—if elected. At the most recent GOP presidential debate in Arizona, Romney said that for him, military action wouldn't be merely "an option." Obama, Romney said, has "made it clear through his administration and almost every communication we've had so far that he does not want Israel to take action, he opposes military action. He should have instead communicated to Iran that we are prepared, that we are considering military options. They're not just on the table. They are in our hand."

#### Romney win causes attack on Iran

Akram ‘12 - former Pakistan ambassador to the UN

1/11/2012, Munir, “The road to another war,” <http://www.dawn.com/2012/01/11/the-road-to-another-war.html>

A second concern is the rising rhetoric in the US presidential campaign. Apart from Ron Paul, the leading Republican contenders have advocated military action against Iran. Such rhetoric could escalate once the Republican nominee faces off against Obama. If the president`s opinion polls are dismal closer to election day, a `bold` strike against Iran may be seen as a popular, if dangerous, gambit to win the election. A US military, frustrated by a decade of quagmire, and less vulnerable now to Iranian retaliation after withdrawal from Iraq, could well concur with an aerial war against Iran The results and consequences of such major aerial attacks cannot be fully anticipated, but they are unlikely to be palatable to any of the protagonists. Aerial strikes will not fully eliminate Iran`s numerous nuclear facilities. At best, Iran`s programme would be delayed by a few years. Human and physical destruction in Iran would be considerable since many facilities are close to population centres and US-Israeli strikes would need to also eliminate Iran`s retaliatory conventional capabilities. Even with a diminished capability, Iran would retaliate, including through asymmetric attacks especially against regional rivals. Tehran would most likely openly declare its decision to acquire nuclear weapons. Iranians would unite behind a hard-line leadership against the West and its friends. Most immediately, the price of oil would spike to unprecedented levels, even if other producers expand production. Are these likely catastrophic consequences sufficient to convince leaders on both sides to step back from the road to war? Is a deal, based on the 2002 Iranian offer, still possible? That should be the aim of all right-thinking policymakers.

## \*\*\*Obama Bad - Iran Strikes Good\*\*\*

### Prolif

#### Iranian nuclearization is inevitable- only us strikes now can stave it off- israel can’t, and even if were not successful a strike would still deter proliferation in the interim

Orlet 2K6 (Christopher, American Spectator, February 24, LN)

Some things are inevitable, like wrinkles and French anti-Americanism. We may as well add a nuclear Iran to the list. Each day more analysts, pundits and editorial page writers are coming round to the conclusion that the U.S. and its Western allies have accepted the idea of a nuclear Iran. But if a thermonuclear Iran is a given, what's to prevent the rest of the Middle East from hopping aboard the plutonium bomb wagon? Certainly if Iran can afford nukes, so too can Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Venezuela. Finances may not even be the issue. Did wretched economies prevent Pakistan and North Korea -- one of the world's poorest countries -- from developing nukes? So what's to stop Yemen? Now an article in Slate hints that Burma, with its newly discovered natural gas deposits, is also looking to join the nine-member Nuclear Club. Burma, it is generally acknowledged, has the world's most paranoid leadership -- and that's saying a lot when you consider how paranoid Venezuela's Hugo Chavez and Cuba's Fidel Castro are. In anticipation of the inevitable U.S. invasion, the Burmese government has reportedly moved its capital to a mountain redoubt in the Burmese jungle interior, protected by a perimeter of bargain-basement landmines. Once the Burmese begin selling natural gas, they will join Venezuela, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the growing list of psychotic governments holding the world hostage with their oil and gas supplies. (Come to think of it, if Cuba had oil there wouldn't be that silly embargo on Habana Cohibas, and I wouldn't have to smuggle them in from Toronto in my shorts.) And that's just the beginning of the end. As more third-world thugocracies acquire nukes, it is only a matter of time before they share them with their partners in crime in Hamas, Hezbollah, and al Qaeda. "It used to be that when a country joined the nuclear club, they suddenly decided that it was just large enough, and they didn't want to help anyone else join," Paul Wolfowitz told an interviewer not long ago. "...Now we have countries joining the nuclear missile club who say 'the more the merrier.' North Korea is out selling its dangerous technology to anyone who wants to spend the money to buy it." SOME OF THIS PESSIMISTIC talk is simply the usual anti-Bush and anti-Iraq War line. Some is anger at Bush and the Neocons over what is perceived to be a pointless war in Iraq, when Iran was the real threat all along. Now American troops it is argued are stretched too thin, and U.S. credibility too weak to deal with the Tehran threat. But how much of this is accurate? And how willing is the U.S. to do whatever it takes to keep nukes out of Tehran's dirty hands? And finally, how willing are the American people to accept skyrocketing gas prices as Iranian oil supplies dry up? It should be obvious by now that negotiating with President Mahmoud "Holocaust? What Holocaust?" Ahmadinejad is fruitless. After all, why should Tehran negotiate, except as a delaying tactic while it puts the finishing touches on its nuclear program? In the meantime Iran's leaders grow more and more confident that the U.S. will not intervene militarily. One, because Iran is convinced that the international community will not support an invasion, particularly U.N. Security Council members Russia and China. Two, because Iran will threaten to shut off already strained oil supplies to the West. Three, because Iran is no Iraq. It is roughly three times larger; its two-dozen suspected nuclear sites are spread across the country; its troops are more willing to fight. The Iranians won't simply lay down their weapons, as did the Iraqis. Four, because Iran recognizes there is little appetite in the U.S. for a ground war, particularly with mid-term elections eight months away. Five, because a U.S. attack would make the cartoon intifada look like the Hollins' Spring Cotillion. So Iran would seem to be holding all the cards, right? Well, not necessarily all the cards. The U.S. still has air strike capability. Granted, air strikes might not get all of Iran's uranium-enrichment sites, but they will slow down research and production; more important they will send a message to the rest of the world's tin pot dictatorships that the U.S. will not be held hostage by oil and gas suppliers, and, more important, that the U.S. is not going to allow another non-democratic country to develop nukes, no matter how dug in it is in the Amazonian jungle or the peaks of Southeast Asia. So don't even waste your time. FORTUNATELY, EVEN IF THE U.S. caves in to Iranian blackmail there is still Israel. "Israel cannot allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons," the country's acting prime minister Ehud Olmert said recently. Now the Guardian reports that Israel has "drawn up plans for strikes against Iran's nuclear facilities with bunker busting bombs supplied by the U.S." But while Israel may be willing to attack if American will is lacking, its strikes will not have the deterring effect that a U.S. strike would. Burma, for instance, will not be deterred from its nuclear ambitions by fear of an Israeli invasion. In the meantime U.S. Secretary of State Rice is in the Middle East promoting change from within, using cash to "develop support for Iranian reformers, political dissidents and human rights activists," and boosting Voice of America broadcasts. This worked in Poland and Czechoslovakia, Rice says. The trouble with Rice's strategy is that Iranian regime change could take decades, or longer. America doesn't have decades if Iran is determined to develop nukes, and perhaps share those with its terrorist brethren. The U.S. and Israel would seem to have two options: take out Iran's suspected nuclear sites or accept a world where nukes are as common as houseflies. Americans are an optimistic and resourceful people, and nobody likes a doomsayer. So if anyone has an alternative plan, by all means, let's hear it.

