# Hoya-Spartan 2012 – Aff helpers for your HSR opening practice debates

## Federalism/States – Aff answers – see HSR Aff file for specific solvency deficits

### All-purpose vs. domestic devolution-style cplan

#### ( ) Devolution lit biased. Balance is okay now – additional devolution would be bad.

Freemark ‘12

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The federal government has already devolved most of its transportation powers to local and state governments. And there is little evidence that further reducing the power of Washington will produce better transportation investments. The reaction to President Obama’s 2013 budget for transportation has ranged from the dismissive — “it’s too big to be part of the discussion” — to the supportive (myself, among others), most of the commentary revolving around the proposed program’s large size. Another theme, however, has reemerged in the discussion: The role of the federal government in funding transportation. It’s not a new conversation, of course; in American transportation circles, the roles of the three major levels of government are constantly being put into question. The argument goes something like this: The federal government, because of its national power and ability to collect revenues from the fuel taxes it administers, is a wasteful spender and it chooses to invest in projects that are inappropriate enough that they wouldn’t be financed by local governments if they were in charge. Harvard Economist Edward Glaeser argues for the de-federalization of transport spending, suggesting “Whenever the person paying isn’t the person who benefits, there will always be a push for more largesse and little check on spending efficiency. Would Detroit’s People Mover have ever been built if the people of Detroit had to pay for it? We should move toward a system in which states and localities take more responsibility for the infrastructure that serves their citizens.” He also suggests, somewhat contradictorily, that federal funding “tie spending to need or performance.“\* USC’s Lisa Schweitzer asserts that if cities want improved sidewalks or public transportation, they should pay for them themselves. ”The typical arguments [are] that “those things are good for us!”,” she writes. “Of course they are. Why can’t you fund them at the city, or in the case of transit, the state level?” [She adds that she will defend federal investment in a future discussion.] Bruce Katz of Brookings chimes in. “The states and metropolitan areas are once again playing their traditional roles as “laboratories of democracy” and centers of economic and policy innovation,” he adds. “An enormous opportunity exists for the next president to mobilize these federalist partners in a focused campaign for national economic renewal.” The federal government, it is implied, is just too intrusive to make the right decisions. Here’s the thing: The large majority of decisions on transportation spending with federal dollars is already made at the state and local levels. And state and local governments already contribute huge sums to the operation, maintenance, and expansion of their transportation programs. Once the federal government collects tax revenue, it distributes funding to the states based on formulas agreed upon by members of Congress. For the most, part, the money goes back to the states and to metropolitan areas, which then fund projects based on the priority lists that they generate. It is true that Washington allocates some money for transit and some for highways, but within those categories, states and local governments generally have power to pay for the projects they want. Washington does run very competitive grant programs — exactly the type of performance-based financing Mr. Glaeser demands — for transit investment projects and for programs like TIGER (and, indeed, for the much-hated high-speed rail program). Federal guidelines require most of these projects (unlike those funded by formula) to meet cost-effectiveness and ridership standards. This was not true at the time of the Detroit People Mover (a project I admit I abhor), but it is certainly true now.\*\*\* While earmarks (now out of the equation entirely) got a lot of attention as being wasteful, even at the height of the process they only accounted for about 5% of transportation spending from Washington. I can think of plenty of expensive and arguably inappropriate transit projects paid for by local governments that would not meet the guidelines to be funded by the federal government under its competitive programs. Should we hail Mr. Katz’s “laboratories of democracy” that produced these? Would Mr. Glaeser have these federal grant programs dismantled so states or localities could fund underperforming transit? Meanwhile, states and local governments are contributing massively to transportation funding already, just as Ms. Schweitzer asks them to. I studied Oregon and Illinois a year and a half ago and found that only about a quarter of Oregon’s Department of Transportation budget comes from Washington; about a third of Illinois’ comes from the national capital. What about those profligate transit agencies that are egged on by the federal government’s wasteful spending? Their operations spending comes from local, state, and fare revenues — not Washington. And expansion projects — especially the big ones — are mostly financed by local revenues, like dedicated sales taxes that voters across the country have approved repeatedly over the past twenty years. The six largest transit expansion projects currently receiving or proposed to receive funding from the Obama Administration this year each rely on the federal government to contribute less than 43% of total costs. Perhaps Detroit would have paid for the People Mover even if it had had to use its own revenues to do so. Now, even if we were to recognize the high level of devolution of power and funds that currently does exist in the U.S., some might still argue that the federal government exercises too much power. Its distribution formula for fuel tax revenues results in certain states getting more money than their drivers contributed (“donor” states) and certain states getting less (“donee” states). Why not simply allow states to collect their own revenues and spend money as they wish? Why should Washington be engaged in this discussion at all? For one, as I have noted above, states and municipalities have no clear record of choosing to invest in better projects when they are fully in charge of collecting the revenues to do so. States have too often proven a complete disregard for public transportation investments when they’re left fully in charge — see state infrastructure banks as evidence for that fact. While federal investments in transportation have been far from perfect, they have nonetheless provided for the significant expansion in transit offerings we’re now seeing. From the 1980s on, the Congress has maintained a steady stream of funding for transit from the fuel tax revenues it collects. How many states, which collect a huge amount of fuel tax revenues themselves, can say the same? But the most important role of the federal government in transportation financing is to ensure that funding is maintained during economic downturns. The Obama Administration actually increased spending on roads and transit projects following the 2008 recession, despite a decline in federal fuel tax revenues, because it was able to use its power of deficit spending (an authority state and local governments do not have\*\*) to maintain investments when the country needed them. Devolution is overrated.

### No link – plan not violate federalism

#### ( ) Federal infrastructure investments don’t violate 10th amendment

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)

With a growing political consensus in Washington for the need to cut federal spending to rein in federal deficits and the national debt, officials will increasingly need to decide between supporting programs that are in the federal interest and those that should more properly be handled at the state and local level. One area where this question is likely to arise is federal investments in infrastructure, including highways, transit systems, airports, dams, levees, federal buildings and drinking & wastewater systems. Some are likely to wonder why federal taxpayers should help subsidize financing for drinking water in Louisville, pay into a pool of funds that will add new highway capacity in Richmond, or use general treasury funds to prevent flooding and speed barge traffic by improving locks along the Ohio River. The answer is that it is clearly in the national interest to invest in infrastructure. For example, there is a clear, constitutionally defined federal role for supporting interstate commerce by investing in transportation infrastructure. Likewise, there is a strong argument to be made that the federal government has a vital role to play in maintaining our national economic security by investing in the infrastructure that is vital to commerce. Indeed, the Constitution is quite clear that it is the responsibility of the federal government to facilitate interstate commerce. Today, the vast majority of that interstate commerce travels on America’s vast, interconnected network of highways, airports and waterways. That means that if Congress and the Administration want to fulfill their Constitutional obligation to facilitate interstate commerce, they must continue to make the investments needed to maintain sufficient quality and capacity along our interstate highway network, our waterways and ensure the safety of air travelers.

### No Federalism Modeling – Generic

#### No one model’s the U.S. – polls prove

Andrew Moravcsik 5, Professor of Government and Director of the European Union Program at Harvard University, January 31, 2005, Newsweek, “Dream On, America,” p. Lexis

Not long ago, the American dream was a global fantasy. Not only Americans saw themselves as a beacon unto nations. So did much of the rest of the world. East Europeans tuned into Radio Free Europe. Chinese students erected a replica of the Statue of Liberty in Tiananmen Square. You had only to listen to George W. Bush's Inaugural Address last week (invoking "freedom" and "liberty" 49 times) to appreciate just how deeply Americans still believe in this founding myth. For many in the world, the president's rhetoric confirmed their worst fears of an imperial America relentlessly pursuing its narrow national interests. But the greater danger may be a delusional America--one that believes, despite all evidence to the contrary, that the American Dream lives on, that America remains a model for the world, one whose mission is to spread the word. The gulf between how Americans view themselves and how the world views them was summed up in a poll last week by the BBC. Fully 71 percent of Americans see the United States as a source of good in the world. More than half view Bush's election as positive for global security. Other studies report that 70 percent have faith in their domestic institutions and nearly 80 percent believe "American ideas and customs" should spread globally. Foreigners take an entirely different view: 58 percent in the BBC poll see Bush's re-election as a threat to world peace. Among America's traditional allies, the figure is strikingly higher: 77 percent in Germany, 64 percent in Britain and 82 percent in Turkey. Among the 1.3 billion members of the Islamic world, public support for the United States is measured in single digits. Only Poland, the Philippines and India viewed Bush's second Inaugural positively. Tellingly, the anti-Bushism of the president's first term is giving way to a more general anti-Americanism. A plurality of voters (the average is 70 percent) in each of the 21 countries surveyed by the BBC oppose sending any troops to Iraq, including those in most of the countries that have done so. Only one third, disproportionately in the poorest and most dictatorial countries, would like to see American values spread in their country. Says Doug Miller of GlobeScan, which conducted the BBC report: "President Bush has further isolated America from the world. Unless the administration changes its approach, it will continue to erode America's good name, and hence its ability to effectively influence world affairs." Former Brazilian president Jose Sarney expressed the sentiments of the 78 percent of his countrymen who see America as a threat: "Now that Bush has been re-elected, all I can say is, God bless the rest of the world." The truth is that Americans are living in a dream world. Not only do others not share America's self-regard, they no longer aspire to emulate the country's social and economic achievements. The loss of faith in the American Dream goes beyond this swaggering administration and its war in Iraq. A President Kerry would have had to confront a similar disaffection, for it grows from the success of something America holds dear: the spread of democracy, free markets and international institutions--globalization, in a word. Countries today have dozens of political, economic and social models to choose from. Anti-Americanism is especially virulent in Europe and Latin America, where countries have established their own distinctive ways--none made in America. Futurologist Jeremy Rifkin, in his recent book "The European Dream," hails an emerging European Union based on generous social welfare, cultural diversity and respect for international law--a model that's caught on quickly across the former nations of Eastern Europe and the Baltics. In Asia, the rise of autocratic capitalism in China or Singapore is as much a "model" for development as America's scandal-ridden corporate culture. "First we emulate," one Chinese businessman recently told the board of one U.S. multinational, "then we overtake."

