# Infrastructure

### Plan creates jobs

#### Investing on Infrastructure creates more jobs

Klein 10’ - His blog points to the hottest policy ideas on the Web and provides his own up-to-the-minute take. Before coming to The Post, he was an associate editor at the American Prospect. Klein has appeared as a guest on CNN, MSNBC, NPR and C-SPAN and lots of online radio shows you've never heard of. <http://voices.washingtonpost.com/ezra-klein/about-ezra-klein.html>

The Council of Economic Advisers has a [report](http://voices.washingtonpost.com/ezra-klein/EMBARGOED%20CEA%20Treasury%20Infrastructure%20Report.pdf) (pdf) out today making the case for more infrastructure investment. Most of the arguments will be familiar to folks who read last week's [column](http://voices.washingtonpost.com/ezra-klein/2010/10/infrastructure_the_best_deal_i.html) on the subject, but the CEA presses one button that I wish I'd had the space to emphasize more: Jobs. Lots of stimulus programs can create jobs. But infrastructure investment creates the right jobs, for the right people, doing the right things -- and at the right time. Or, to say it more clearly, infrastructure investment creates middle-class jobs for workers in a sector with high unemployment and it puts them to work doing something that we actually need done at a moment when doing it is cheaper than it ever will be again. Remember that the Great Recession was driven by a collapse in real estate -- which meant a collapse in the construction industry. About 21 percent of the eight million jobs lost between December 2007 and December 2009 were in the construction industry. Unemployment in the sector is still at about 17 percent. Repairing the nation's infrastructure is a lot more like building a house than writing a book. As such, the people it employs are, well, people who build things, and folks from related industries. The CEA predicts that the unemployment rate among those who would get work from infrastructure spending is currently 15 percent -- so you're drawing workers from the really high-unemployment groups, which is both good for those workers and good for the workers left in those groups, as now there's less competition for the few private-sector jobs that are available to them.And then there are all the other arguments you've heard me make. Raw materials are cheap. Labor -- due to the high unemployment rate -- is cheap. Borrowing money is cheaper than at any time since the 1950s. And this is one sector where the normal deficit objections simply don't apply. "You run a deficit both when you borrow money and when you defer maintenance that needs to be done," Larry Summers told me. "Either way, you're imposing a cost on future generations." Not spending a dollar on infrastructure repairs today means we'll have to spend it tomorrow -- and by that time, it will cost more than a dollar. More so than anything else I can think of in the economy, infrastructure investment is win-win-win-win, and I'm not certain I've tacked enough "wins" on there.

# Internal – voter block UQ

### Youth – UQ – low turnout

#### Youth voter turnout low – economy

Cheung 6-12-12 (Jessica, writer @ New America Media, "Young People Aren’t Motivated to Vote," <http://www.care2.com/causes/young-people-arent-motivated-to-vote.html>//LL)

In 2008, presidential candidate Barack Obama ran a grassroots campaign based on the mantra of hope and change, generating a wave of support from his youth voters and those who plan to vote for him when they become eligible. Unfortunately, in the 2012 election, the youth who are now eligible to vote for the first time, are less enthusiastic about making a difference with their vote. “Obama’s 2008 platform emphasized hope and change in an idealized way, and that was what attracted the attention of youth voters who wanted a change after eight years of Bush as president,” Emily Moody, 19, of Wesleyan University, said. “But now that Obama has been in office for four years and people actually see what progress he has and hasn’t made, the message of hope and change is a bit tarnished and voting may not seem as exciting to youth voters.” “This isn’t going to be like the milestone election it was in 2008,” noted Sean Lee, 19, of McGill University. According to a report released by the Center for the American Electorate, youth voter turnout is predicted to drop significantly in the 2012 U.S. presidential election, due partly to the decline in political interest among young people. Voter turnout for the 2008 election was the highest since 1960, according to [Fair Vote](http://fairvote.org/). “Last election, Obama really tapped into the youth, but now that he’s an incumbent, I’m seeing less excitement and enthusiasm from him,” Edmond Chan, 19, a freshman at the University of California at Santa Barbara, said. “[Since I’m a democrat,] I probably won’t vote in the presidential election because I’m 100 percent sure California will go blue.” A freshman at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Irina Kirnos, 19, shares the same sentiment. “I pretty much know California will vote for Obama,” she said. “I’m also not voting because I haven’t had the time to keep up with the details of the election.” “This is my first opportunity to vote, but I plan not to vote in November,” Lee said. “I support Obama, and to quote my AP history teacher: the incumbent always has the advantage. Truthfully, I have the one-vote- isn’t-going-to-make-a-difference attitude.” “Young people assume their views will be reflected in the results of the elections,” Nicola Householder, 19, and a student at Barnard College in New York City, said. “When you’re just hanging out with a group of friends who share similar views, there’s a misconception [that everyone shares your beliefs] and people assume that their votes will be accounted for.” Organizations such as Rock the Vote aim to encourage youth to head for the polls through pubic service announcements by celebrity spokesmen. But some youth voters say it it’s not the celebrities that drive young voters, but the issues on the line. “Employment and job creation is my biggest concern, and is one becoming more pertinent for students coming out of college,” Householder said. A national poll of America’s 18- to 29- year olds by Harvard University’s Institute of Politics released in April cited that 58 percent of them said “jobs and the economy” are the top issues that concern them. With the recent wave of Occupy movements on college campuses and rising student debt, for them the economy is a hot-button issue.