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### Nuclear War

#### Strikes solve prolif – prevents global nuclear war

**Denenberg, 2007** (Herb,- professor at the Wharton School, is a longtime Philadelphia journalist http://www.thebulletin.us/site/news.cfm?newsid=18414050&BRD=2737&PAG=461&dept\_id=576361&rfi=6

U.S. Needs To Bomb Iran Now To Prevent A Global Nuclear War. Strange as it may seem to those who are infected with the disease of negotiate/appease/retreat/surrender and who are unaware of where we are and what is happening as we face World War IV, the only way to prevent almost certain international catastrophe and global nuclear war, is to bomb Iran and take out its nuclear capability. If we don't do that, Iran will get a nuclear weapon and, with leadership of madmen, they will do what they have promised. They will use nukes for war and terror. Remember that their first objectives are to control the Middle East and to blackmail Europe into further submission (it has already virtually surrendered to the oncoming tide of Islamofascism). With nukes, which they will soon have, and with missiles, which they are developing with the help of North Korea, they will be able to threaten the world. They intend to do that, so as to impose Islamofascism on the world.

### Global Prolif 2NC

#### Iran prolif coming soon – only striking *Soon*  solves – all alternatives have failed

**Kroenig, 12** (Matthew, professor of Government at Georgetown University and a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, Foreign Affairs, Feb, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136917/matthew-kroenig/time-to-attack-iran)

DANGERS OF DETERRENCE Years of international pressure have failed to halt Iran's attempt to build a nuclear program. The Stuxnet computer worm, which attacked control systems in Iranian nuclear facilities, temporarily disrupted Tehran's enrichment effort, but a report by the International Atomic Energy Agency this past May revealed that the targeted plants have fully recovered from the assault. And the latest IAEA findings on Iran, released in November, provided the most compelling evidence yet that the Islamic Republic has weathered sanctions and sabotage, allegedly testing nuclear triggering devices and redesigning its missiles to carry nuclear payloads. The Institute for Science and International Security, a nonprofit research institution, estimates that Iran could now produce its first nuclear weapon within six months of deciding to do so. Tehran's plans to move sensitive nuclear operations into more secure facilities over the course of the coming year could reduce the window for effective military action even further. If Iran expels IAEA inspectors, begins enriching its stockpiles of uranium to weapons-grade levels of 90 percent, or installs advanced centrifuges at its uranium-enrichment facility in Qom, the United States must strike immediately or forfeit its last opportunity to prevent Iran from joining the nuclear club.

#### IRANIAN NUCLEARIZATION LEADS TO HUMAN EXTINCTION

Krauthammer 2K6

(Charles, 1987 Pulitzer Prize winner, 1984 National Magazine Award winner, and a columnist for The Washington Post since 1985, Time, April 3, LN)

Like many physicists who worked on the Manhattan Project, Richard Feynman could not get the Bomb out of his mind after the war. "I would see people building a bridge," he wrote. "And I thought, they're crazy, they just don't understand, they don't understand. Why are they making new things? It's so useless." Feynman was convinced man had finally invented something that he could not control and that would ultimately destroy him. For six decades we have suppressed that thought and built enough history to believe Feynman's pessimism was unwarranted. After all, soon afterward, the most aggressive world power, Stalin's Soviet Union, acquired the Bomb, yet never used it. Seven more countries have acquired it since and never used it either. Even North Korea, which huffs and puffs and threatens every once in a while, dares not use it. Even Kim Jong Il is not suicidal. But that's the point. We're now at the dawn of an era in which an extreme and fanatical religious ideology, undeterred by the usual calculations of prudence and self-preservation, is wielding state power and will soon be wielding nuclear power. We have difficulty understanding the mentality of Iran's newest rulers. Then again, we don't understand the mentality of the men who flew into the World Trade Center or the mobs in Damascus and Tehran who chant "Death to America"--and Denmark(!)--and embrace the glory and romance of martyrdom. This atavistic love of blood and death and, indeed, self-immolation in the name of God may not be new--medieval Europe had an abundance of millennial Christian sects--but until now it has never had the means to carry out its apocalyptic ends. That is why Iran's arriving at the threshold of nuclear weaponry is such a signal historical moment. It is not just that its President says crazy things about the Holocaust. It is that he is a fervent believer in the imminent reappearance of the 12th Imam, Shi'ism's version of the Messiah. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has been reported as saying in official meetings that the end of history is only two or three years away. He reportedly told an associate that on the podium of the General Assembly last September, he felt a halo around him and for "those 27 or 28 minutes, the leaders of the world did not blink ... as if a hand was holding them there and it opened their eyes to receive" his message. He believes that the Islamic revolution's raison d'être is to prepare the way for the messianic redemption, which in his eschatology is preceded by worldwide upheaval and chaos. How better to light the fuse for eternal bliss than with a nuclear flame? Depending on your own beliefs, Ahmadinejad is either mystical or deranged. In either case, he is exceedingly dangerous. And Iran is just the first. With infinitely accelerated exchanges of information helping develop whole new generations of scientists, extremist countries led by similarly extreme men will be in a position to acquire nuclear weaponry. If nothing is done, we face not proliferation but hyperproliferation. Not just one but many radical states will get weapons of mass extinction, and then so will the fanatical and suicidal terrorists who are their brothers and clients. That will present the world with two futures. The first is Feynman's vision of human destruction on a scale never seen. The second, perhaps after one or two cities are lost with millions killed in a single day, is a radical abolition of liberal democracy as the species tries to maintain itself by reverting to strict authoritarianism--a self-imposed expulsion from the Eden of post-Enlightenment freedom. Can there be a third future? That will depend on whether we succeed in holding proliferation at bay. Iran is the test case. It is the most dangerous political entity on the planet, and yet the world response has been catastrophically slow and reluctant. Years of knowingly useless negotiations, followed by hesitant international resolutions, have brought us to only the most tentative of steps--referral to a Security Council that lacks unity and resolve. Iran knows this and therefore defiantly and openly resumes its headlong march to nuclear status. If we fail to prevent an Iranian regime run by apocalyptic fanatics from going nuclear, we will have reached a point of no return. It is not just that Iran might be the source of a great conflagration but that we will have demonstrated to the world that for those similarly inclined there is no serious impediment. Our planet is 4,500,000,000 years old, and we've had nukes for exactly 61. No one knows the precise prospects for human extinction, but Feynman was a mathematical genius who knew how to calculate odds. If he were to watch us today about to let loose the agents of extinction, he'd call a halt to all bridge building.

### Strikes Solve – AT: No long term/They Rebuild

#### Iran can’t and won’t rebuild nuclear program after strikes

**Kroenig, 12** (Matthew, professor of Government at Georgetown University and a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, Foreign Affairs, Feb, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136917/matthew-kroenig/time-to-attack-iran)

 ANY TIME IS GOOD TIME Critics have another objection: even if the United States managed to eliminate Iran's nuclear facilities and mitigate the consequences, the effects might not last long. Sure enough, there is no guarantee that an assault would deter Iran from attempting to rebuild its plants; it may even harden Iran's resolve to acquire nuclear technology as a means of retaliating or protecting itself in the future. The United States might not have the wherewithal or the political capital to launch another raid, forcing it to rely on the same ineffective tools that it now uses to restrain Iran's nuclear drive. If that happens, U.S. action will have only delayed the inevitable. Yet according to the IAEA, Iran already appears fully committed to developing a nuclear weapons program and needs no further motivation from the United States. And it will not be able to simply resume its progress after its entire nuclear infrastructure is reduced to rubble. Indeed, such a devastating offensive could well force Iran to quit the nuclear game altogether, as Iraq did after its nuclear program was destroyed in the Gulf War and as Syria did after the 2007 Israeli strike. And even if Iran did try to reconstitute its nuclear program, it would be forced to contend with continued international pressure, greater difficulty in securing necessary nuclear materials on the international market, and the lurking possibility of subsequent attacks. Military action could, therefore, delay Iran's nuclear program by anywhere from a few years to a decade, and perhaps even indefinitely. Skeptics might still counter that at best a strike would only buy time. But time is a valuable commodity. Countries often hope to delay worst-case scenarios as far into the future as possible in the hope that this might eliminate the threat altogether. Those countries whose nuclear facilities have been attacked -- most recently Iraq and Syria -- have proved unwilling or unable to restart their programs. Thus, what appears to be only a temporary setback to Iran could eventually become a game changer.