### No Federalism Modeling – Iraq

#### No judiciary modeling – distinct origins

Rubini 3 [Daniel L. Rubini is the Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Justice in Iraq, “Ask the White House,” 11-03, http://www.whitehouse.gov/ask/20031113.html]

Scott, from Washington DC writes: Judge Rubini - What similarities does the Iraqi judiciary process have with the United States? Also, what position does Iraq have concerning International Court of Justice decisions? Thanks, Daniel Rubini In the organizational sense, the court system resembles the European process. It does not resemble U.S., although the same basic elements of preliminary investigation, trial with presumption of innocence, and right of appeal are all present. Right now we are not affected on a day to day basis by the international courts. And without further checking, I do not know what protocols previous Iraq governments signed regarding the International Courts. [Continued…] Iraq’s legal system, without rule by decree from Saddam Hussein is more like a European system based on Spanish civil codes. It is not like the American system which is inherited from the British common law system.

### Impact Defense – Iraqi civil war not escalate

#### Instability doesn’t escalate

Michael Knights 11, fellow at the Washington Institute, “Iraq's Relentless Insurgency: The Fight for Power ahead of U.S. Withdrawal”, September 22, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=1703>

With the exception of anti-U.S. attacks carried out by Iranian-backed groups such as Kataib Hezbollah and Asaib Ahl al-Haq (splinters from the Sadrist movement and the Badr political party with ties to Iranian intelligence services), the vast majority of violent actions in Iraq are no longer targeted against U.S. forces. Indeed, most violent **factions are already looking well past the U.S. drawdown**; the U.S. withdrawal will probably not unleash more violence because **to many Iraqis, particularly insurgents, the U.S. military has already been gone for months, or even years in some areas**. **The main event in Iraq**, which was postponed for many years due to the U.S. presence, **is the struggle among Iraqis to control the country**. In today's Iraq, the most common forms of low-profile attacks -- far more numerous than the headline-grabbing bombings -- are drive-by shootings and bombs attached to the underside of personal vehicles. These **attacks are largely contained within sectarian communities** (Sunni against Sunni or Shia against Shia) **and reflect the ultra-local struggle for dominance that is broiling throughout Iraq**. Such attacks are by definition low-lethality: they are intended to intimidate as much as they are to kill. **They are** also **the inevitable epilogue of a violent and protracted civil war** in which some members of each community sided with the Iraqi government and the U.S.-led coalition while others backed the insurgency. **Now the scores must be settled**. The campaign of assassinations in Iraq shows that the **political parties are not immune from the temptation of violent jockeying**. After 2003, political parties and movements have been able to slide around on the fringes of the political spectrum at will, with relatively reputable parties able to reach out to affiliates in the insurgency when they needed to get tough. **The intense campaign of assassinations** in Baghdad **began in 2010** as the selective attacks of insurgent groups such as AQI and JRTN against government officials quickly became a free-for-all that drew negative energy from the stagnation of the government formation process. As Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki admitted at a press conference last April, Iraq's political parties used the cover of large numbers of unsolved killings to undertake "political assassinations." This, in turn, unleashed a wave of score-settling and intimidation attacks. **Shiite political factions**, including various splinters of Muqtada al-Sadr's movement, the Badr organization, and Maliki's own Dawa party appear to have **fought** low-profile **skirmishes with one another for dominance of** various **security agencies**, **key Iraqi Army formations, and regions throughout the southern provinces**. As part of these struggles, Shia political parties have carried out a wave of Shia-on-Shia assassination attempts against Iraqi Army division commanders, political party bosses, and local representatives of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. By this June, when the assassinations had reached their height, senior Iraqi politicians and bureaucrats were attending multiple funerals per week. Although the pace of these attacks is now slowing due to government raids against assassination gangs, the **spring** season of **assassinations cast a spotlight on the violence lurking just beneath the surface of Iraqi politics**. As the crackdown on Baghdad assassinations showed, **events can only deteriorate so far before the Iraqi government will act**. **The government has unacceptable "red lines" for general destabilization that are broadly understood by militant groups**. For example, in response to closed-door meetings with government representatives, Sadr has stepped back from his threat to mobilize his militia; Sadrists, meanwhile, have scrupulously avoided taking actions that would trigger a government offensive, such as openly carrying weapons at their parades or mounting armed patrols within their strongholds. In places such as Basra, local political pressure and operations by Iraqi security forces have curtailed armed resistance against U.S. targets, such as the heavy rocketing of the U.S. base at the airport. Likewise, **although the violent jockeying within sectarian factions has increased, the government has been sure to** take steps to **prevent any widespread conflict between sectarian communities** in Baghdad and other trouble spots. In other words, **there appear to be definite limits to how far security can deteriorate in Iraq**. The flip side, however, is that there are probably equally definite limits concerning how much better things can get in the coming years. For a while, Iraq will be stuck on this plateau: a moderate level of insecurity in which the country suffers somewhere between 300 and 500 insurgent attacks per month, including around two dozen attempted mass-casualty attacks. **A formal extension of the U.S. military presence will not shorten this period of moderate insecurity**. Today, **most Iraqis do not interact with U.S. forces, and the U.S. military is no longer the glue holding together many ISF divisions and brigades**. Indeed, **there is little that a formally extended U.S. presence on Iraq's streets could achieve at this point**. An extension would also prove contentious: Iraq's highly fragmented parliament and an equally uncertain public may not be ready to debate and approve a formal security agreement that would modify the December 31, 2011 departure date for U.S. military units.

#### No spillover or great power draw-in

Cook 7 – fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations

Steven A., and Ray Takeyh (fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations), Suzanne Maloney (senior fellow at Saban Center) Brookings Institution, International Herald Tribune, “Why the Iraq war won't engulf the Mideast,” 6-28, www.iht.com/articles/2007/06/28/opinion/edtakeyh.php

It is abundantly clear that major outside powers like Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey are heavily involved in Iraq. These countries have so much at stake in the future of Iraq that it is natural they would seek to influence political developments in the country. Yet, the Saudis, Iranians, Jordanians, Syrians, and others are very unlikely to go to war either to protect their own sect or ethnic group or to prevent one country from gaining the upper hand in Iraq. The reasons are fairly straightforward. First, Middle Eastern leaders, like politicians everywhere, are primarily interested in one thing: self-preservation. Committing forces to Iraq is an inherently risky proposition, which, if the conflict went badly, could threaten domestic political stability. Moreover, most Arab armies are geared toward regime protection rather than projecting power and thus have little capability for sending troops to Iraq. Second, there is cause for concern about the so-called blowback scenario in which jihadis returning from Iraq destabilize their home countries, plunging the region into conflict. Middle Eastern leaders are preparing for this possibility. Unlike in the 1990s, when Arab fighters in the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union returned to Algeria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia and became a source of instability, Arab security services are being vigilant about who is coming in and going from their countries. In the last month, the Saudi government has arrested approximately 200 people suspected of ties with militants. Riyadh is also building a 700 kilometer wall along part of its frontier with Iraq in order to keep militants out of the kingdom. Finally, there is no precedent for Arab leaders to commit forces to conflicts in which they are not directly involved. The Iraqis and the Saudis did send small contingents to fight the Israelis in 1948 and 1967, but they were either ineffective or never made it. In the 1970s and 1980s, Arab countries other than Syria, which had a compelling interest in establishing its hegemony over Lebanon, never committed forces either to protect the Lebanese from the Israelis or from other Lebanese. The civil war in Lebanon was regarded as someone else's fight. Indeed, this is the way many leaders view the current situation in Iraq. To Cairo, Amman and Riyadh, the situation in Iraq is worrisome, but in the end it is an Iraqi and American fight. As far as Iranian mullahs are concerned, they have long preferred to press their interests through proxies as opposed to direct engagement. At a time when Tehran has access and influence over powerful Shiite militias, a massive cross-border incursion is both unlikely and unnecessary. So Iraqis will remain locked in a sectarian and ethnic struggle that outside powers may abet, but will remain within the borders of Iraq. The Middle East is a region both prone and accustomed to civil wars. But given its experience with ambiguous conflicts, the region has also developed an intuitive ability to contain its civil strife and prevent local conflicts from enveloping the entire Middle East.