### Latino – UQ – low turnout

#### Lation turnout low - economy

Schechter 5-31-12 (Dave, CNN Senior National Editor, CNN, "'Sleeping giant' Latino vote yet to awaken," <http://www.cnn.com/2012/05/30/politics/latino-vote-sleeping-giant/index.html>//LL)

"Hispanics have been the 'sleeping giant' of American politics for decades. Each election season, we see more and more articles about how important this group of Americans is, and how their impact will be outsized and ever-growing. Yet for some reason, the 'giant' never quite seems to wake up." There are an estimated 31.8 million Hispanics of voting age (18 and older) in the United States, but only 10.9 million -- 51.6% -- are registered to vote, compared with 62.8% for eligible African-Americans and 68.2% for what the government calls non-Hispanic whites, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Voters not re-registering "We believe that the recession and mortgage foreclosure crisis explains this decline," Antonio Gonzalez, director of the [William C. Velasquez Institute](http://www.wcvi.org/" \t "_blank), based in San Antonio, told the Houston Chronicle. "It hit blacks and Latinos and the lower middle-class people first. "When people lose their jobs or homes, they usually have to move elsewhere. When you move, you have to re-register, and we suspect that didn't happen in 2009-10. ... The law of unintended consequences is at work here. This administration, like the last one, didn't have an answer for home foreclosures. The unintended consequence is a dampening of Latino voter turnout." Academic experts and advocates agree that increasing registration is the key to taking advantage of the opportunities available to influence the outcome of the 2012 election, perhaps more on Capitol Hill than at the White House. Gonzalez, who also heads the [Southwest Voter Registration Education Project](http://www.svrep.org/" \t "_blank), said that while just 15% of the Latino vote is in so-called battleground states for the presidential race, this year offers numerous opportunities for Latinos to increase their ranks on Capitol Hill.

#### Primaries show low Hispanic turnout

Kraushaar 6/27 (John Kraushaar, Political analyst and editor of National Journal Hotline, “Should Democrats Worry About Hispanic Turnout?,” National Journal, June 27, 2012, Date Accessed: June 27, 2012, <http://www.nationaljournal.com/thenextamerica/politics/should-democrats-worry-about-hispanic-turnout--20120627>, LG)

If there was any doubt about the importance of the Hispanic vote this election year, President Obama laid it to rest with his recent, aggressive courtship of Latino voters. But this month also provided fresh warnings to the Obama campaign that Hispanic voters, despite their growing numbers, aren’t all that interested in turning out to vote. The evidence can be drawn from the House primaries that took place in states with significant Hispanic populations over the last month, particularly California, New York, and Texas. In contests from Southern California to Spanish Harlem, Hispanic candidates suffered political disappointments because of low turnout from their own voters. The biggest setback for Hispanic representation took place in Texas, where Latinos fueled the population growth in the state over the last decade. But it’s unlikely they will gain more seats in Congress even with four new congressional districts. While 38 percent of Texas voters are Hispanic, it’s likely that only six of the state’s 36 House districts (17 percent) will be represented by a Hispanic member of Congress in 2013. In the state’s primaries, several Hispanic candidates suffered several stinging defeats, largely because of low levels of Latino participation. Their most notable setback took place in a new Fort Worth-area seat specifically drawn to elect a minority member of Congress. But former state Rep. Domingo Garcia, a Democrat, wasn’t able to take advantage of the district’s sizable Hispanic population, which makes up nearly two-thirds of the district (and 39 percent of its voting-age population) and finished 12 points behind Democratic state Rep. Marc Veasey, who is African-American. Only about 18,000 registered Democrats showed up to vote, an anemic turnout level far below the rates in other districts featuring competitive Democratic primaries. Garcia is the heavy underdog in the July 31 runoff. At least Democrats could take solace that the seat will remain in their hands. But in California, the party took a major hit when its favored candidate in a 49.4 percent-Latino battleground district didn’t even qualify for the ballot. Redlands Mayor Pete Aguilar was one of the party’s brightest recruits, and looked like an early favorite against Republicans Rep. Gary Miller (who didn’t live in the district he was running in) and state Sen. Bob Dutton. But turnout in the district’s fast-growing Hispanic core was anemic, and Aguilar didn’t even qualify for the general election ballot, finishing in third place in the all-party primary. This, in a district Obama carried with over 55 percent of the vote. In another cautionary note for the Obama campaign, immigration was a major dividing line in the election, but it didn’t push Hispanic voters to the polls. Aguilar campaigned on a comprehensive immigration reform that would create a path to citizenship for some illegal immigrants. Miller, meanwhile, is one of the leading immigration restrictionists in Congress, and recently sponsored legislation that would end birthright citizenship for children of illegal immigrants born in the U.S. Despite so much at stake for Hispanic voters, they didn’t show up. Democratic operatives were blindsided by the results, anticipating much better Hispanic turnout to comfortably push Aguilar to face off against a Republican in November. Now Republicans are guaranteed to hold the seat in November. “We clearly have to do a much better job reaching out to Hispanics to get them to vote,” Aguilar said in an interview. “We put together a decent field program, but it appears from the data we’ve seen, the precincts that were more Hispanic were not as likely to get to the polls.” The latest sign that Hispanic voters’ clout may not match their numbers took place Tuesday night in New York City, where Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., comfortably defeated Hispanic state Sen. Adriano Espaillat. Espaillat entered the race against Rangel in hopes of capitalizing on the demographic change in the district -- it's 55 percent Hispanic after redistricting -- and campaigned mainly in Hispanic areas. Espaillat looked like a formidable contender against the ethically-embattled congressman. But Rangel's victory -- he was leading by five points as of presstime -- showed that a shared ethnic background isn’t enough to turn voters out to the polls. However, the early expectations for Espaillat have been tempered by the reality that a shared ethnic background isn’t necessarily enough to turn voters out to the polls. To be sure, you can’t read too much from the primary turnout numbers. Voter turnout can be notoriously low in primaries, and increases significantly for November. And so far, the primaries occurred in states where the presidential race isn’t expected to be competitive. But there are a number of pivotal congressional races that are taking place in battleground states, where the difference between winning and losing depends on the level of Hispanic turnout and whether they overwhelmingly support the Democratic candidate. Obama’s get-out-the-vote machine will be active in all these areas, and its effectiveness will be critical for his own prospects. In suburban Las Vegas, GOP freshman Rep. Joe Heck is facing Hispanic state Assembly Speaker John Oceguera, a Democrat, in a district where Hispanics make up 13 percent of the voting-age population. In Colorado, Democrats are bullish on their chances of defeating Republican Reps. Mike Coffman (who recently apologized for saying Obama was not American “in his heart”) and Scott Tipton and need strong Hispanic turnout to win. Meanwhile, Rep. Allen West, R-Fla., moved up the coast to run in one of the country's biggest battleground districts, which voted for both Obama and Republican Florida Gov. Rick Scott. He’s facing Democrat Patrick Murphy in a district where 12 percent of voting-age residents are Hispanic. This district about as close to a bellwether as they come: If Obama wins the district, it’s a good sign for his reelection. These races highlight some opportunities for Democrats to win back seats, demonstrating how Hispanic growth can change the political map. But the primary results offer the opposite side of the coin, and should serve as a cautionary tale for Democrats who believe that the growing Hispanic vote, by itself, is enough to be a game-changer.