#### Strikes solves kill key scientists and fear of another attack prevents future prolif

**Rogers, 2006** (Paul, Professor of Peace Studies at the University of Bradford and Global Security Consultant to Oxford Research Group “IRAN: CONSEQUENCES OF A WAR”, February)

Although the United States has a major problem of overstretch affecting its Army and Marine Corps, an attack on Iranian nuclear facilities would be undertaken almost entirely by the Air Force and the Navy. To have the maximum impact, it would be done by surprise, utilising land-based aircraft already in the region, long-range strike aircraft operating from the United States, the UK and Diego Garcia, and naval strike forces involving carrier-borne aircraft and sea-launched cruise missiles. At any one time, the US Navy keeps one aircraft carrier battle group on station in or near the Persian Gulf. Such groups rotate, and there are periods when two are on station, providing over 150 aircraft, together with several hundred cruise missiles.4 Similar numbers of land-based aircraft could be assembled with little notice, given the range of US bases in the region, and B 1B and B-2 bombers could operate from outside the region. In particular, the specialised facilities required to operate the stealth B-2 aircraft are now available at Fairford air base in Gloucestershire.5 Air strikes on nuclear facilities would involve the destruction of facilities at the Tehran Research Reactor, together with the radioisotope production facility, a range of nuclear-related laboratories and the Kalaye Electric Company, all in Tehran. The Esfahan Nuclear Technology Centre would be a major target, including a series of experimental reactors, uranium conversion facilities and a fuel fabrication laboratory. Pilot and full-scale enrichment plants at Natanz would be targeted, as would facilities at Arak (see Appendix 1).6 The new 1,000 MW reactor nearing completion at Bushehr would be targeted, although this could be problematic once the reactor is fully fuelled and goes critical some time in 2006. Once that has happened, any destruction of the containment structure could lead to serious problems of radioactive dispersal affecting not just the Iranian Gulf coast, but west Gulf seaboards in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. As well as the direct human effects, since these comprise the world’s most substantial concentration of oil production facilities, the consequences could be severe.7 All of the initial attacks would be undertaken more or less simultaneously, in order to kill as many of the technically competent staff as possible, therefore doing the greatest damage to longer-term prospects. This would be a necessary part of any military action and would probably extend to the destruction of university laboratories and technology centres that indirectly support the Iranian nuclear scientific and technical infrastructure. Such an aspect of the attack is not widely recognised outside of military planning circles but would be an essential component of the operation. Given that the aim is to set back Iranian nuclear potential for as long as possible, it would be essential to go well beyond the destruction of physical facilities that could be replaced quite rapidly. The killing of those with technical expertise would have a much more substantial impact on any efforts to redevelop nuclear capabilities. Furthermore, since such expertise is known to include foreign nationals, the killing of such people already working in the country would serve as a deterrent to the involvement of others in the future. Iran currently has limited air defences and a largely obsolete and small air force. Even so, defence suppression would be a major aspect of military action, primarily to reduce the risk of the killing or capture of US aircrew. It would involve the targeting of radar facilities and command and control centres, as well as Western Command air bases at Tehran, Tabriz, Hamadan, Dezful, Umidiyeh, Shiraz and Isfahan, and Southern Command air bases at Bushehr, Bandar Abbas and Chah Bahar.8 A particular concern for US forces is the continued deployment by Iran of 45 or more of the American F-14A Tomcat interceptors and their long-range AWG-9 radar equipment. 79 planes were originally procured before the fall of the Shah and around 30 are available operationally at any one time out of those still deployed.9 Research, development and production facilities for Iran’s medium-range ballistic missile programme would be priority targets, as would bases at which these mobile missiles are deployed. Because of their mobility, surprise would once again be essential. US forces have already used reconnaissance drones to map Iranian facilities and these, combined with satellite reconnaissance and a range of forms of electronic surveillance, have provided considerable information on the nuclear infrastructure and more general defence forces.

### AT: Escalation/Iran Retaliation

#### Iran retaliation will stay limited – multiple factors prevent escalation

**Kroenig, 12** (Matthew, professor of Government at Georgetown University and a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, Foreign Affairs, Feb, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136917/matthew-kroenig/time-to-attack-iran)

SETTING THE RIGHT REDLINES The fact that the United States can likely set back or destroy Iran's nuclear program does not necessarily mean that it should. Such an attack could have potentially devastating consequences -- for international security, the global economy, and Iranian domestic politics -- all of which need to be accounted for. To begin with, critics note, U.S. military action could easily spark a full-blown war. Iran might retaliate against U.S. troops or allies, launching missiles at military installations or civilian populations in the Gulf or perhaps even Europe. It could activate its proxies abroad, stirring sectarian tensions in Iraq, disrupting the Arab Spring, and ordering terrorist attacks against Israel and the United States. This could draw Israel or other states into the fighting and compel the United States to escalate the conflict in response. Powerful allies of Iran, including China and Russia, may attempt to economically and diplomatically isolate the United States. In the midst of such spiraling violence, neither side may see a clear path out of the battle, resulting in a long-lasting, devastating war, whose impact may critically damage the United States' standing in the Muslim world. Those wary of a U.S. strike also point out that Iran could retaliate by attempting to close the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow access point to the Persian Gulf through which roughly 20 percent of the world's oil supply travels. And even if Iran did not threaten the strait, speculators, fearing possible supply disruptions, would bid up the price of oil, possibly triggering a wider economic crisis at an already fragile moment. None of these outcomes is predetermined, however; indeed, the United States could do much to mitigate them. Tehran would certainly feel like it needed to respond to a U.S. attack, in order to reestablish deterrence and save face domestically. But it would also likely seek to calibrate its actions to avoid starting a conflict that could lead to the destruction of its military or the regime itself. In all likelihood, the Iranian leadership would resort to its worst forms of retaliation, such as closing the Strait of Hormuz or launching missiles at southern Europe, only if it felt that its very existence was threatened. A targeted U.S. operation need not threaten Tehran in such a fundamental way. To make sure it doesn't and to reassure the Iranian regime, the United States could first make clear that it is interested only in destroying Iran's nuclear program, not in overthrowing the government. It could then identify certain forms of retaliation to which it would respond with devastating military action, such as attempting to close the Strait of Hormuz, conducting massive and sustained attacks on Gulf states and U.S. troops or ships, or launching terrorist attacks in the United States itself. Washington would then need to clearly articulate these "redlines" to Tehran during and after the attack to ensure that the message was not lost in battle. And it would need to accept the fact that it would have to absorb Iranian responses that fell short of these redlines without escalating the conflict. This might include accepting token missile strikes against U.S. bases and ships in the region -- several salvos over the course of a few days that soon taper off -- or the harassment of commercial and U.S. naval vessels. To avoid the kind of casualties that could compel the White House to escalate the struggle, the United States would need to evacuate nonessential personnel from U.S. bases within range of Iranian missiles and ensure that its troops were safely in bunkers before Iran launched its response. Washington might also need to allow for stepped-up support to Iran's proxies in Afghanistan and Iraq and missile and terrorist attacks against Israel. In doing so, it could induce Iran to follow the path of Iraq and Syria, both of which refrained from starting a war after Israel struck their nuclear reactors in 1981 and 2007, respectively.