### Federalism Not So Good in Iraq – local governments fail

#### Local governments fail

Denise Natali 11, Fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies, “Can Federalism Work in Iraq?”, October 21, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lng=en&id=134644>

Institutional constraints. Iraq’s excessively regulatory structure, nepotism and corruption at all levels of business and government, and absence of the rule of law hinders foreign investment, increases costs, and prevents the successful completion of projects at the local levels.4 The country also has no institution to represent provincial interests at the federal level.  Weak capacities. Provincial administrations are ill-equipped to effectively manage or implement projects. Only 9 percent of the government’s 2011 total capital expenditures, or $25.7 billion, has been targeted to the provinces for development projects.5 The operational budget also fails to address local needs. Allocations focus on play grounds and road maintenance The provinces also lack the authority and capabilities to provide services. According to a survey conducted in July 2010 by the Iraqi Ministry of Planning, local planning bodies were generally available but described as weak and inefficient. These bodies rarely engage in strategic planning but focus instead on operational level planning, which is conducted mainly by temporary contractors.7 Additionally, the provinces have all of the weaknesses of the federal government; no oversight on corruption, legislation, and human rights issues.  Expectations of the role of the central government. Despite the creation of provincial councils Iraqis have a mentality that the central government is the source of all benefits and services and all ills. It is difficult to change this mentality, particularly for those who rule in Baghdad. Although some provincial officials see devolution of power as a means of expanding local patronage networks, the vast majority is afraid of being held responsible for the lack of services. The KRG also has large expectations of the central government, but for different reasons. In the Kurdistan region local expectations are not vested in Baghdad but the KRG, which has assumed responsibility for delivering goods and social services in the region. Yet even though the KRG has been the most reluctant to integrate into a national structure and has developed its own parallel sectors, the region remains highly dependent upon Baghdad for nearly 95 percent of its budget. The KRG also expects the central government to finance its militia (peshmerga) and resource development projects alongside its annual budget.

### Federalism Not So Good in Iraq – Oil / Revenue Fights

#### Fights over oil and revenues kill implementation

Denise Natali 11, Fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies, “Can Federalism Work in Iraq?”, October 21, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lng=en&id=134644>

Efficiency or equality? Resource and revenue management. The Iraqi constitution clearly prioritizes equity over efficiency, yet lack of technical skills, corruption, and heavy reliance on international oil companies prevent the KRG and the provinces from maximizing benefits in the energy sector. Iraq’s federalism also lacks mechanisms of assuring regular and complete payment transfers from regions and provinces to the central government. All provinces are currently compliant in transferring non-oil revenue to the federal treasure except the Kurdistan region. Baghdad is responsible for allocating revenues to each province and region from the Development of Regions and Provinces Fund which is based upon population density, though areas “damaged” during the previous regime may receive greater compensation. Iraqi ministries also are financed to execute their own projects in the provinces. These seemingly arbitrary revenue distribution processes, alongside inequalities of the petro-dollar scheme, have further limited the authority of regions and local administrations to engage in long-term planning and development projects. For instance, Iraq’s revenue allocation to the provinces from 2006-2011 reveals no clear pattern; in 2008 Baghdad received $900 million while Basra received $300 million and in 2011 Baghdad received about $550 million while Basra received about $975 million. Kirkuk, which received less than $150 million in 2008 was the third highest recipient of central government provincial funds in 2011, with an allocation of nearly $400 million.8 Energy sector management has created similar constraints for regional and local administrations. Even though all Iraqis agree that oil is the key to Iraq’s finances, they disagree on how the sector should be managed, reflecting the vagaries of the 2005 Constitution and competing views on the distribution of powers between the Baghdad and the provinces.9 Oil deposits also are unevenly spread across the country and differences exist among oil fields’ production capacity, extraction costs, and quality of crude. According to energy sector and economic experts, a more equitable resource management policy would give regions and provinces the right to manage oil production and revenues. In doing so, oil would yield less revenue than its potential, as oil firms would negotiate with more, smaller vendors in the form of provinces, rather than a single, larger vendor in the form of the Iraqi government. This option would also reduce the share of the oil revenue going to the Iraqi government. In contrast, greater resource efficiency requires maximizing oil production and revenue, which given Iraq’s energy structure, would result in greater control by Baghdad. According to the Iraqi Institute for Economic Reform, Baghdad’s total revenue for 2011 is over 69 billion dollars; about ninety percent of which is oil based and representative of 60 percent of Iraq’s gross domestic product.10 Given the country’s high dependence upon oil and exposure to oil price shocks, the central government is reluctant to decentralize the system radically because it risks losing power. Baghdad also is reticent to expand other sectors because they could consume oil and thus take away profits of the petroleum economy.  The hydrocarbons law. One of the most contentious issues involving resource and revenue management is the hydrocarbons law. Two versions of the draft law representing the distinct and overlapping demands by the KRG and provinces and the central government have been proposed by the parliament and cabinet respectively. These versions reflect the competition for greater control over the energy sector, as well as where decision-making power in Iraq should be vested; legislative (parliament) or executive (Cabinet) branches of government.11 Equally problematic is the validity of contracts signed by the KRG, particularly those in the disputed territories. In response to Baghdad’s criticisms of the opacity of its contracts and procedures, the KRG has publicly opened some of its records, although in a limited form.12 Further, there still is no systematic process of accounting and auditing energy sector activities. Baghdad has created a Committee of Financial Experts to replace the Iraqi Supreme Auditing Board to monitor transactions; however, no significant changes should be expected before 2012.

#### There’s no alternative to central government control of the oil and budget

Niqash 11, Iraqi political news, “Sharing the Oil Money: How Federalism Could Save Iraq”, November 4, <http://www.iraq-businessnews.com/2011/11/04/sharing-the-oil-money-how-federalism-could-save-iraq/>

The Iraqi Constitution contains several references to financial management but unfortunately many are open to interpretation and compromise. For example, every year there is disagreement on how much of the national budget the semi-autonomous state of Iraqi Kurdistan should be getting. And this is mainly because of a lack of clarity when it comes to the rules on national and state finances. The Constitution gives provincial governments the right to increase their revenues independently but in reality they still tend to rely on the federal government’s budget – this means that the Ministry of Finance in Baghdad still holds sway over Iraq’s states, and this power could be exploited under certain political conditions. The focus should be on developing clarity in this area – ultimately this would lead to a reduction in the provinces’ dependence on the central government and would strengthen the basic principles of democracy. But there is another important issue here: encouraging provincial financial independence will also require clarity on exactly how oil revenues are to be distributed. And this question is mired in suspicion, envy and mutual distrust. Currently almost all of the revenue from Iraq’s oil ends up with the central government in Baghdad while the provinces that produce the oil get the left overs. As one classical Arab poem puts it, these provinces are like camels in the desert, who carry water on their backs but then die of thirst. The way that oil revenues are currently distributed – concentrated in Baghdad – sets the financial foundation for a new dictatorship. In order to avoid this, we must agree upon a more fair distribution system that will also calm fears that the oil producing regions will take everything if they are given the chance. Currently the wording of the Iraqi Constitution attempts to solve this problem by giving the national government the right to manage oil extraction and revenues. It’s not clear on what happens with new and undeveloped oil fields but at the same time it stresses equitable distribution of the revenues. However the Constitution alone cannot solve this problem. New laws are needed. Unfortunately the inability of the Iraqi parliament to pass a new national oil and gas law has prolonged conflict in this area. That conflict has also resulted in unusual and uncertain practices – for example, some tribes in Iraq’s southern states have tried to impose extra fees on international companies before they start work on oil-field-development contracts they actually signed with the central government.