#### Hispanics won’t show up to the polls

Caputo 6/5 (Marc Caputo, political writer @ The Miami Herald, “'Dismal' jobs report gives Mitt Romney shot at the Hispanic vote,” “Miami Herald, June 5, 2012, Date Accessed: June 27, 2012, <http://miamiherald.typepad.com/nakedpolitics/2012/06/dismal-jobs-report-gives-mitt-romney-shot-at-the-hispanic-vote.html>, LG)

Mitt Romney's presidential campaign is out with another dual English-Spanish web ad, this one about the "dismal" jobs report that showed Hispanic unemployment rose from 10.3 to 11 percent in the past month. This is only a web ad right now, but it has the feel of TV spot (if it were cut in half to 30 seconds). President Obama's campaign has been waging an early-and-often battle for the hearts and minds of Hispanics and will likely win the Latino vote. Obama supports the pro-immigrant DREAM Act, popular among many Hispanics, and Romney said he would've vetoed it. Obama's also trying to make Romney look extremist to Latinos when it comes to immigration. Romney has largely dropped the issue as a topic now that the GOP primary is over. But will it be enough for Obama if Hispanics feel worse off under the president? It's not as if they'll flock to Romney. But many might stay home on Election Day. That would be a killer for Obama, who won 57 percent of the Florida Hispanic vote in 2008 (George W. Bush took 56 percent in 2004). Romney might be making gains, or Obama might be losing support among Hispanics. Last month's Quinnipiac University poll showed Obama winning the Latino vote 42-40 over Romney. That's not enough for the Democrat. A Marist Florida poll was better news for Obama. It showed him winning the Hispanic vote 55-36 in Florida. Both polls have relatively small Latino sample sizes. So it's unclear who's right.

#### Latino voters not showing up now, key to election

Kraushaar 6/27 Josh [executive editor of National Journal Hotline and pens the weekly “Against the Grain” column. He also contributes to 2012 Decoded. Kraushaar previously reported for Politico, where he broke political news and covered and analyzed campaigns. Prior to joining Politico, Kraushaar was the editor of House Race Hotline where he covered the historic 2006 Congressional elections] “Should Democrats Worry About Hispanic Turnout?” *The NationalJournal* 6/27/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.nationaljournal.com/thenextamerica/politics/should-democrats-worry-about-hispanic-turnout--20120627> DR