#### Even if that fails – US can deescalate quickly and no regional war

**Kroenig, 12** (Matthew, professor of Government at Georgetown University and a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, Foreign Affairs, Feb, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136917/matthew-kroenig/time-to-attack-iran)

Even if Tehran did cross Washington's redlines, the United States could still manage the confrontation. At the outset of any such violation, it could target the Iranian weapons that it finds most threatening to prevent Tehran from deploying them. To de-escalate the situation quickly and prevent a wider regional war, the United States could also secure the agreement of its allies to avoid responding to an Iranian attack. This would keep other armies, particularly the Israel Defense Forces, out of the fray. Israel should prove willing to accept such an arrangement in exchange for a U.S. promise to eliminate the Iranian nuclear threat. Indeed, it struck a similar agreement with the United States during the Gulf War, when it refrained from responding to the launching of Scud missiles by Saddam Hussein.

## \*\*\*Mechanics\*\*\*

### Debates Don’t Matter

#### Presidential debates don’t change the majority of voter’s minds

This Nation 04 (How long have presidential candidates debated each other?, http://www.thisnation.com/question/046.html)

Many voters watch the debates to find out where each of the candidates stands on the issues. Others watch to gauge how well the candidates hold up under pressure and how they think on their feet. Some voters simply want to "get to know" the candidates as people, to learn about their personalities. However, a recent Gallup Poll suggests that the debates might not be a "big factor" for a large majority of voters. According to the poll, 71% of likely voters say that the debates won't significantly influence their vote for president this Fall. However, younger voters (especially younger female voters), moderates and independents say they are more likely to be influenced by the debates.

#### Debates don’t change voters’ minds

Sipe 06 (Corey Sipe, Televised Presidential Debates and Its Influence on Voters, Aug. 30, 2006, <http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/54720/televised_presidential_debates_and.html?page=2>)

Audiences may know more about the issues after debates, but sometimes debates do not drastically change which candidate the public favors. In the Gallup poll in the week before the first debate, 52.42% of voters favored Clinton and 36.85% favored Dole. In the week after the first debate, 52.71% of voters favored Clinton, a 0.29% increase, and 34.14% favored Dole, a 2.71% decrease. Although there are differences in the percentages, they are two small to attribute to the debates. Other polls released at the same time were consistent with these Gallup poll findings (USA Today, 1996). Friedenberg concludes that Clinton debated effectively and had a large lead ten days before the election while Dole debated less effectively but he managed gained ground after the debates, but not enough to close the gap between him and Clinton (Friedenberg, 1998).

### Polls Inaccurate – General

#### Has to be a 5 point lead to be even close to accurate

Silver 08 (Nate Silver is the founder of FiveThirtyEight.com, an independent polling and political-analysis Website, The Insider’s Guide to Election Polls, Aug. 21, 2008, http://nymag.com/daily/intel/2008/08/the\_insiders\_guide\_to\_election.html)

Only a five- to seven-point lead in national polls is safe. The one thing that’s certain about the day before the election is that the pundits won’t know as much as they claim to. That is because some elections can break very late. In 1980, for instance, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan were virtually tied in polling just days before the election, but Reagan wound up winning by nearly ten points. In 2004, 9 percent of the electorate made its choice either on Election Day itself or on the three days immediately preceding it — movement that may come too late to be picked up by the polling.

#### Polls inaccurate- 6 reasons (methodology, “likely voter” screens, unpredictable turnout, undecideds, changing preferences, bad questions)

Oxford Analytica 08 (Sept. 2, 2008, Early Election Polls Are Often Misleading, <http://www.forbes.com/home/2008/09/01/election-early-polling-cx_0902oxford.html>)

Coverage of the presidential "horse race" invariably crowds out more substantive coverage of policy issues, and the heavy media coverage of polling can also be misleading. While polling, though still imperfect, does have some predictive capacity in the days before an election, it is quite unreliable months before. These early polls are outperformed by political scientists' election forecasts based on the "fundamentals"--factors such as the state of the economy, the role of foreign wars and whether the incumbent president is running. At best, polls represent a snapshot of the electorate on a given day, rather than a forecast of the eventual outcome. Yet even this modest view has its problems. A snapshot may be seen as worthless if it is clear that the picture must eventually change. In four of the last five presidential elections, the eventual popular vote winner has trailed in the polls at some point, often by a substantial margin. Moreover, these changes are often predictable, as shifts usually move in the direction suggested by forecasts based on readings of "bread and peace": the state of the economy and U.S. standing abroad. Polling methodology problems. Pollsters also face statistical modeling challenges, which are far more acute months ahead of the election: "Likely voters." Pollsters attempt to survey the subset of the population that will vote on election day, rather than the entire adult population. (This makes sense, given that these polls are geared toward an election and not an abstract representation of the public's preference, such as presidential job approval ratings.) Some polls survey only registered voters, while others will ask a series of questions designed to screen out those who are not deemed 'likely voters': --Misapplied technique? These screening techniques help give a more accurate picture of the electorate in polls conducted shortly before election day. However, polls with "likely voter screens" portray a very volatile electorate, with levels of fluctuation that appear unrealistic. Crucially, it is more difficult to predict likely voters in July or September than it is in late October; there is some evidence to suggest that likely-voter screens, in particular, may actually make early polls less accurate. --Turnout guesswork. Turnout is not easy to predict, even in principle. For example, anecdotal reports suggest that Barack Obama's campaign has a large advantage in the 'ground game' of door-to-door canvassing (in terms of measurable campaign activity such as money invested, volunteers enlisted, and field offices opened). This could conceivably translate into a higher Democratic turnout than models based on past elections predict. Undecided voters. In an apparent paradox, polls move a great deal over the course of the campaign but usually claim that only a small segment of the population is "undecided." Yet if 85% to 95% of the electorate has already "decided," then early polls should track the November results closely--and they do not. If pollsters' estimates of undecided voters early in the election campaign were meaningful, then the race would essentially be over when one candidate's lead exceeds the remaining number of undecided voters. This paradox has two main causes: --Pollsters' questions. Aiming for a momentary snapshot, pollsters almost always ask respondents whom they would vote for "if the election were held today." Many also use a follow-up probe to see if those who say they are unsure "lean" in a particular direction. --Voter preferences change. This approach fails as a predictor because while a voter might have a preference when polled in August, he or she could easily become undecided or change his or her mind later in the campaign. Indeed, since early polls fail to predict November results, many voters clearly do change their minds--more than the 5% to 15% that polls generally report as undecided. Academic studies and exit polls suggest that over 20% of voters make up their minds during the final month of the campaign. Polls become more accurate predictors of the November election result in October. To draw meaningful conclusions from polling data, it is crucial to dissect the partisan and demographic compositions of pollsters' samples--and to recognize that more voters are genuinely undecided than pollsters acknowledge.