### Federalism Not So Good in Iraq – Security Forces Arg

#### Local governments can’t manage the army or police

Denise Natali 11, Fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies, “Can Federalism Work in Iraq?”, October 21, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lng=en&id=134644>

Securing the federal Iraqi state. Federalism in the security sector is an equally sensitive issue. The constitution permits regions and provinces to establish internal security; however it does not clarify who is responsible for securing borders or paying costs of local militia, particularly if they operate separately from the Iraqi army. These concerns stem from two trends that have emerged in the security arena since 2003: the increase in organized crime and decline in the capabilities of military forces due to new responsibilities of dealing with police work. Different views of Iraqi capabilities show that while Iraqis are working hard to fill these gaps, security and political dilemmas remain. They include:  How to reconstitute the Iraqi army. What rules and processes will define the composition of the military? If the army is created along ethnic or sectarian lines it will be seen as exclusionary but if it is representative of society it will be criticized for being based on quotas. Re-building and sustaining the army also is tainted by Saddam’s use of the military for internal security purposes and different group perceptions of the military. Shi’as continue to have greater representation in the military but are now also dominant in the officer corps, which was previously Sunni Arab (The Maliki government has excluded Sunni Arabs as Ba’athists) Most Shi'as continue to be distrustful of the former Sunni Arab dominated armed forces. Sunnis are distrustful of the new military because it is misrepresentative of the population while the Kurds are distrustful of both.  Securing Iraqi borders. New disputes have emerged over deployments of Iraqi armed forces in the provinces, and similarly, the deployment of Kurdish peshmerga and local militia outside regional or provincial borders. While party and group militias have assumed greater control of local security, the main threats (terrorism and insurgency) are transnational and trans-provincial and cannot be effectively countered exclusively on a local level. Another issue is identity-based. Police and security forces do not enforce warrants against people in their own tribes. The recent Karbala bus incident that led to the deployment of Karbala security forces in Anbar province that created local hostilities, exemplifies the problem of Iraq’s securing its borders.13  Baghdad-Arbil relations. According to a high-level Iraqi official, security issues and challenges differ more within the Kurdistan Region than with the provinces. Baghdad has had particular tensions with the Kurds in the past and is wary of their perceived intentions, while the KRG continues to distrust the central government. The size of KRG forces and their costs remains a contentious issue. Although the KRG refuses Iraqi military forces from entering the Kurdistan region, it wants Baghdad to fund 90,000 peshmerga forces to guard the borders of the Kurdistan Region in addition to the 17 percent budget its receives from the central government (Baghdad has agreed to fund 30,000). Additionally, tensions have reemerged over the jurisdiction and identity of Iraq’s disputed territories. Maliki’s recent decree banning Kurdish flags from being flown in Khanaqin in Diyala province has let to demonstrations and new threats of a “popular revolution” by the Kurds.14

### Federalism Not So Good in Iraq – Legal Confusion

#### Legal confusion kills governance and causes turf wars

Denise Natali 11, Fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies, “Can Federalism Work in Iraq?”, October 21, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lng=en&id=134644>

Iraq’s Federalist Solution: The idea of a federalist system was initiated by the United States and Iraqi opposition groups while planning for a post-Saddam Iraq. Federalism was perceived as the best way to guarantee minority group rights, prevent a return of dictatorship and keep the country together. The particular nature of Iraqi federalism, as espoused in the 2005 constitution, devolved large powers to the Kurdistan region and the provinces, expanded political participation and representation through a quota system, and checked the authority of the central government. In doing so, Iraq became one of the weakest forms of federalism in the world, leaving the central government with minimal responsibilities including enumerated powers to collect and distribute revenues. Yet Iraq’s federalist framework is riddled with ambiguity and legal inconsistencies that have constrained both central government power and autonomy of the provinces. Vagaries of the constitution, institutional weakness, gaps in local capabilities and confusion about the meaning of federalism among different groups have prevented effective governance. Tensions between equity and efficiency also have become salient as the country attempts to reinvigorate its oil-dependent economy. Two contradictory trends have emerged that pose new challenges to governance, development and security; the push toward greater autonomy by regional and local administrations and a reaffirmation of central authority from Baghdad.

### Federalism Not So Good in Iraq – Constitution

#### The Constitution’s too vague

Denise Natali 11, Fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies, “Can Federalism Work in Iraq?”, October 21, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lng=en&id=134644>

The key findings were that Iraqi federalism has a chance to succeed but only with modifications. Most participants were relatively positive about the idea of federalism but critical of the way it has been applied. One of the biggest problems is the 2005 Constitution. While assuring minority group rights, the constitution’s intentional ambiguity on resource and revenue-sharing and security responsibilities has created new tensions between Baghdad, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and local administrations. Another unintended consequence has been greater inefficiency in governance and economic development. Even though the provinces have been constitutionally bestowed with large powers, they have neither the institutional capacity nor resources to manage or implement large-scale projects, particularly in the energy sector. Some argued that given the significant role of petroleum in the Iraqi economy, a more centralized system would be most effective in advancing energy development. Others pressed for greater clarity in authority between the central government, KRG, and local administrations, either through bilateral agreements or special arrangements.

### Federalism Bad in Iraq – Causes Civil war

#### More decentralization causes civil war

Hayder al-Khoei 11, The Guardian, “Iraq is not ready for division”, December 27, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/dec/27/iraq-federalism-division>

In an article last Thursday, Ranj Alaaldin argued that Iraq's current problems can be traced back to the centralisation of power in Baghdad, and suggested that the country must turn towards federalism in order to overcome these issues. This is the worst possible solution for Iraq now. To implement federalism in this highly charged atmosphere sends the wrong message to the people of Iraq and to the world. Federalism as a solution misdiagnoses the crisis. The real problem is not centralised government but politicians who have failed the people. Iraq must wait until a rational debate on federalism can focus on good governance as opposed to defending sectarian identities. Otherwise, if calls for partition drown out those calling for calm and patience, there will be another bloodbath reminiscent of the civil war in 2006-08. It would be impossible to implement widescale federalism now without engaging in violent conflict. Theory is one thing, but the reality on the ground tells a different story. Iraq has never in its history been neatly geographically divided along ethno-sectarian lines. If the wheels of division were to come into motion, Sunni, Shia and Kurdish forces would scramble to seize control of mixed and disputed territories. Iraqis are not born savages who are incapable of living together peacefully. Foreign-backed terrorists have long been exploiting domestic quarrels to incite sectarian violence. Iraq must not fall into their trap. Federalism may have worked wonders for the Kurds, but their success cannot be taken as a blueprint for the rest of the country. The Kurds are an exception because they have had de facto autonomous rule since 1991. That was a consequence of the brutality of the Ba'ath regime. Today, Iraqi villages are not being gassed, mass graves are not being filled with hundreds of thousands of corpses, and entire towns and cities are not being cleansed by the central government. The Kurdish example, however, also illustrates that mere autonomy is not enough to resolve conflict. In the mid-90s, the Kurds fought each other over resources in a bloody civil war that left thousands dead as rival political factions jockeyed for power. Today, the Kurdish region does fare better economically and in terms of security, but politically the Kurds are mired by the same problems that affect the rest of Iraq: corruption, nepotism, lack of transparency and accountability. These are the real issues holding Iraq back and they need to be addressed more urgently than the debate over federalism. It is equally important to highlight the nature of sectarianism in Iraq. We must be able to distinguish between pent-up hatreds that date back centuries and shrewd political manipulation. Professor Eric Davis, a political scientist whose research includes the relationship between state power and historical memory in modern Iraq, argues that the ethno-confessional model used to frame politics leads to a vicious cycle that shapes the realities on the ground and adds to the misunderstanding. He argues that the one-dimensional analysis fits the thinking of many policymakers who need to digest information quickly. A self-reinforcing cycle is created whereby analysts feed the elite, whose decisions only encourage further reductionist and simplistic approaches. We are in a real danger of talking Iraq to death. Perception is dangerous in a country where even the most well-intentioned calls for keeping a check on Baghdad can be translated as ripping apart the country. This isn't healthy for anyone except maybe those posed to gain immediately by their newfound power.

### Federalism Bad in Iraq – Maliki Backlash

#### Decentralization causes al-Maliki to crackdown – causes worse instability

Ramzy Mardini 11, Research Analyst at the Institute for the Study of War, “Iraq’s First Post-Withdrawal Crisis”, December 19, <https://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Backgrounder_PostWithdrawalCrisis.pdf>

A Renewed Push for Federalism: Unlike the governorates of Salah ad-Din and Diyala, both Ninawa and Anbar province have not yet declared the intention to establish a federal region. However, both provinces have threatened to exercise Article 119 should the prime minister continue on his path of consolidating power and targeting Sunni Arabs in their areas. Should further provinces decide to embrace federalism, the political crisis would worsen dramatically and likely force Maliki to take drastic measures, possibly involving the deployment of security forces to threaten provincial leaders. Ironically, this response is only likely to further intensify calls for establishing federal regions, perpetuating a cycle of societal fragmentation and regionalization that threatens to divide Iraq along sectarian identities.