If there was any doubt about the importance of the Hispanic vote this election year, President Obama laid it to rest with his recent, aggressive courtship of Latino voters. But this month also provided fresh warnings to the Obama campaign that Hispanic voters, despite their growing numbers, aren’t all that interested in turning out to vote. The evidence can be drawn from the House primaries that took place in states with significant Hispanic populations over the last month, particularly California, New York, and Texas. In contests from Southern California to Spanish Harlem, Hispanic candidates suffered political disappointments because of low turnout from their own voters. The biggest setback for Hispanic representation took place in Texas, where Latinos fueled the population growth in the state over the last decade. But it’s unlikely they will gain more seats in Congress even with four new congressional districts. While 38 percent of Texas voters are Hispanic, it’s likely that only six of the state’s 36 House districts (17 percent) will be represented by a Hispanic member of Congress in 2013. In the state’s primaries, several Hispanic candidates suffered several stinging defeats, largely because of low levels of Latino participation. Their most notable setback took place in a new Fort Worth-area seat specifically drawn to elect a minority member of Congress. But former state Rep. Domingo Garcia, a Democrat, wasn’t able to take advantage of the district’s sizable Hispanic population, which makes up nearly two-thirds of the district (and 39 percent of its voting-age population) and finished 12 points behind Democratic state Rep. Marc Veasey, who is African-American. Only about 18,000 registered Democrats showed up to vote, an anemic turnout level far below the rates in other districts featuring competitive Democratic primaries. Garcia is the heavy underdog in the July 31 runoff. At least Democrats could take solace that the seat will remain in their hands. But in California, the party took a major hit when its favored candidate in a 49.4 percent-Latino battleground district didn’t even qualify for the ballot. Redlands Mayor Pete Aguilar was one of the party’s brightest recruits, and looked like an early favorite against Republicans Rep. Gary Miller (who didn’t live in the district he was running in) and state Sen. Bob Dutton. But turnout in the district’s fast-growing Hispanic core was anemic, and Aguilar didn’t even qualify for the general election ballot, finishing in third place in the all-party primary. This, in a district Obama carried with over 55 percent of the vote. In another cautionary note for the Obama campaign, immigration was a major dividing line in the election, but it didn’t push Hispanic voters to the polls. Aguilar campaigned on a comprehensive immigration reform that would create a path to citizenship for some illegal immigrants. Miller, meanwhile, is one of the leading immigration restrictionists in Congress, and recently sponsored legislation that would end birthright citizenship for children of illegal immigrants born in the U.S. Despite so much at stake for Hispanic voters, they didn’t show up. Democratic operatives were blindsided by the results, anticipating much better Hispanic turnout to comfortably push Aguilar to face off against a Republican in November. Now Republicans are guaranteed to hold the seat in November. “We clearly have to do a much better job reaching out to Hispanics to get them to vote,” Aguilar said in an interview. “We put together a decent field program, but it appears from the data we’ve seen, the precincts that were more Hispanic were not as likely to get to the polls.” The latest sign that Hispanic voters’ clout may not match their numbers took place Tuesday night in New York City, where Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., comfortably defeated Hispanic state Sen. Adriano Espaillat. Espaillat entered the race against Rangel in hopes of capitalizing on the demographic change in the district -- it's 55 percent Hispanic after redistricting -- and campaigned mainly in Hispanic areas. Espaillat looked like a formidable contender against the ethically-embattled congressman. But Rangel's victory -- he was leading by five points as of presstime -- showed that a shared ethnic background isn’t enough to turn voters out to the polls. However, the early expectations for Espaillat have been tempered by the reality that a shared ethnic background isn’t necessarily enough to turn voters out to the polls. To be sure, you can’t read too much from the primary turnout numbers. Voter turnout can be notoriously low in primaries, and increases significantly for November. And so far, the primaries occurred in states where the presidential race isn’t expected to be competitive. But there are a number of pivotal congressional races that are taking place in battleground states, where the difference between winning and losing depends on the level of Hispanic turnout and whether they overwhelmingly support the Democratic candidate. Obama’s get-out-the-vote machine will be active in all these areas, and its effectiveness will be critical for his own prospects. In suburban Las Vegas, GOP freshman Rep. Joe Heck is facing Hispanic state Assembly Speaker John Oceguera, a Democrat, in a district where Hispanics make up 13 percent of the voting-age population. In Colorado, Democrats are bullish on their chances of defeating Republican Reps. Mike Coffman (who recently apologized for saying Obama was not American “in his heart”) and Scott Tipton and need strong Hispanic turnout to win. Meanwhile, Rep. Allen West, R-Fla., moved up the coast to run in one of the country's biggest battleground districts, which voted for both Obama and Republican Florida Gov. Rick Scott. He’s facing Democrat Patrick Murphy in a district where 12 percent of voting-age residents are Hispanic. This district about as close to a bellwether as they come: If Obama wins the district, it’s a good sign for his reelection. These races highlight some opportunities for Democrats to win back seats, demonstrating how Hispanic growth can change the political map. But the primary results offer the opposite side of the coin, and should serve as a cautionary tale for Democrats who believe that the growing Hispanic vote, by itself, is enough to be a game-changer.

### Blacks – UQ – low turnout

#### Black turnout low – economy

Washington Post 8-25-11 (Peter Wallsten, reporter @ the Wall Street Journal, Krissah Thompson, contributor @ the Washington Post, "Obama faces uncomfortable questions from black community, lawmakers," <http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/obama-faces-uncomfortable-questions-from-black-community-lawmakers/2011/08/25/gIQAxV6meJ_story.html>//LL)

From the start of his history-making tenure, the nation’s first black president took care never to be seen making policy or political decisions aimed solely or directly at black America. His position: He is the president of the whole country, focused on broad-based fixes to “lift all boats.” The race-avoidance strategy served President Obama well, helping him attract support from many whites while also mobilizing African Americans energized by the powerful symbol of a black commander in chief. But a soaring jobless rate among African Americans and a newfound comfort by black lawma006Bers to criticize Obama’s economic policies are prompting the White House to recalibrate — and to focus more directly on the struggles of black America. The shift comes amid a growing concern among some Democrats that the stubborn economic conditions in minority communities might hamper efforts by Obama’s reelection campaign to generate the large black voter turnout it needs in key cities to make up for his declining support among white independents. This week, the White House [dispatched a top official](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/black-lawmakers-grill-obama-aide-on-jobs/2011/08/23/gIQAXeQ4XJ_story.html) to participate in a Congressional Black Caucus jobs forum in Miami that had been scheduled in part to pressure the White House.

### Independetns - UQ – low turnout

#### Poor jobs reports are pushing Independents to Romney, determines the election

Dowd 6/1 Matthew [American political consultant who was the chief strategist for the Bush-Cheney '04 presidential campaign] “Is Dismal Jobs Report the Signal Independents Are Seeking?” *ABC News* 6/1/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/06/is-dismal-jobs-report-the-signal-independents-are-seeking/> DR

In life, when things seem like a close call in debating whether to take a job or move somewhere or dive deeper into a relationship, we look for a signal of which way to go. In facing really difficult choices, we are open to all kinds of signals. They could come from a movie that pops up on television, something someone says at the store, or a sudden tragedy that reminds us how precious life is. We search for those signals at key moments. The same is true for independent voters in this very, very close presidential election. If one looks at the polls, this election seems to hover at 47/47 in a divided country, with the 5 or 6 percent of truly independent voters ultimately determining who will be elected. Will they stay with President Obama? Will they go for Mitt Romney? Or will they split and force us to be up all night on Election Day? These voters are — as we all sometimes are in our personal lives — very confused and split. They like Obama and have great respect for him and his family, and think he has done some good things during bad times, but wonder if he has the leadership to get us to where the country needs to go. They would like to rehire him for another term, but believe the country is on the wrong track and have questions about his leadership especially on the economy. They aren’t at all satisfied with where the country is at today. As for Romney, those voters think he has a great family and they have respect for many moments in his career. They like some of his ideas, but wonder if a wealthy corporate businessman will understand their lives. They are looking for someone new, but worry that the Republican Party might be too far to the right at this time. They’re giving him a serious look, but he hasn’t closed the deal and voters have lingering concerns. So in this extremely tight election environment, with each partisan side lined up solidly behind their candidate and independent voters liking and disliking elements of both candidates, those voters are looking for those signals. They’re looking for moments that give them an indication of what the right choice is. Friday’s poor jobs report may be one of those signals. In the last two months, less than 150,000 total jobs have been added. Not only is this not enough to keep pace with population growth; it’s also way below even the most conservative estimates. For the Obama campaign, the May jobs number of 69,000 being created is extremely bad news at an extremely bad time. This moment is one of those signals that could begin to push swing voters over to Romney. Independents may begin saying, “I really like President Obama, but maybe we should give Romney a shot for four years.” There’s still a long time until Election Day, and there will be a few more moments to give voters an indication of where they should head. These could include more dramatic economic news; a global event, a candidate misstep, Romney’s vice-presidential pick or the debates. Each of these could cause a swing in this election. These “signal” moments for independent voters will matter more than television ads or super PAC spending or candidate appearances. And it is those moments that we should watch for over the next five months. They’ll be the things that tip the scales.