### Polls Inaccurate – Cell Phones

#### Ignores cell phone voters

Silver 08 (Nate Silver is the founder of FiveThirtyEight.com, an independent polling and political-analysis Website, The Insider’s Guide to Election Polls, Aug. 21, 2008, http://nymag.com/daily/intel/2008/08/the\_insiders\_guide\_to\_election.html)

…but beware the Verizon Effect. Nearly half of voters under the age of 30 rely primarily or exclusively on cell phones rather than landlines — and they will be off-limits to many pollsters, who do not include cell phones in their samples. Pollsters have various techniques to attempt to correct for this problem, but they may not be entirely satisfactory — research conducted by the Pew Research Center revealed that Barack Obama gained three points when a supplementary cell-phone sample was included.

#### Not accounting for cell phones creates wildly inaccurate polling.

Silver 6/25

Nate Silver is the founder of FiveThirtyEight.com, an independent polling and political-analysis Website June 25, 2012 The Problems With Forecasting and How to Get Better at It

http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/25/the-problems-with-forecasting-and-how-to-improve/

In addition, in a new wrinkle in the model this year, the consensus is estimated solely from polling firms that include cellphones in their sample. More and more polling firms are including cellphones, including almost all of the major news organizations. But some still do not, and this is an increasingly unacceptable practice. About one-third of American households [do not have landlines at all](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless201112.htm), while another one-sixth have landlines but rarely or never accept calls on them.

What this means is that polling firms that are not including cellphones are missing somewhere between one-third and one-half of the American population. That really stretches the definition of a scientific survey. There is reasonably persuasive evidence that [this can bias results](http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1761/cell-phones-and-election-polls-2010-midterm-elections). Polling firms can try to compensate for the problem by applying demographic weights, but this entails making a lot of assumptions that may introduce other types of bias and error.

There has been a modest tendency this year for polling firms that do not include cellphones to show more favorable results for Mr. Romney than those that do include cellphones. The more powerful pattern, however, may simply be that polling firms that do not include cellphones are producing more erratic results in one direction or another as their weighting algorithms try and sometimes struggle to compensate for their failure to collect a random sample. We are not quite at the point of completely throwing these results out (although that may be a defensible position). But we do calculate the consensus based solely on the polls that do include cellphones. Therefore the house effect adjustment includes an implicit cellphone adjustment.

### Polls Inaccurate – Housing Effects

Changes in polling numbers are due to housing effects.

Silver 6/22

Nate Silver June 22, 2012 Calculating ‘House Effects’ of Polling Firms http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/22/calculating-house-effects-of-polling-firms/

One of the ways that our forecast model seeks to make polling data more robust is by calculating and adjusting for “house effects,” which are systematic tendencies for polling firms to favor either the Democratic or Republican candidate.

Fairly often, what is perceived as a change in the polls is really just a reflection of these tendencies. A polling firm that tends to show favorable results for Barack Obama might survey a state one week, showing him three percentage points ahead. A different polling firm that usually has favorable results for Mitt Romney comes out with a survey in the same state the next week, showing him up by two points. Rather than indicating a change in voter preferences, these results may just reflect the different techniques and assumptions that the polling firms have applied.

#### **Public Policy Polling, Gallup and Rasmussen are biased.**

Silver 6/22

Nate Silver June 22, 2012 Calculating ‘House Effects’ of Polling Firms http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/22/calculating-house-effects-of-polling-firms/

As you can see, there is a fairly wide spread in the polls this year. For instance, the firm Public Policy Polling shows results that are about three percentage points more favorable to Mr. Obama than the consensus of surveys. (How is the consensus determined? More about that in a moment.) Conversely, Gallup’s polls have been leaning Republican this year, by about 2.5 percentage points. (See the Huffington Post’s Mark Blumenthal for [a good explanation as to why.](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/17/gallup-poll-race-barack-obama_n_1589937.html?utm_hp_ref=@pollster))

Rasmussen Reports, which has had Republican-leaning results in the past, does so again this year. However, the tendency is not very strong – a Republican lean of about 1.3 points.

### Polls Inaccurate – State Polls

#### States polls are unreliable

PRC 04 (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, Pre-Election Polls Largely Accurate, Nov. 23, 2004, <http://people-press.org/commentary/?analysisid=102>)

State Polls: Helpful But... The number of horse race polls has been rising for the past several elections, and this year brought an increasing number of polls in the battleground states. Facing a difficult political terrain by definition, all of these states were closely divided the state surveys had varying degrees of success. In Michigan, for instance, most of the final week polls showed Kerry with a slight advantage. Of the six polls conducted between Oct. 25 and Nov. 1, the website RealClear Politics found that, on average, they showed Kerry with a 3.5% lead; Kerry won Michigan 51%-48%. By contrast, the polls did not fare nearly as well in Florida, which Bush won by a fairly comfortable margin (52%-47%). Four polls conducted in the campaign's final weeks had Bush ahead anywhere from a point to as many as eight points; three others showed Kerry leading, with Fox News showing Kerry with a five-point advantage. The main shortcoming of the state polls is that typically they have small samples. But even some that had sizable samples missed the mark in Florida. The highly diverse make-up of the Florida electorate may present special challenges to polling.

### AT: Nate Silver

#### Silver is not a political scientist – even if his models are accurate at some times, you should not default to him.

Dickinson ‘10 – Professor of Political Science

Matthew, professor of political science at Middlebury College and taught previously at Harvard University where he worked under the supervision of presidential scholar Richard Neustadt. “Nate Silver Is Not A Political Scientist”. November 1, 2010

I’ve made this point before, most recently during the 2008 presidential campaign when Silver’s forecast model, with its rapidly changing “win” probabilities, made it appear as if voters were altering their preferences on a weekly basis. This was nonsense, of course, which is why the political science forecast models issued around Labor Day proved generally accurate. But in light of Silver’s column yesterday, it bears repeating: he’s not a political scientist. He’s an economist by training, but he’s really a weathercaster when it comes to predicting political outcomes. That is, he’s very adept at doing the equivalent of climbing to the top of Mt. Worth (a local skiing area for those not familiar with God’s Green Mountains), looking west toward Lake Champlain to see what the prevailing winds are carrying toward us, and issuing a weather bulletin for tomorrow. Mind you, this isn’t necessarily a knock on Silver’s work – he’s a damn good weathercaster. In 2008, his day—before election estimate came pretty close to nailing the Electoral College vote. More generally, at his best, he digs up intriguing data or uncovers interesting political patterns. At the same time, however, when it comes to his forecast models, he’s susceptible to the “Look Ma! No Hands!” approach in which he suggests the more numerous the variables in his model, the more effective it must be. In truth, as Sam Wang demonstrated in 2008, when his much simpler forecast model proved more accurate than Silver’s, parsimony can be a virtue when it comes to predictions. Why do I bring this up now? Because, in the face of conflicting data, weathercasters can become unstrung if they are used to simply reporting the weather without possessing much of a grasp of basic meteorology. In yesterday’s column which the more cynical among us (who, moi?) might interpret as a classic CYA move, Silver raises a number of reasons why current forecasts (read: his!) might prove hopelessly wrong. Now, I applaud all efforts to specify the confidence interval surrounding a forecast. But the lack of logic underling Silver’s presentation reveals just how little theory goes into his predictions. For instance, he suggests the incumbent rule – which he has spent two years debunking – might actually come into play tomorrow. (The incumbent rule says, in effect, that in close races, almost all undecideds break for the challenger). Silver has provided data suggesting this rule didn’t apply in 2006 or 2008. You would think, therefore, that he doesn’t believe in the incumbent rule. Not so! He writes, “So, to cite the incumbent rule as a point of fact as wrong. As a theory, however — particularly one that applies to this election and not necessarily to others — perhaps it will turn out to have some legs.” Excuse me? Why, if there’s no factual basis for the incumbent rule, will it turn out to apply in this election? The rest of the column rests on equally sketchy reasoning. Silver concludes by writing, “What we know, however, is that polls can sometimes miss pretty badly in either direction. Often, this is attributed to voters having made up (or changed) their minds at the last minute — but it’s more likely that the polls were wrong all along. These are some reasons they could be wrong in a way that underestimates how well Republicans will do. There are also, of course, a lot of reasons they could be underestimating Democrats; we’ll cover these in a separate piece.” Let me get this straight: it’s possible the polls are underestimating the Republican support. Or, they might be underestimating Democrats’ support. I think this means if his forecast model proves incorrect, it’s because the polls “were wrong all along”. Really? Might it instead have something to do with his model? Come on Silver – man up! As it is, you already take the easy way out by issuing a forecast a day before the election, in contrast to the political scientists who put their reputations on the line by Labor Day. Do you believe in your model or not? The bottom line: if you want to know tomorrow’s weather, a weathercaster is good enough. If you want to know what causes the weather, you might want to look elsewhere.