#### That turns their impact – crackdown = more centralization

Denise Natali 11, Fellow at the Institute for National Strategic Studies, “Can Federalism Work in Iraq?”, October 21, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lng=en&id=134644>

Backlash from Baghdad. Iraqi federalism also has a chance of failing or changing in form. Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki has responded to demands for greater local autonomy by trying to re-assert the authorities taken from Baghdad in the 2005 constitution. Key security positions remain vacant and under Maliki’s personal control. Deputy Prime Minister of Energy Hussein Shahristani has reinforced Baghdad’s position by pressing a centrist position on energy sector management. The Kurdistan Alliance and Iraqiyya have responded by attempting to oppose Maliki’s State of Law bloc; however, they have been unable to pose a serious political challenge. Neither have enough support in parliament nor among the Sadrists, who have assumed an increasingly salient voice in Baghdad. In the absence of a formidable opponent and with momentum in developing the southern oil fields, Maliki may succeed in consolidating his power. Thus, even if federalism survives in Iraq, it may do so with a significantly stronger political center.

### Federalism Bad in Iraq – Maliki Backlash – Link Ext.

#### Al-Maliki opposes federalization

Hassoun al-Haffar 12, AK News – Kurd news agency, “Maliki: Iraq is not ready for federalism”, February 12, <http://aknews.com/en/aknews/4/289426/>

A federalized Iraq will split the country, declared Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki yesterday. Maliki believes that federalization of Iraq in its current state will cause further deterioration of the country. Speaking at a ceremony in the Hindiya district, east of Karbala, Maliki said: "We will not allow the establishment of federalism in the Iraqi provinces because it will be a cause for tearing the country. "The urgency in the formation of federalism, in the current circumstances through which Iraq is passing, will create problems that we do not need." But added: "We don't reject the demand but we say that the time is not appropriate for it." The prime minister also said that calls for federalism by some parties was an attempt to get benefit of a constitutional requirement. Maliki also said that only border provinces who had problems with their neighbors want federalism, but most Iraqis do not. "The Iraqi people do not want to stir unrest and the things that keep them away from their main demands that are the provision of essential services such as electricity, water and infrastructure that were destroyed due to previous wars and made them suffer. "Therefore we are continuing the national partnership government in meeting these demands. "Then we will look at the formation of federals when there is economic and security stability for the country and citizen, and when we feel that these federations will not be a cause for division." His speech coincides with a recent poll by local NGO Tammouz Organizatoin, in which 60% of respondents from nine Iraqi provinces believed that establishing regions in Iraq would lead to division.

### Federalism Bad in Iraq – Public Backlash

#### U.S. promotion of federalism causes escalating backlash and sectarianism

Anthony H. Cordesman 7, Chair in Strategy at the CSIS, “Pandora’s Box: Iraqi Federalism, Separatism, “Hard” Partitioning, and US Policy”, October 9, <http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/071009_pandorasbox.pdf>

A debate has developed over whether the US should try to legislate Iraqi federalism and encourage some form of “soft partitioning.” It is time to take a much harder look at the facts in Iraq, at just how “hard” partitioning has already been, and at the dangers any form of federalism or partitioning can have unless they are achieved as the result of some form of Iraqi accommodation that can minimize the years of turbulence and instability that could follow any form of sectarian and ethnic division. Some formal political division of Iraq’s population may take place as a result of force, intimidation, and other factors causes by the insurgency and Iraq’s civil conflicts, but planning and managing it in any orderly way will be incredibly difficult for Iraq’s leaders and the Iraqi government, and is not something the US should overtly encourage. No one can deny that Iraq is already dividing along sectarian and ethnic lines in many areas. This process, however, has been forced upon Iraq’s population by its violent extremists rather than by popular will, and Iraq’s Kurds are the only faction in Iraq that show major popular support any formal effort at partitioning. The term “Soft Partitioning” has also been shown to be a cruel oxymoron. Virtually every aspect of sectarian and ethnic struggle to date has been brutal, and come at a high economic cost to those affected. The reality is that partitioning must be described as “hard” by any practical political, economic, and humanitarian standard. If such divisions continue and reach the level of partitioning or federalism that effectively divide Iraq on sectarian and ethnic lines the consequences are likely to be much grimmer. It is far from clear that such developments will lead to a large-scale blood bath -although this is at least possible. However, isolated cases of large-scale violence and local atrocities seem all too likely. Major new displacements of population are almost certain, and will come at great economic cost to those involved. Any such developments that occur without some form of broad national political accommodation, and without a central government that retains significant strength, is virtually certain to lead to ongoing local and regional power struggles. The result will be continuing insecurity, and a level of political instability that easily could play out over a decade or more. It might well cripple much of Iraq’s economic development. It also could lead to political or military intervention by Iraq’s neighbors as they take sides, and some - like Iran – will seek to exploit Iraq’s weakness and divisions Even if Iraqis can agree on some form of accommodation that create sectarian and ethnic zones in much of the country – “federalism” by at least partial consensus -- the results are still likely to be continued tension and instability, albeit at a lower level. Efforts to pay compensation and actually manage such separation in peaceful ways are almost certainly likely to fail in many cases because of sectarian and ethnic divisions over how to pay the money, the specific details of any given set of shifts, and the inability to create housing Cordesman: Iraq, Federalism, and Hard Partitioning 10/9/07 Page iii and jobs in ways that match population migration. Efforts to create military and police forces and a justice system that is not divided along sectarian and ethnic lines are almost certain to fail. Preserving and improving Iraq’s infrastructure -- petroleum, water, utilities and transport – will at best present massive challenges. As for the US, there is a good case for quiet efforts to help Iraq’s leaders find solutions that reflect the grim realities of the last four years, that do create “federal areas” that empower Arab Shi’ites, Arab Sunnis, and Kurds without breaking up the country, and develop more legitimate local and provincial governments and ensure a sharing of the nation’s oil wealth. This is very different, however, from trying to openly intervene in shaping the division or partitioning of Iraq. First, it is far from clear that the US has the competence to offer such plans and advice. Second, it is unclear that any overt US effort can do anything other than alienate Iraqi factions and much of the Iraqi public. The US is in a poor position to encouraged partitioning or federalism when Iraqi public opinion polls show that most Iraqis do not want such divisions to take place. Further, any overt action to divide Iraq by the US would almost certainly raise the already high level of Iraqi anger and hostility to the US presence in Iraq, and lead one or more sides to see the US as an enemy almost regardless of the nature of the US effort. Third, US security efforts may not be popular among Iraqis, but they are almost certainly doing more to reduce the cost of hard partitioning, and to make some form of gradual Iraqi political accommodation possible, than any US effort to encourage partitioning or federalism could possibly accomplish. If the US attempts to intervene in federalism, it will confront major new security problems in every divided area. It will almost inevitably see its efforts to create national -- rather than sectarian and ethnic – security forces fail. Leaders and officials in the central government will question US motives and be encouraged to support given factions even more than they do today. The US might also end in compromising any ability to act as a buffer between Iraq’s sectarian and ethnic factions or take humanitarian action to halt new outbreaks of open fighting between them.

#### That means the public votes against federalization

Reidar Visser 11, senior research fellow at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, “Disputed Territories and Region Formation: A New Low in the Iraqi Constitutional Debate”, December 15, <https://gulfanalysis.wordpress.com/category/federalism-in-sunni-majority-areas-of-iraq/>

If a referendum for the establishment of a federal region in Diyala is called for (as it should be, legally speaking, regardless of Shiite-led counter-demonstrations of some size), inhabitants of Khanaqin – just like all the other citizens of Diyala – will have to vote on whether Diyala (including Khanaqin) should become a single federal region or remain as an ordinary governorate as per today. No other option can or will be on the table.

#### Also takes out solvency for their impacts – everyone will ignore the outcome anyway

Reidar Visser 11, senior research fellow at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, “Finally, Some Good Sunni Federalism”, December 1, <http://www.iraq-businessnews.com/2011/12/01/finally-some-good-sunni-federalism/3/>

The ugly reality of today’s Iraq is that in the context of increased Sunni calls for federalism, constitutional provisions are ignored by both opponents and proponents of federalism in Sunni areas. Illegal attempts at sub-governorate separatism seem to multiply. The Americans, for their part, elegise on Iranian influences in the shape of nasty militias but seem oblivious to the fact that they themselves gave Iran precisely what it wanted in Iraq in late 2010 in terms of a prime minister appointed on the strength of a sectarian Shiite coalition and an ethno-sectarian political framework more generally.