### GOP Base – locked up

#### GOP Base enthusiasm is locked up and irreversible – moderates key

Epstien, 12 (Reid, Columnist @ Politico, 5/17, lexis)

Romney can make the about-face on Clinton, GOP operative Rick Wilson said, because the combination of the primary's end and Obama's embrace of gay marriage have coalesced for him the conservative base. What's left to target is the political middle and voters who remember fondly the Clinton era. "Romney now has the Republican base done and done. Locked up, cooked, in the bag," Wilson said. "He is still soft a little bit with moderates. Bill Clinton is beloved by those folks. He's not seen as a Democratic partisan in the same way he was when he was president."

# Internal – jobs key election

### Jobs key elections

#### **Jobs are the most important issue to voting Americans**

Adecco 2012, (they are an agency that is a leader in workforce and recruiting solutions), “Adecco Workplace Insights Survey: 2012 Outlook on Jobs & the Election”, <http://www.adeccousa.com/articles/Adecco-Workplace-Insights-Survey:-2012-Outlook-on-Jobs-&-the> Election.html?id=196&url=/pressroom/pressreleases/pages/forms/allitems.aspx&templateurl=/AboutUs/pressroom/Pages/Press-release.aspx AP

Adecco conducted an **Omnibus survey regarding Americans’ outlook on jobs, the economy and the 2012 Presidential Election.** Telephone survey of 1,014 American adults Fielded by Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) Conducted January 12 - 15, 2012Differences between various demographics groups were also explored: Gender, Parents, Age/generation, Income, Education, Geographic Region, Employment Status, and Survey results have a margin of error +/- 3.08% for this sample size. **Jobs Creation Will Most Influence Americans’ Vote for President in 2012 Half (49 percent) of America will be most influenced by jobs creation when they vote in the 2012 presidential election**. Behind jobs creation, healthcare reform (18 percent) is the second most influential issue to impact voters’ decisions. Americans Most Confident that President Obama is the 2012 Presidential Candidate with the Best Plan to Create Jobs Despite the various job creation plans proposed by GOP presidential contenders, 36 percent of Americans believe President Obama has the most successful plan to create jobs in the U.S. Of the remaining candidates, only 15 percent of Americans think Mitt Romney has the best plan to create jobs and less than half that amount believe that Ron Paul (8 percent) or Newt Gingrich (7 percent) have the best plan. Only three percent of Americans believe Rick Santorum has the most successful plan to create jobs. President Obama Top Choice for Office “Cube-mate**”** While the race for presidency isn’t always a popularity contest, it’s interesting to see that four in 10 Americans (41 percent) would most want to share an office with President Obama more than any other presidential candidate. In fact, only one out of 10 Americans (10 percent) would want to share an office with Mitt Romney and even fewer would want to share an office with Ron Paul (9 percent), Newt Gingrich (7 percent) or Rick Santorum (5 percent). Americans Believe Congress & the Federal Government More to Blame for Lack of Jobs than Obama While about a fifth of Americans (21 percent) blame corporations and businesses most for the lack of jobs creation in the U.S., Congress and the Federal Government are close runners up with 18 and 15 percent of Americans’ vote, respectively. Fourteen percent of Americans believe President Obama is most to blame. Thirteen percent of Americans blame banks or financial institutions for lack of jobs but employed Americans (16 percent) are more likely to blame this group than those Americans without jobs (10 percent). While Americans are quick to point fingers at various individuals and groups for lack of jobs, one in 10 Americans still don’t know whose fault it is.

#### The president who makes significant changes to infrastructure will win the election because of the job increase

Perks 2012,( Rob Perks is NRDC’s Deputy Director and serves senior advisor to the NRDC Action Fund. Rob has spent the better part of two decades as an environmental advocate), “Transportation infrastructure is important to voters”, NRDC, <http://www.nrdcactionfund.org/updates/transportation-infrastructure-is-important-to-voters.html/> AP

As the election season heats up, candidates would do well to bear in mind that voters are in to infrastructure. According to a new [nationwide nonpartisan poll](http://aem.org/News/Newsroom/Releases/?R=863#.TyMNk1zOyHd), a solid 65% of the national electorate would be more inclined to vote for a presidential candidate with a strong position on rebuilding the nation’s infrastructure.  “Creating manufacturing jobs and rebuilding infrastructure are both very important issues for voters,” said Dr. Ron Faucheux, president of Clarus Research Group, which conducted the poll for the Association of Equipment Manufacturers. “Based on these poll results, presidential candidates would be wise to focus much more attention on them.”The poll, which primarily focused on manufacturing, asked this specific question related to transportation infrastructure: If a presidential candidate has a very strong position on rebuilding America’s infrastructure––including roads, bridges, flood control, drainage and water systems would that make you much more inclined to vote for that candidate, somewhat more inclined to vote for that candidate, somewhat less inclined to vote for that candidate, much less inclined to vote for that candidate, or would it not affect your vote?  So there you have it. If a candidate wants to build support for his or her campaign this year, then it’s a good idea to have a strong position on — and talk about — getting Americans back to work by rebuilding the nation’s aging infrastructure.