### Polling Good – Pooling Polls

#### **Aggregate polls correct for the biases of individual polls.**

Hillygus ‘11

D. SUNSHINE HILLYGUS is Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the Initiative on Survey Methodology at Duke University, Durham, NC The Evolution of Election Polling in the United States. Public Opin Q *(Special Issue 2011) 75 (5): 962-981.*

In recognition that individual poll results are subject to random sampling error and any potential biases introduced by a firm’s particular polling methodology, it has become popular to aggregate across many different polls. The widespread availability of poll numbers online has made it easy to do polling aggregation to forecast election outcomes.[8](http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/75/5/962.full#fn-8) Online poll aggregators include [FiveThirtyEight.com](http://FiveThirtyEight.com), [Pollster.com](http://Pollster.com), the Princeton Election Consortium, and [RealClearPolitics.com](http://RealClearPolitics.com). Nate Silver’s [FiveThirtyEight.com](http://fivethirtyeight.com), in particular, was a popular sensation in the 2008 campaign; his website reported 3.63 million unique visitors, 20.57 million site visits, and 32.18 million page views in October alone.

Aggregating polls helps reduce volatility in polling predictions. Although there is the tendency for news organizations to focus great attention on every movement up or down in the polls, as [Jackman (2005)](http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/75/5/962.full#ref-43) noted, “media-commissioned polls employ sample sizes that are too small to reliably detect the relatively small day-to-day or week-to-week movements in voter sentiment we would expect to occur over an election campaign” (p. 500). Pooling polls improves the precision of polling estimates—a larger sample size has a smaller margin of error. But there are multiple methods for aggregating polls, and it is not yet clear which one is best.

### Polling Good – Every Change Matters

#### Even tiny swings have huge impact – determine the outcome

Abramowitz, 6/7/12

Alan I. Abramowitz, Senior Columnist, Center for politics, 6/7/12 <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/>

With five months to go until Election Day 2012, all indications are that the presidential race between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney is going to go down to the wire and that the outcome will ultimately be decided by voters in 10-15 battleground states in which neither candidate has a decisive advantage. These findings raise an important question for the Obama and Romney campaigns. In deciding how to allocate money and other resources, how much emphasis should they give to mobilizing potential supporters versus persuading undecided voters? The answer to this question depends on the characteristics and political attitudes of two key groups of voters in the battleground states: unregistered supporters and undecided registered voters. In order to compare the potential payoffs of a strategy emphasizing mobilization compared with a strategy emphasizing persuasion, I analyzed data from a March 20-26 Gallup Poll in 12 key battleground states: Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin. This was the most recent battleground state polling data available for analysis. A total of 1,046 adults were interviewed on landline and cellular telephones, including 871 registered voters. Swing voters: Unhappy with Obama but unenthusiastic about voting One important finding from Gallup’s March swing state poll is that there were relatively few swing voters in these swing states. Among registered voters, 49% supported Barack Obama and another 1% indicated that they leaned toward Obama, while 41% supported Mitt Romney and another 2% leaned toward Romney. The March 20-26 survey was conducted at a time when Mitt Romney was still battling with Rick Santorum for the Republican nomination. Now that Romney has locked up the GOP nomination, Obama’s lead in these battleground states may very well be smaller. What is striking, however, is that as early as March, relatively few registered voters were unwilling to state a preference in a Romney-Obama contest. Even combining leaners with the undecided, swing voters made up less than 10% of the electorate in these 12 states. Still, with the race between Obama and Romney expected to be very close, even a small group of swing voters could decide the outcome. So who are these swing voters? To answer this question, I compared the characteristics and political attitudes of swing voters (those who were undecided or only leaning toward a candidate) with the characteristics and attitudes of voters who were supporting either Obama or Romney. The results are displayed in Table 1.

### Polling Good – Better than Electoral Counts

#### National polls better than electoral counts

Krugman 08 (Paul Krugman, Op-ed columnist for the New York Times, Sept. 11, 2008, Electoral college comfort?, http://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/)

One thing one hears all the time is that Democrats shouldn’t be worried by the national polls, because it’s the electoral college that matters, and Obama is solidly ahead there. Um, no. First of all, electoral college counts based on the most recent polls are close. Real Clear Politics currently shows Obama 217, McCain 189, 132 tossups. That’s essentially a dead heat. Second, to the extent that state polls look better, that’s largely because they’re older. State polls don’t happen as frequently as national polls, so the data that go into electoral college counts don’t fully reflect Obama’s national slump. Nate Silver at FiveThirtyEight has a model that, as I understand it, uses both state and national polls to calculate probabilities of an electoral college win. He currently shows Obama 48%, McCain 52%. There are reasons for Democrats to think that the current panic is overdone — but the electoral college isn’t one of them.

### AT: Cell Phone Inclusion

#### Lack of cell phone polling doesn’t hurt polling accuracy

PRC 04 (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, Pre-Election Polls Largely Accurate, Nov. 23, 2004, <http://people-press.org/commentary/?analysisid=102>)

Cell Phones: Not a Major Problem Yet. Throughout the campaign, pollsters were frequently asked about the potential bias created by the fact that cell phones are not reached in telephone surveys. A growing number of people, especially young people, are believed to be relying solely on cell phones for phone service. The exit polls indicated that approximately 7% of all voters are cell phone-only; this group skews heavily toward younger voters, with about half of them (48%) falling under age 30. But although cell-only voters were somewhat more Democratic than the electorate as a whole, the difference was relatively small. Cell-only voters went for Kerry by a margin of 54% to 45%, compared with Bush's 51%-48% advantage among all voters. This difference, and the relatively small size of the cell-only group, was not large enough to create an error in pre-election poll estimates. Moreover, young voters with and without cell phones were virtually identical politically, suggesting that young people reachable by conventional land-line service remain representative of their cell-only counterparts. About one-in-five (19%) voters under 30 years of age indicated they relied solely on cell phone service. These voters favored Kerry by 58%-41%, close to the advantage he had among the rest of this age cohort (56%-43%).