### Federalism Bad in Iraq – Kurds Backlash

#### Federalism leads to territory disputes around Kurdistan

Bahadin Yousef 12, Kurd reporter, “Spectre of Iraqi Federalism frightens pro-Federal Kurdistan”, January 13, <http://www.ekurd.net/mismas/articles/misc2012/1/state5795.htm>

SULAIMANIYAH, Kurdistan region 'Iraq', — Federalism could be one way of solving Iraq’s current political impasse. But forming semi-independent states could also lead to more conflict and violence. And those in Iraq’s only current federal region, Iraqi Kurdistan, are concerned. Currently the spectre of increased federalism in Iraq is haunting the semi-autonomous state of Iraqi Kurdistan – and that is despite the fact that Iraqi Kurdistan is itself a mostly independent state with its own military, government and laws. By rights, Iraqi Kurdistan should support federalism. Instead though politicians in Iraqi Kurdistan are anxiously awaiting the results of moves made by the provinces of Salahaddin, Ninawa and Diyala toward more independence. The Kurdish have long supported the establishment of a federal system in Iraq. But this is not enough to ease their minds about what is happening in Salahaddin, Ninawa and Diyala. All three of these provinces share borders with Iraqi Kurdistan and also contain disputed territory: That is, there is land there that Iraqi Kurdistan says belongs to Iraqi Kurdistan but which Baghdad says belongs to Iraq. And fears are rising that if these regions do achieve some level of independence they may be reluctant to negotiate with Iraqi Kurdistan over the disputed territory.

### Federalism Bad in Iraq – Oil Disputes

#### Decentralization causes disputes over oil

Joost R. Hiltermann 12, deputy program director for the Middle East and North Africa at the International Crisis Group, “Iraq's Federalism Quandary”, February 28, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iraq-iran-gulf/iraq/op-eds/hiltermann-iraqs-federalism-quandary.aspx>

Yet Iraq is not a set of former colonies or emirates coming together to form a new country. It is a ninety-year-old, historically centralized state that has grappled for decades with the latent Kurdish desire for independence. Moreover, Iraq’s oil and gas is geographically distributed in a way that highlights the country’s ethnic and sectarian fault lines. In this context, full local control of oil resources—a feature of symmetrical, coming-together federations such as the United States, Canada and the UAE—could be dangerously destabilizing in Iraq, leading to large regional wealth disparities. And radical decentralization is not popular among Iraq’s Arab majority—even as Sunni areas chafe under the perceived excesses of the new order.

## Some Election Answers – see file for more

### Public not aware of HSR

#### ( ) Public not aware of HSR

Schultz ‘11

(Linda Schulz, Vice President, Public Affairs, Harris Interactive – Harris Interactive is a market research firm, known for the Harris Poll. Harris works in a wide range of industries, across countries and territories through North America, Europe, and Asia. The company is a member of several research organizations, including the US National Council of Public Polls, the British Polling Council , the Council of American Survey Research Organizations, the US Council for Marketing and Opinion Research, and the UK Market Research Society. February 24, 2011 – http://www.harrisinteractive.com/NewsRoom/HarrisPolls/tabid/447/mid/1508/articleId/700/ctl/ReadCustom%20Default/Default.aspx)

When Americans were asked about awareness of high-speed rail projects, only a little more than a third (35%) of those living in one of the proposed high-speed rail corridors said they are aware of a high-speed rail project that is either proposed or under development in their state, with more than four in ten (45%) unsure. "The relatively low awareness of high-speed rail across the country is not surprising given the disparate, regional nature of today's hottest HSR debates" said Linda Schulz, Vice President of Public Affairs and Policy at Harris Interactive. "However, as discussions become more prominent in more areas, and as projects get underway, we will be well positioned to monitor changing awareness and attitudes". Not surprisingly, awareness is highest in states where HSR is developing the fastest (68% are aware in California corridor, 60% in Florida). Awareness in other states with proposed high-speed rail projects include the Chicago Hub at 31% and New York at 28%.

### Florida not key to the election

#### ( ) Florida no longer key to the election

Harkleroad ‘12

Stephen Harkleroad, creator of Crank Crank revolution – a political blog – “Some Early Electoral Math” – Crank Crank Revolution – June 6, 2012 – http://www.crankcrankrevolution.com/2012/06/some-early-electoral-math.html

Let's take a look at the past three elections. We can't go much further back than that, since the political landscape has changed too much to read too far back than that. (One can certainly argue that the landscape has changed simply between 2004 and 2008, but given how the polls look I'm not willing to make that bet quite yet--it seems reasonably clear that 2008 was a spike in Democratic support as opposed to a meaningful realignment, especially given the gains Republicans made in 2010.) By looking at the margin of victory of each candidate the top swing states are (in order of swinginess): Florida Ohio Iowa Missouri New Hampshire Wisconsin New Mexico Minnesota Pennsylvania Nevada Everything from Florida to Wisconsin has an average of less than 5% margin of victory per year. The math here's a little wonky, I realize, but we have to go with what we have. The list would look a lot different if we lopped off 2008; in fact, one of the surprising things looking at the list is how close the 2004 election really was. States that are a given for Obama this year were almost lost by Kerry that year--for example, Kerry won Oregon by only 4%, despite the fact that Obama won it by almost 17%. The same stats apply in Michigan--Kerry won by around 4%, but Obama carried it by 17%. Even in Wisconsin, Kerry won by .3%, while Obama ran away with 14%. (A lot of the percentages are going to be deceptively strong for Obama. There's no way he wins North Carolina again, even though he won by a comfortable margin. The violent reaction in the 2010 congressional elections confirmed that the few states who flipped to Obama, like Indiana and NC, aren't going to be easy for him this time around.) If the factors that made 2008 so different no longer really apply--if the same enthusiasm that propelled Obama to office four years ago fades and everything reverts back to 2004 levels--then the number of swing states will dramatically increase, probably to over 15 or so. States currently assumed to be safe now become in play; If, say, Pennsylvania (a state Kerry won with barely 3% but Obama won with 10%) suddenly is in contention, a whole new set of math becomes apparent, and Florida is no longer necessary.

#### ( ) Florida is not key to the election

Smith ‘11

Adam C. Smith, Tampa Times Political Editor, October 11, 2011 – http://www.tampabay.com/news/politics/national/the-tricky-2012-math-for-president-barack-obama/1196157

There's good news for President Barack Obama as he sweeps into Florida today to raise money in a state where barely four in 10 voters approve of his performance: He can lose Florida's 29 electoral votes and still comfortably win re-election in 2012. Thanks to the expanded political playing field he helped create three years ago, even a long-standing presidential election axiom — whoever wins two out of three between Florida, Pennsylvania and Ohio wins the White House — is out the window. Obama could lose all three of those mega battleground states, 67 electoral votes combined, and still have more than enough to win the required 270. That's because in 2008, Obama overwhelmingly won the electoral vote, 365 to John McCain's 173.

### Rubio Thumper vs. Election

#### ( ) Rubio thumper:

#### He’ll be the VP on the ticket

Krauthammer ‘12

(as quoted in Real Clear Politics – Charles Krauthammer is a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for the Washington Post who is regarded as an important intellectual trailblazer of neoconservative discourse in the United States. Real Clear Politics – April 23rd –

http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2012/04/23/krauthammer\_rubio\_will\_find\_a\_horses\_head\_in\_his\_bed\_if\_he\_passes\_on\_vp.html)

"If Rubio passes the vetting process, assuming he does, I think he's the obvious choice. And if he says he doesn’t want the office, he'll find a horse's head in his bed. The next day he will accept," Charles Krauthammer said on this week's broadcast of "Inside Washington." "Romney's not going to take no for an answer. We have ways, we Republicans," Krauthammer added.

#### that ensures GOP wins Florida

Miller ‘12

(internally quoting Florida-based political consultant Rick Wilson Zeke Miller is a staff writer for Buzz Feed – Buzz Feed – Apr 3, 2012 – http://www.buzzfeed.com/zekejmiller/the-rubio-assumption)

Romney is a candidate who always makes the safe choice. But despite some worries about Rubio’s time in the Florida legislature, the rising expectations may make Rubio the safest. “If you put Marco Rubio on the ticket you lock down Florida,” said Florida-based political consultant Rick Wilson, explaining the simple calculus that is certain to appeal to Romney’s advisers.