#### Jobs Key To Election

Hansen 6/10 Alyssa; Ohio leaders say jobs key in presidential election; NPR; June 10, 2012; <http://woub.org/2012/06/10/ohio-leaders-say-jobs-key-presidential-election> JB1

**The November election is now less than six months away and the attention turns to Ohio. The Buckeye state is known for being a key battleground for presidential hopefuls. When it comes to winning Ohio voters, those who have already done it say it comes down to one thing. "Jobs and jobs and jobs. That's what we need. That's what we need in America," says Ohio's Governor John Kasich.** "I think people are gonna look, they're gonna look at the President and see we were losing 800,000 jobs a month, three and a half years ago when he took office," said Brown. Brown's fellow Ohio senator, Republican Rob Portman, says the country's economic climate enforces that idea. "This economy and our deficit and debt are the real problems facing our country. And Ohioans get it. I mean, if you talk to Ohioans, in fact not just Republicans and Independents but a lot of Democrats, too, they're really worried about the direction of our country right now. And that's gonna be what this campaign is about," said Portman.

#### Voters Focused On Jobs

[Zaimov](http://www.christianpost.com/author/stoyan-zaimov/) 5/15 Stoyan; Voters more focused on jobs and healthcare, not gay marriage; Christian Post; May 15, 2012; <http://www.christianpost.com/news/voters-more-focused-on-jobs-and-health-care-not-gay-marriage-74964/> JB1

Despite the ongoing controversy regarding President Barack Obama's endorsement of same-sex marriage, **a new [CBS News/New York Times poll](http://www.cbsnews.com/htdocs/pdf/CBSNYTPoll_051412.pdf" \t "_blank) that surveyed over 500 registered voters has found that** only seven percent of respondents believe it will be a top issue this coming November. Obama's comments may have disappointed those supporting the traditional definition of marriage, but according to the results of the poll**, Americans are by far and wide mainly concerned with the economy – over 60 percent rated it as a top issue.** **Among the concerns registered voters listed as caring most about, 62 percent chose the economy and jobs.** In second place came a related issue – the federal budget deficit, with 11 percent of the votes. Health care, at nine percent, was also above gay marriage, which was at seven percent. Foreign policy was only chosen by four percent of respondents, and in last place came immigration with a two percent share.

### Jobs key independents

#### Jobs and the economy influence undecided voters and the election – Now is the key time

Kellman 6/27 Laurie [AP writer] “Week’s events could drive election” *The Associated Press* 6/27/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://theadvocate.com/news/elections/3211145-123/weeks-events-could-drive-election> DR

WASHINGTON (AP) — If you pay attention to election 2012 at all this summer, make it this week. Decisions out of Washington are sure to have an impact on the major issues driving the presidential and congressional elections: Jobs. How much is in your wallet. Health insurance, immigration, campaign finance and more. Lawmakers face deadlines on legislation determining the interest rate students pay for loans, overhaul of the federal transportation program, and money for the system that provides insurance for homes and businesses in flood-risk areas. The Supreme Court, meanwhile, is rendering judgment Thursday on the health care overhaul law, President Barack Obama’s signature legislative achievement. “I saw some story about (how) this is the week that could make or break Barack Obama. I don’t buy it,” said Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, chairman of the Senate Health committee, who personally invested considerable time into passage of the health care law. “It’s an important week, sure.” In opinion polls, voters put the economy at the top of their list of concerns along with unemployment, which stands at 8.2 percent. They worry about federal spending at a time of record-breaking deficits, how to pay for their health care, and immigration policy. And in interview after interview, respondents say they are extremely concerned about their personal finances. These are the substantive issues the presidential and congressional candidates are certain to focus on in the fall as they battle for the presidency, congressional majorities and the loyalties of persuadable voters. There are plenty of those — a quarter of registered voters have yet to commit to Obama or Republican challenger Mitt Romney, according to an Associated Press-GfK poll this month. The ranks of the undecided will shrink before Election Day, but this group could make the difference in a close presidential race and in congressional contests. Republicans need a net four seats to seize control of the Senate from the Democrats. In the House, Democrats need a net of 25 seats to oust the GOP majority.

#### Jobs key to swing independents and the election

Tantaros 6/14 Andrea [American political analyst and commentator, who is currently one of several rotating co-hosts on The Five] “Obama’s blame game” *NY Daily News* 6/14/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/obama-blame-game-article-1.1095839#ixzz1z76e0nAt> DR