### Bradley Effect Matters

#### Obama will suffer from a modified Bradley effect – scorned former supporters will pledge to vote in polls and fail to show on election day.

Wilder ‘12

L. DOUGLAS WILDER was governor of Virginia from 1990 to 1994. He was the nation’s first elected African-American governor. 5/14/12 Obama best look for variation in ‘Bradley effect’ http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0512/76274.html

So is the Bradley effect dead? I would argue that Team Obama should tread cautiously when looking at where the president stands in the polls. Since a variation of the Bradley effect should be anticipated.

The New York Times has noted this, with a recent article, “4 Years Later, Race Is Still Issue for Some Voters.”

One Ohio law enforcement official, John Corrigan of Jefferson County, talked about this. “Certain precincts in this county,” Corrigan said, “are not going to vote for Obama. I don’t want to say it, but we all know why.”

Jason Foreman, also interviewed for this article, had no trouble discussing the reason why, “I’ll say it: It’s because he’s black.”

The article continued describing how race in non-urban/nonsuburban areas of swing states — even those populated by union members normally supportive of Democratic candidates — still have a problem supporting Obama, due to his mixed-race heritage.

The article made me think of the Bradley effect — and why its classic sense from the 1980s may now be inoperative. Voters today do feel comfortable telling a pollster that they won’t vote for a minority candidate. They are able to do just this in the Times — with their names, hometowns and occupations cited.

That’s not the concern in what may be a modernized Bradley effect.

This time it’s minorities, students and marginal independent voters who are in the grasp of the effect. In 2008, those groups turned out in large numbers for Obama. When pollsters called, they proudly announced their plans to take part in a national movement — one that would elect Obama to the White House. Some seasoned election watchers questioned whether these groups would actually show up in the overwhelming numbers predicted. On Election Day, they did.

So Obama won. And he won big — becoming the first person, black or white, to win more that 51 percent of the vote since 1988. (He won 53 percent of the ballots cast in 2008.)

What about 2012?

When pollsters call these voting blocs now, many people will likely proclaim their continued loyalty to the president.

They won’t be lying to pollsters about whom they really want to vote for. The issue will be whether they actually go to the booth and vote for Obama.

Many voted in 2008 with the desire to see racism and racists humiliated by having a qualified black man elected president. Especially after eight years of what was not, and still is not, perceived as a successful presidency.

Now, many of these same voters still feel an allegiance to Obama — and he’s their theoretical choice in the election. But along with feeling some allegiance, they also may be left feeling disappointment. And that can lead to a disconnect with what pollsters hear compared with the voters who actually show up on Election Day.

What I am hearing from around the country is that many black and brown voters, whom the president might consider his strongest base, feel left behind, taken for granted and largely ignored.

The people who need jobs, help with educational costs and improved wages question when their bailout is coming. They question why they were not included in the first stimulus package. They wonder whether this is the best that can be achieved where they are concerned. They wonder why, when they ask these questions, it is considered “whining.” Yet when others make the same “noise,” they get the mother’s milk of politics: money from Washington.

Have the president and his administration tended astutely to the special concerns of these voters, who placed so much hope in him and his ability to make life different or better? Too often the answer I hear is, “No.”

Will the people who voice such sentiments storm the gates for the Republican nominee? Again, the answer I hear is, “No.”

But will a large portion of them feel less likely to make lines unusually long come Election Day 2012 to match what they did in 2008? The answer to that question, might be, “Yes.”

And with that, a version of the Bradley effect may be reborn as the Obama effect. Voters who tell pollsters the candidate they support, wanting to still be a part of a post-racial American tableau — but unmotivated to vote by former feelings of hope that saw too little real change.

#### **A modified Bradley effect will hurt Obama – people will react to his race and his liberal stance on gay marriage.**

McAllister ‘12

LENNY MCALLISTER is a senior contributor to [Politic365](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEKwG4wYjcA&context=C3a75359ADOEgsToPDskJ1ff-CoXC-IlBmXHDyzAcp) The Bradley Effect: 2012′s Flesh Eating Disease May 11, 2012 http://politic365.com/2012/05/11/the-bradley-effect-2012s-flesh-eating-disease/

Religious voters that are also feeling the sting of the economy in key states such as Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, Florida, and Virginia (all states that have both a high level of self-identifying religious voters and a high rate of economic strife), may consider the news cycle of the past 7 days as enough to reconsider their 2008 votes. Woeful economic numbers and a controversial stance on marriage could serve as enough for these voters to flip their states back to “red states” in 2012, even if the polls indicate otherwise as we progress towards 2012.

And that is where the Bradley Effect comes into play.

If the myth is true – that many undecided voters in 2008 eventually went for then-Senator Obama partly due to their fear of being called bigots for a vote against the first Black presidential nominee – then one should conclude that many of these same voters will not want to poll against the first Black president in 2012 for that same reason. That reluctance (if it does exist) would certainly apply to a desire to avoid being seen as anti-gay, as well. This means that if President Obama lost their support after these past few days, concerns about being called a bigot on the grounds of race or sexual orientation could be enough to keep some voters’ true November intentions hidden.

Some theorized that the Bradley Effect was an eroding legacy on American politics, evidenced by President Obama’s election. Yet, that was before 4 years of blatant [racism hurled at the current president](http://wonkette.com/409193/latest-republican-racist-email-features-hilarious-summary-of-44-american-presidents) mixed in with an ongoing recession, hyper-partisanship throughout government, and major social issues to heighten tensions. The decision to choose a side in the gay marriage debate may have been enough for some in key swing states to jump off the Obama bandwagon. What is dangerous for the Obama Campaign is that this abandonment – based on resurgent racism, a disagreement on social issues, or merely a lack of faith in the administration moving “forward” – may not show up in the polls until it’s too late.

### AT: Bradley Effect

#### The economy trumps race

Franke-Ruta 6/11

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But for all that, it's not totally clear from Stephens-Davidowitz's findings what the Electoral College impact of racism was or would be. The popular vote is obviously critical in a presidential election, but it's mediated. It cannot come as a shock to anyone that Obama is not seen as the cat's meow [in places like West Virginia](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/05/white-resentment-obama-and-appalachia/257574/), southern Mississippi or southern Oklahoma. And even a large racial cost in those states would have had no impact on Obama's general election prospects, because he was always going to lose those states. Meanwhile, racism in places like upstate New York and rural Illinois, as documented in Google searches, may be culturally and politically significant and yet still pretty much irrelevant to Obama's reelection prospects, as any Democrat who's so weak he can't even win New York or Illinois is someone heading into a blow-out loss nationwide.

Where racial animus might intersect with the Electoral College to matter -- eastern Ohio, western Pennsylvania, parts of Florida -- on Election Day is something to contemplate. Still, if Obama loses, it will be hard to argue that those well-known swing states and regions don't also have unusually significant economic problems that might turn them away from any incumbent president running on the historically weak fundamentals Obama is. Some researchers will point to Obama's race as a factor if he loses -- but even more will point to the biggest and best-know electoral predictor of all: the strength of the economy.