### A-to Rubio won’t get VP on GOP Ticket

#### ( ) Rubio’s denials about accepting the VP seat are a smokescreen.

Fiscal Times ‘12

(June 1, 2012 – http://www.thefiscaltimes.com/Articles/2012/06/01/Can-Romney-Resist-Marco-Rubio-As-Running-Mate.aspx#page1)

A first-term Republican senator and a darling of both the Florida Cuban American community and the Tea Party, Rubio bumped off former governor Charlie Crist in 2010 to win an open Senate seat. The 41-year-old lawyer insists he’s not interested in the number-two spot on the GOP ticket. But that’s hard for some to fathom, given Rubio’s high-profile public appearances and tough rhetoric about Obama. Rubio has called the president the most “divisive figure in modern American history.”

### Rubio means GOP wins Florida

#### ( ) Rubio means GOP ticket carries Florida.

Fiscal Times ‘12

(June 1, 2012 – http://www.thefiscaltimes.com/Articles/2012/06/01/Can-Romney-Resist-Marco-Rubio-As-Running-Mate.aspx#page1)

An NBC News/Telemundo/Wall Street Journal poll out this week showed that Latino voters preferred Obama over Romney by an overwhelming 34 percentage points. “Romney certainly needs to do something to turn his chances around,” said Matt Barreto, co-founder of the research and polling firm Latino Decisions. “That means it’s even more important this year for Republicans to hit that 40-percent level if they want to stay competitive in a lot of states.” Barreto told The Fiscal Times there is little doubt Rubio could help Romney carry Florida with his strong appeal among Cuban Americans. But Rubio has little following in key southwestern states with large populations of Hispanics from Mexico and Central America. Cubans and their descendants make up just 4.5 percent of eligible Hispanic voters, according to recent Census data.

### Rubio means GOP wins General Election

#### ( ) Rubio means the GOP wins – energizes the base and the Hispanic and youth vote

Fiscal Times ‘12

(June 1, 2012 – http://www.thefiscaltimes.com/Articles/2012/06/01/Can-Romney-Resist-Marco-Rubio-As-Running-Mate.aspx#page1)

Some of those promoting Rubio for the GOP ticket view him as an ideal match for Romney, 65, the former Bain Capital chief executive and Massachusetts governor. For one thing, the highly articulate Rubio would give Romney’s stodgy campaign a jolt of youthful vitality. And after a tough GOP primary season in which Romney was repeatedly bashed by former senator Rick Santorum and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Rubio would serve as an emissary to the party’s far right, which remains suspicious of Romney’s conservative principles. As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations and Intelligence Committees, Rubio could also help fill in some of the gaps in Romney’s knowledge of foreign policy. During his speech in New York, the Florida Republican offered a vigorous defense of U.S. foreign aid, a frequent target of conservatives. He warned that “getting rid of it doesn’t solve anything but it creates a host of problems.” Perhaps most important, by choosing Rubio – the first Cuban-American to become speaker of the Florida House – Romney could reach out to Latino voters who will be vital to Romney’s chances of beating Obama. Romney alienated many Latinos during the GOP primaries by taking a tough stand against immigration reform, including passage of a DREAM Act that would provide legal status to the children of undocumented aliens.

## Some Politics/Agenda Answers – see files for more

### High Speed Rail-Specific Link Turns

#### ( ) HSR builds Obama’s capital – it outweighs your spending and tea party links

Garrett ‘11

Garrett, Sierra. This thesis was mentored and overseen by Dr. R. Mark Isaac, Institute for Energy Systems, Economics and Sustainability at Florida State University –"Florida High-Speed Rail: An Economic Policy Analysis" (2011). Honors Theses. Paper 13. – available at: http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/uhm/13

Infrastructure projects are also important to politicians as political capital. As John Bartle writes about transportation infrastructure, a completed project is “a classic political photo opportunity and a tangible symbol politicians can point to of their work on behalf of their constituents.”51 If the project is presented by a local official, but paid for by the federal government instead of the state, the deal seems even sweeter. Plus, local industry, from engineers to bankers and construction workers are employed, lending even more support to the incumbent politician. The increase in these types of projects may even create the need for specialized attorneys and investment professionals to work specifically with the financial instruments and tax codes created for these projects. The resulting political capital from transportation projects can also be focused for specific areas or groups of constituents. The location of the project and its related economic stimulus can bring greater support to a politician even if the money used for the project may have been equally or more beneficial if spent somewhere else. Infrastructure projects are also used nominally to aid low-income areas or groups of people, under the premise that development and investment will spur economic growth. Economists such as Bartle, however, believe direct subsidy to these individuals (rather than in the form of capital investment) is more effective and efficient.52

#### ( ) HSR builds capital. Prefer our ev – political momentum’s with us.

Hart ‘12

Thomas Hart Jr. is director of government relations at Quarles & Brady, and vice president of government affairs for the US High Speed Rail Association. Politico – May 23, 2012 – lexis

In California, where the US High Speed Rail Association is hosting a conference in San Francisco this week, a high-speed rail corridor is also viable because of major population centers from Sacramento to San Jose to San Francisco, then south through the Central Valley to Los Angeles and San Diego. Gov. Jerry Brown and Dan Richard, the new chairman of the California High-Speed Rail Authority are planning to begin construction next year of an 800-mile high-speed rail system connecting the major cities. This entire project is now projected to be completed over 30 years at a cost of $68 billion. In a state with high unemployment, it is expected to create an estimated 150,000 jobs during construction, and 450,000 related jobs along the corridor. It is projected to remove more than 1 million automobiles and use only 30 percent of the energy needed for airplanes. A 2008 California ballot proposition authorized financing for initial construction, along with requirements for federal matching funds. California received some 2009 stimulus funding. It also has a $3.3 billion Department of Transportation grant for construction in the Central Valley, the backbone of the system, where trains are expected to run at top speeds of 220 mph. The CHSRA is now moving ahead with construction plans for the Central Valley, due to begin in 2013 and finish in 2017, at a cost of $6 billion. Brown has long been strongly committed to high-speed rail as a transportation alternative for the state's rapidly growing population. He is supported by Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Environment and Public Works Committee and co-chairwoman of the conference committee of the surface transportation bill, and House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), whose slogan "It's About Time" has become a rallying cry for progressive Californians. The political winds are beginning to shift, and some elected officials see that there can be political consequences from strongly opposing high-speed rail. The governors on record as opposing projects are among the least popular - including Rick Scott in Florida, who rejected federal money. A new political group is now forming Republicans for Rail. There is also talk of starting a rail super PAC to generate money and grass-roots support for additional rail transit investments. If this political shift continues in the crucial 2012 elections, prospects for U.S. high-speed rail, particularly along the East and West Coasts, could finally brighten.

#### ( ) HSR is *on balance* bipartisan – gas price fear outweigh spending concerns

Livable Cities ‘12

(April 9th – “Bipartisan Support for High-Speed Rail Mostly on Track” – http://www.livablecities.org/blog/bipartisan-support-high-speed-rail-mostly-track)

Despite the (likely underestimated) price tag, concerns over budget shortfalls, and the emphasis on public transit, the plan is receiving bipartisan support in Congress and at the state level. At a time when gas prices are set to reach $5 per gallon, you’d hope that common sense and the desire for energy independence would make support for high-speed rail a sure thing—a nonpartisan issue. But the usual skeptics remain, of course, including republican governors from Ohio and Wisconsin, who rejected federal money for the project. The biggest upset has been Florida governor, Rick Scott’s refusal of more than $2 billion for a section between Tampa and Orlando that was set to become a shining example of intercity rail, job creation (more than 24,000 projected), and improved livability. Despite a swift backlash, Florida’s state Supreme Court upheld the governor’s decision and the money will now be available to other states including Vermont, Rhode Island, Virginia, Delaware, New York, and California. In an effort to support disheartened high-speed rail supporters in Florida, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has agreed to let a regional rail authority in central Florida compete for the funding.

#### ( ) Neg links exaggerate. Economic and environmental concerns outweigh.

Business Wire ‘11

(internally quoting Environmental Law & Policy Center Executive Director Howard Learner – The Environmental Law & Policy Center is the Midwest's leading public interest environmental legal advocacy and eco-business innovation organization. April 13th – http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20110413006559/en/High-Speed-Rail-Moving-Budget-Cuts-Environmental-Law)

Rumors of high-speed rail’s demise have been greatly exaggerated, according to Environmental Law & Policy Center (ELPC) Executive Director Howard Learner. The Federal Railroad Administration will soon be making $2 billion in new federal high-speed rail grants for shovel-ready projects in response to competitive requests from 24 Governors—12 Democrats, one Independent and 11 Republicans. These upcoming investments should move high-speed rail forward notwithstanding the disappointing FY 2011 budget cuts. The partisan attacks are counter to the pragmatic understanding of both Democratic and Republican Governors that modern high-speed rail makes sense for their states and for the nation. Americans want modern, fast and better rail service that can improve mobility, reduce pollution, create jobs and spur economic growth, Mr. Learner commented: “High-speed rail investments are on track with vast bipartisan support across the country. While bickering continues inside the Beltway, projects are moving forward, jobs are being created, and dozens of governors from both sides of the aisle are applying for $2 billion in available funding.