Last week was arguably President Obama’s worst week ever. That is, until this week. On the heels of explaining a disappointing 69,000 jobs added and an attempt to spin a stalled economy by asserting that the private sector is “doing fine,” The Federal Reserve this week announced that Americans’ wealth plummeted 40% between 2007 and 2010, shrinking so much that in 2010 that median family net worth was no more than it had been in 1992, after adjusting for inflation. Adding insult to injury, Democrats fired shots inside their own tent directly at the President. Democratic political consultants James Carville and Stan Greenberg hit Obama hard for trying to convince voters that he has put the country on sound fiscal footing. In a memo for Democracy Corps, the men write: “These voters are not convinced that we are headed in the right direction. They are living in a new economy — and there is no conceivable recovery in the year ahead that will change the view of the new state of the country.” They also advised Obama to avoid the rearview mirror and explain what he is going to do in the next four years to make the economy and Americans’ lives better, instead of simply reflecting on his first term. But that might be part of the problem. Not only does Obama fail to look forward; when he does offer his plans for a second term, it’s nothing new to anyone listening. At an event this week in Virginia, when asked by a local reporter what he would do to tackle the state’s high unemployment rate, Obama responded by regurgitating a position he’s pushed for over four years and had little success with as an investment: “One of the things I talked about in that region was the possibility of us really doubling down on clean energy — wind, solar — I think it’s a huge opportunity for rural communities.” But the administration has already pumped billions into green energy subsidies, loans and other boosts. If failed companies like Solyndra and Sun Power are the model for alternative energy investments, the last thing Obama should be discussing is doubling down on a bad bet. Perhaps that explains why 54% of independent swing voters — the key that Obama needs to win re-election — disapprove of his economic plans, according to a newly released ABC News/Ipsos poll. The President has also asked for another term to fix Obamacare, his signature piece of legislation. That takes some gall: Obama blew the tremendous amount of capital he had with the country on a healthcare bill that’s still unpopular and could be overturned by the Supreme Court at the end of the month instead of focusing on the economy — and now he needs more time to tinker with it? As far as his shortcomings, they are all the fault of George W. Bush. At a fund-raiser in Baltimore this week, Obama said that the country’s budget deficits and big debt were the result of the George W. Bush’s two tax cuts, as well as the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, ignoring his own stimulus package and current spending in Afghanistan. Even though it appears the wheels are coming off the bus, Obama is nevertheless better off taking some heat than looking like a backseat driver. Of course, there are risks to accepting responsibility for failures, but when you are blaming everyone other than yourself, it looks like you don’t know how to, or can’t, fix the problems facing voters. People want a leader who can admit mistakes — and then find fresh solutions to solve them. They don’t want blame and promises. At least by holding himself accountable, Obama makes it look like his hands are on the wheel. And while there is still time for the President to find his message mojo, without an actual improvement in the economy that the voters can feel, Obama’s chances for another term are slim. Recycling old speeches, blame-shifting and playing small ball on issues like solar panels and student loans aren’t enough to revive a suffocating economy. If he can’t get more Americans back to work by summer’s end, he’ll need more than a new message or two — he’ll need a miracle.

### Jobs key soccer moms

#### Jobs key to win election – Wal-Mart Moms

Bull 12 Alister [White House Correspondent. Based in the United States for six years covering the economy and Federal Reserve before moving to the White House beat. Previously reported for Reuters from Germany, South Africa, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Iraq] “In the aisles of Wal-Mart, Bain is a four-letter word” *Reuters* 6/8/12 accessed: 6/27/12 http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-06-08/news/sns-rt-us-usa-campaign-momsbre85717g-20120608\_1\_wal-mart-stores-moms-congressional-elections

"The main thing I've heard that kind of scares me is ... the whole Romney thing, where all these people, the factories that have been shut down where they've worked over 30 years and then they are left with nothing," said Rebecca W., a participant in the Virginia focus group whose last name was not given. "That concerns me." In 1996, political strategists deemed suburban "soccer moms" - middle-class suburban women - as that year's crucial voting bloc. Eight years later, "NASCAR dads" - blue-collar, usually white men - were seen as a key demographic to win over. In recent years it's been "Wal-Mart moms," who are similar to soccer moms but less affluent. Obama carried this group in 2008, but they voted Republican in the 2010 congressional elections. Perhaps sensing a branding opportunity, Wal-Mart Stores Inc has financed the political study of its shoppers, although the retail chain had no part in the selection of participants. The moms all shop at least monthly at the retail giant and were screened to exclude strong partisans of either party. Rebecca, who voted for Republican John McCain in 2008 but is undecided now, was among 10 women taking part in a focus group in Richmond, Virginia, on a recent night. She heard the claim about Romney and jobs in a television ad. Focus groups are a vital tool for election campaigns looking to find messages that resonate with voters. They are usually staged privately, but a small group of Washington reporters was invited to remotely observe sessions in Richmond and another in Las Vegas, which was centered on Hispanic mothers. Virginia and Nevada are vital 2012 battlegrounds that will help sway the outcome of what is expected to be a very tight election. OPPORTUNITIES REMAIN While some participants admired Romney's business success, there was a general sense that they did not know enough about the specific policies of either man vying for the White House on November 6, particularly on how they would boost U.S. jobs. "There is still a lot of opportunities for both candidates here. There is good news and also some lessons," said Margie Omero, president of Momentum Analysis, a Democratic pollster who helped run the bipartisan study. "I would advise Democrats to continue talking to these women because they are hearing some of the beginnings of the general election campaign but still want to hear some more specifics."

### Jobs key Latinos

#### Jobs and economic growth key to Latino vote

Killough 6/26 Ashley [freelance journalist and student at Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism She's worked as a Fulbright Fellow in Armenia and has spent two summers in Washington, D.C., reporting for The Chronicle of Higher Education and writing radio editorials for Voice of America Ashley has also won regional and national awards for her work as a staff writer for The Baylor Lariat,] “Poll: Immigration not a top issue for Hispanic voters” *CNN* 6/26/12 accessed: 6/27/12 <http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2012/06/25/poll-immigration-not-a-top-issue-for-hispanic-voters/> DR

(CNN) – A new Gallup survey released Monday indicates immigration falls low among issues most important to Hispanic registered voters. Twelve percent of respondents rated it as the top priority, while health care received the most nods with 21% ranking it as No. 1, according to the poll. Another 19% picked unemployment, 17% said economic growth and 16% said the gap between the rich and poor was the biggest issue. The poll comes the same day the Supreme Court struck down key parts of an Arizona law that sought to deter illegal immigration. The high court, however, let stand a controversial provision that allows police to check a person's immigration status while enforcing other laws. Among all American voters, not just Hispanic voters, immigration policies fall dead last in the Gallup list, behind health care and economic issues. Twenty-one percent said the budget was most important, while 20% each said health care and economic growth were at the top. Five percent listed immigration as the biggest priority. Monday's results are based on Gallup's Daily tracking telephone interviews with 1,005 Hispanic registered voters between April 16 and May 31, with a sampling error of plus or minus four percentage points. For the survey among all American voters, Gallup interviewed 1,010 adults between June 13 and June 14.