#### Bradley effect is a myth – 08 proves.

Silver 08 (Nate Silver is the founder of FiveThirtyEight.com, an independent polling and political-analysis Website, The Insider’s Guide to Election Polls, Aug. 21, 2008, http://nymag.com/daily/intel/2008/08/the\_insiders\_guide\_to\_election.html)

Forget the Bradley Effect… Conventional wisdom holds that preelection polls tend to overstate the performance of black candidates — a phenomenon known as the Bradley Effect, named after 1982 Los Angeles mayoral candidate Tom Bradley, an African-American who narrowly lost his election after having a significant lead in the polls. More contemporary research, however, reveals that this effect disappeared at some point in the early nineties: Voters may still vote based on the race of the candidates, but their preferences will be reflected accurately by the polls. And in the Democratic primaries, it was Barack Obama rather than Hillary Clinton who overperformed his polls, beating his preelection averages by a margin of about three points.

#### Polls account for racism

Smith 08 (ADAM C. SMITH, St. Petersburg Times, September 15, 2008, Black ‘issue’ hangs over presidential polls, http://www.ajc.com/news/content/news/stories/2008/09/15/obama\_race\_campaign.html)

The Bradley effect may be a bygone relic. In 2006, many observers questioned the polling in Tennessee’s Senate race, featuring African-American Democrat Harold Ford and white Republican Brad Corker, but Ford’s narrow loss closely matched the polls. In this year’s hard-fought Democratic primaries, exit polls an especially tricky process that involves talking to voters as they leave their voting precincts frequently overstated Obama’s support. Yet the pre-election polls were mostly close to the mark, with the exception of the Northeast, where Clinton outperformed the polls in states such as New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. “Everyone has always assumed the South has had more racial issues, and yet the Northeast is where this thing hit much more often,” said pollster Luntz, predicting racial issues could also be a factor in the more competitive industrial Midwest where the race may be decided. Mark Mellman, John Kerry’s pollster in 2004, dismissed the Bradley effect but not the potential importance of race. “Are there people who are not going to vote for Barack Obama because he’s black? I’m afraid there are,” Mellman said. “Are they going to hide their racism? Probably yes. Are they going to hide their vote? Probably not. There’s no evidence that’s happening in any systemic way.”

### Forecasting Models Bad

#### **Forecasts by experts are empirically wildly inaccurate.**

Silver 6/25

Nate Silver is the founder of FiveThirtyEight.com, an independent polling and political-analysis Website June 25, 2012 The Problems With Forecasting and How to Get Better at It

http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/25/the-problems-with-forecasting-and-how-to-improve/

Mr. Tetlock found that the [experts’ predictive judgment wasn’t very good](http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/12/05/051205crbo_books1). Most of his experts were outperformed by a statistical algorithm, and many were worse than “dart-throwing monkeys.” Most had no clue about some generation-defining events — like the collapse of the Soviet Union — until they began to occur. Mr. Tetlock found that credentials made little difference: having a Ph.D. in political science, for instance, was not a significant factor either way in predicting success.

My own small contribution to this literature comes from my own study of [predictions that political scientists and economists have published of presidential elections](http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/26/models-based-on-fundamentals-have-failed-at-predicting-presidential-elections/). Some of these experts [claimed](https://gupea.ub.gu.se//bitstream/2077/2847/1/gunwpe0020.pdf) that they could predict elections to an extremely high degree of accuracy without ever looking at a poll, instead relying on various combinations of economic and other variables.

In fact, these efforts have gone badly. Models based on these “fundamentals” alone have missed election results by an average of eight points since they began to be published widely in 1992. (Those models that combined economic and polling data have had considerably better results.) This is worse than you would do just by glancing at the Gallup poll, or even by just guessing that the outcome of the election would be split 50-50.

It was also much worse than what the models advertised. Most of them claimed to have pinpoint accuracy, and would have given odds anywhere from hundreds-to-one to billions-to-one against some of the outcomes that actually occurred, like the virtual tie between George W. Bush and Al Gore in 2000. (Many of the models had envisaged a Gore landslide instead.)

I’ve gotten various reactions since I’ve published these results, but some have verged on utter denial. Some political scientists have obfuscated the problem (intentionally or not) by treating the data the models used to fit their equations as tantamount to actual predictions – in essence, claiming credit for “predicting” the past. (Here’s a tip: I have a model that says you should bet a lot on [George Mason to make the Final Four in 2006](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2006_NCAA_Men%27s_Division_I_Basketball_Tournament). You’ll make a fortune. Now you’ll just have to get your hands on a time machine.)

The political scientists have also noted that some of the forecast models have done better than others. To be clear, I do think that some of them are more soundly constructed. But so far, the results of the “fundamentals” models when tested on real data have been consistent with a hypothesis of no forecasting skill but instead some random variance centered around a poorly performing mean. Cherry-picking the most successful models may be the equivalent of attributing genius to the [octopus that predicted the World Cup](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_the_Octopus).

### Forecasting Models Good

#### **Forecast models are improving and can provide accurate early info.**

Hillygus ‘11

D. SUNSHINE HILLYGUS is Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the Initiative on Survey Methodology at Duke University, Durham, NC The Evolution of Election Polling in the United States. Public Opin Q *(Special Issue 2011) 75 (5): 962-981.*

Election forecasters argue that statistical predictions should outperform other election predictions because they are rooted in a theory about voter behavior. [Lewis-Beck (2005)](http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/75/5/962.full#ref-52) argued that other forecasting approaches, such as poll- and market-based predictions, “are not based on any theory of the vote. Instead, they are merely providing point estimates on a dependent variable. … It is my belief that, in the long run, the statistical modeling approach, because it draws on voting theory, will yield a better performance” (p. 148).

One criticism of these models is that, like the national-poll-based forecasts, they typically predict the two-party popular vote rather than the Electoral College outcome. Given the two-party system of the United States, the popular vote typically falls within a rather narrow range of values. A naïve prediction based on a coin toss would predict a 50-percent vote share, which gets pretty close to the right answer in many election years. Another criticism is that once we account for the confidence intervals around the point estimate, it becomes evident that most models predict a wide range of possible outcomes, including victory by the opposing candidate ([Lewis-Beck 2005](http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/75/5/962.full#ref-52)). There are only a handful of presidential elections for which the necessary aggregate data are available to estimate the statistical models, so predictions are inherently imprecise. Moreover, according to [Greene (1993)](http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/75/5/962.full#ref-31), the tendency for models to be fitted to previous outcomes—that is, selecting model specification based on past elections—means that the models underestimate the true level of uncertainty. [Vavreck (2009)](http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/75/5/962.full#ref-76) argued that economic models have sometimes failed because they have not taken into account the content of the campaign, especially the candidates’ messages about the economy and their attention to other issues.

Reflecting these issues, the track records for individual models are highly variable; for example, Ray Fair’s model had one of the worst predictions in 1992 despite a previous history of successful forecasts ([Greene 1993](http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/75/5/962.full#ref-31)). Nonetheless, it is clear that there are regularities in presidential races that help in predicting the outcome long before the polling numbers converge on the likely winner. And there is clearly value in being able to make an early prediction, provided that the appropriate amount of uncertainty in that estimate is reported. With the increasing availability of state-level measures and more complex statistical techniques, the field is poised to make further improvements in the accuracy and reliability of model-based forecasts of Electoral College outcomes (e.g., [Rigdon et al. 2009](http://poq.oxfordjournals.org/content/75/5/962.full#ref-66)).

#### Despite flaws – forecasting models accurately predict likely winner

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

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