#### ( ) M.A.P.’s Senate passage proves plan popular and disproves their link

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 – “The Senate’s Transportation Program” – March 15th – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/03/15/the-senates-transportation-program/)

Yet the political conditions in which MAP-21 did pass are indicative of the bill’s importance. We are, after all, in a tightly contested election year in which Republicans have set their sights on the White House and Senate as Democrats eye the House. The bipartisan passage of the legislation — though not as close to unanimity as many previous transportation bills — suggests that there continues to be relative consensus among both parties that there is a rationale for federal investment in transportation infrastructure. Republicans in the Senate could have easily deflected the bill’s passage, forcing yet another extension — but they chose to cooperate and produce a less-than-ideal bill that will nonetheless keep people employed and America’s infrastructure in reasonable condition.

(Note: MAP-21 is Senate Bill 1813, also known as MAP-21, “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century“)

### A-to Neg’s Oil Lobby Link

#### ( ) Since BP spill, oil lobby is weak.

Baram ‘10

(Marcus Baram is a news editor at the Huffington Post. Huffington Post – July 21st – http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/07/21/bp-big-oil-slightly-incre\_n\_653661.html)

In the wake of the biggest oil spill in the nation's history and facing a government intent on tightening regulation of the oil and gas industry, BP and some of its competitors slightly increased their spending on lobbying in the second quarter of 2010. In its effort to shape the upcoming regulatory changes and a host of other issues, from financial reform to climate change legislation, BP spent $1,720,000 on lobbying from April through June, compared to the $1.6 million it spent in the first quarter of the year. In addition to a team of in-house lobbyists led by Elizabeth Reicherts, the company's senior director of U.S. government and international affairs, BP also paid high-powered lobbyists at the Podesta Group; the Duberstein Group; Arnold & Porter; the Alpine Group; Stuntz, Davis & Staffier; Thomas Advisors and Eris Group. And the industry's main trade group, the American Petroleum Institute, almost doubled its spending to $2.3 million in the quarter, likely out of concern about the Obama administration's current moratorium on offshore drilling. Chevron increased its spending by almost 27% to $3.92 million and Shell increased its spending by almost 75% to $4.05 million. The owner of the Deepwater Horizon, which exploded at the start of the quarter, on April 20, causing the massive oil spill, also increased its visibility on Capitol Hill. Transocean spent $110,000 on lobbying by the Capitol Hill Consulting Group. Halliburton, the massive oil services company which has been potentially implicated in the incident due to its cementing work, decreased its spending by almost half, shelling out $70,000 for lobbying in the second quarter. Other oil giants actually decreased their spending in the quarter -- ExxonMobil spent $2.52 million compared to $3.39 million in the first quarter, ConocoPhillips spent $5.52 million compared to $6.41 million in the first quarter. API spent much of the quarter lobbying on oil spill legislation currently before Congress, "including amending the 1990 Oil Pollution Act and a measure to strengthen federal oversight of the blowout preventers that apparently failed on the BP rig," reports Roll Call. Overall, the oil industry's biggest players only slightly increased their spending in the quarter to $25.6 million, from $24.3 million in the first quarter, according to an analysis by Reuters. The amount is still $2 million less than what the sector spent in the second quarter of 2009. The up and down numbers reflect the challenge facing the industry, according to several lobbyists who declined to be named. Though they are willing to spend millions to influence pending legislation that could hurt their bottom line, most oil companies are acutely aware that a heavy lobbying presence could appear unseemly in the wake of the Gulf disaster.

**Winners Win**

#### ( ) Winners Win

Singer ‘9

(Jonathan -- senior writer and editor for MyDD. Singer is perhaps best known for his various interviews with prominent politicians. His interviews have included John Kerry, Walter Mondale, Bob Dole, Michael Dukakis, and George McGovern, Barack Obama, John Edwards, and Tom Vilsack. He has also also interviewed dozens of senatorial, congressional and gubernatorial candidates all around the country. In his writing, Singer primarily covers all aspects of campaigns and elections, from polling and fundraising to opposition research and insider rumors. *He has been quoted or cited in this capacity* by Newsweek, The New York Times, USA Today, The Politico, and others. My Direct Democracy, 3-3-09, [http://www.mydd.com/story/2009/3/3/191825/0428](http://www.thespacereview.com/article/499/1))

From the latest NBC News-Wall Street Journal survey: Despite the country's struggling economy and vocal opposition to some of his policies, President Obama's favorability rating is at an all-time high. Two-thirds feel hopeful about his leadership and six in 10 approve of the job he's doing in the White House. "What is amazing here is how much political capital Obama has spent in the first six weeks," said Democratic pollster Peter D. Hart, who conducted this survey with Republican pollster Bill McInturff. "And against that, he stands at the end of this six weeks with as much or more capital in the bank." Peter Hart gets at a key point. Some believe that political capital is finite, that it can be used up. To an extent that's true. But it's important to note, too, that political capital can be regenerated -- and, specifically, that when a President expends a great deal of capital on a measure that was difficult to enact and then succeeds, he can build up more capital. Indeed, that appears to be what is happening with Barack Obama, who went to the mat to pass the stimulus package out of the gate, got it passed despite near-unanimous opposition of the Republicans on Capitol Hill, and is being rewarded by the American public as a result. Take a look at the numbers. President Obama now has a 68 percent favorable rating in the NBC-WSJ poll, his highest ever showing in the survey. Nearly half of those surveyed (47 percent) view him very positively. Obama's Democratic Party earns a respectable 49 percent favorable rating. The Republican Party, however, is in the toilet, with its worst ever showing in the history of the NBC-WSJ poll, 26 percent favorable. On the question of blame for the partisanship in Washington, 56 percent place the onus on the Bush administration and another 41 percent place it on Congressional Republicans. Yet just 24 percent blame Congressional Democrats, and a mere 11 percent blame the Obama administration. So at this point, with President Obama seemingly benefiting from his ambitious actions and the Republicans sinking further and further as a result of their knee-jerked opposition to that agenda, there appears to be no reason not to push forward on anything from universal healthcare to energy reform to ending the war in Iraq.

#### ( ) Victories increase capital

Lee ‘5

(Andrew, Claremont McKenna College, “Invest or Spend? Political Capital and Statements of Administration Policy in the First Term of the George W. Bush Presidency,” Georgia Political Science Association Conference Proceedings, http://a-s.clayton.edu/trachtenberg/2005%20Proceedings%20Lee.pdf)

To accrue political capital, the president may support a particular lawmaker’s legislation by issuing an SAP urging support, thereby giving that legislator more pull in the Congress and at home. The president may also receive capital from Congress by winning larger legislative majorities. For example, the president’s successful efforts at increasing Republican representation in the Senate and House would constitute an increase in political capital. The president may also receive political capital from increased job favorability numbers, following through with purported policy agendas, and defeating opposing party leaders (Lindberg 2004). Because political capital diminishes, a president can invest in policy and legislative victories to maintain or increase it. For example, President George W. Bush invests his political capital in tax cuts which he hopes will yield returns to the economy and his favorability numbers. By investing political capital, the president assumes a return on investment.

#### ( ) Winners win on controversial policies.

Ornstein ‘1

(Norman, American Enterprise Institute, “How is Bush Governing?” May 15, http://www.aei.org/events/filter.,eventID.281/transcript.asp)

The best plan is to pick two significant priorities, things that can move relatively quickly. And in an ideal world, one of them is going to be a little bit tough, where it's a battle, where you've got to fight, but then your victory is all the sweeter. The other matters but you can sweep through fairly quickly with a broad base of support and show that you're a winner and can accomplish something. Bush did just that, picking one, education, where there was a fairly strong chance. Something he campaigned on, people care about, and a pretty strong chance that he could get a bill through with 80, 85 percent support of both houses of Congress and both parties. And the other that he picked, and there were other choices, but he picked the tax cuts. What flows from that as well is, use every bit of political capital you have to achieve early victories that will both establish you as a winner, because the key to political power is not the formal power that you have. Your ability to coerce people to do what they otherwise would not do. Presidents don't have a lot of that formal power. It's as much psychological as it is real. If you're a winner and people think you're a winner, and that issues come up and they’re tough but somehow you're going to prevail, they will act in anticipation of that. Winners win. If it looks like you can't get things done, then you have a steeply higher hill to climb with what follows. And as you use your political capital, you have to recognize that for presidents, political capital is a perishable quality, that it evaporates if it isn't used. That's a lesson, by the way, George W. Bush learned firsthand from his father. That if you use it and you succeed, it's a gamble, to be sure, you'll get it back with a very healthy premium.