#### Jobs key to mobilize Latino vote

Caputo 6/26 Mark [The Miami Herald's political writer, graduated from the University of Miami] “'Dismal' jobs report gives Mitt Romney shot at the Hispanic vote” *The Miami Herald* 6/26/12 accessed: 6/27/12 <http://miamiherald.typepad.com/nakedpolitics/2012/06/dismal-jobs-report-gives-mitt-romney-shot-at-the-hispanic-vote.html> DR

Mitt Romney's presidential campaign is out with another dual English-Spanish web ad, this one about the "dismal" jobs report that showed Hispanic unemployment rose from 10.3 to 11 percent in the past month. This is only a web ad right now, but it has the feel of TV spot (if it were cut in half to 30 seconds). President Obama's campaign has been waging an early-and-often battle for the hearts and minds of Hispanics and will likely win the Latino vote. Obama supports the pro-immigrant DREAM Act, popular among many Hispanics, and Romney said he would've vetoed it. Obama's also trying to make Romney look extremist to Latinos when it comes to immigration. Romney has largely dropped the issue as a topic now that the GOP primary is over. But will it be enough for Obama if Hispanics feel worse off under the president? It's not as if they'll flock to Romney. But many might stay home on Election Day. That would be a killer for Obama, who won 57 percent of the Florida Hispanic vote in 2008 (George W. Bush took 56 percent in 2004). Romney might be making gains, or Obama might be losing support among Hispanics. Last month's Quinnipiac University poll showed Obama winning the Latino vote 42-40 over Romney. That's not enough for the Democrat. A Marist Florida poll was better news for Obama. It showed him winning the Hispanic vote 55-36 in Florida. Both polls have relatively small Latino sample sizes. So it's unclear who's right.

### Economy key Latino

#### The economy key to Latino vote, turnout key to swing states

Semuels 6/27 Alana [journalist for the Los Angeles Times in Los Angeles, California Semuels, born in Boston, Massachusetts, attended Harvard University where she earned Bachelor of Arts in American History and Literature] “Latino support surges for Obama, but will it hold?” *LA Times* 6/27/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-pn-polls-obama-leading-among-latinos-but-enthusiasm-is-mixed-20120627,0,5661505.story> DR

That poll asked Latino voters how interested they are in November's election on a scale of 1 to 10, and added up those who rated themselves as 8, 9, and 10 to measure how many Latinos would probably vote in the fall. Only two-thirds of Latinos surveyed said they were very interested in the contest, down from 68% last month. The same poll found that 80% of all adults consider themselves in the 8, 9 or 10 category and that 89% of tea party supporters are in that category. Still, 57% of Latinos said they were more enthusiastic about voting in this election than in previous ones. That WSJ/NBC/Telemundo poll also found that Latinos support Obama on other issues besides immigration. Nearly three-quarters of Latinos said the president inherited the economic situation, as opposed to 60% of all respondents; 64% said they thought the government should do more to help, compared with 49% of all respondents. On the enthusiasm divide, Barreto, of Latino Decisions, said that asking voters to rate their enthusiasm isn't always the most successful polling method, and that wording matters in polls. He also pointed out that his pollsters were in the field in the battleground states before and after Obama's immigration announcement, giving them a unique perspective on how Latino opinions changed after June 15. The WSJ/NBC/Telemundo poll was conducted after the announcement, from June 20-24. The Latino Decisions poll shows big bumps to Obama in battleground states such as Florida, where it found Obama leads Romney by a margin of 53% to 37% among registered Latino voters. That's up from the 50% to 40% margin he held over Romney in Florida in January. Latinos favor Obama to Romney by the biggest margin in Arizona, 74% to 18%. While the state is still heavily Republican, the immigration law put in place by Gov. Jan Brewer -- and mostly overturned earlier this week by the Supreme Court -- has rallied Latinos against the Republican Party. While John McCain won the state by 9 points in 2008, the Obama campaign still hopes to capture it with the help of the Latino vote. The Democratic presidential nominee last won the state in 1996. The outcome in the election in battleground states could very much depend on Latino voter turnout. In Nevada's 2010 election, Harry Reid won a tough reelection fight thanks in part to Latino turnout. Latino Decisions also put together an interactive map showing who would win different states depending on the level of Latino turnout. The map shows that high Latino turnout could tip states such as Florida, Nevada and Virginia to Obama.

#### **The economy mobilizes Latino voters**

Silver 6/19 Nate [The accuracy of his November 2008 presidential election predictions—he correctly predicted the winner of 49 of the 50 states—won Silver further attention and commendation FiveThirtyEight won a Webby Award as the "Best Political Blog" from the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences] “What Obama’s Immigration Decision Might Mean for 2012” *FiveThirtyEight* 6/19/12 accessed: 6/27/12 <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/19/what-obamas-immigration-decision-might-mean-for-2012/> DR

In the Pew survey and in others, Mr. Obama’s approval ratings have not always been outstanding among Hispanic voters. But relatively few have said that they plan to vote for Mr. Romney. The danger for Democrats was that these voters, unenthusiastic about both choices, might not have turned out to vote at all. Historically, Hispanics have not been as likely to register to vote as other groups, in part a reflection of the fact that a fair number of them are not United States citizens. However, voting participation has been relatively low, even among those Hispanics who were registered to vote. Mr. Obama’s decision could motivate some additional turnout among these voters. If, for instance, Hispanic turnout increases by 5 percent, and 5 percent of Hispanics who might otherwise have voted for Mr. Romney now vote for Mr. Obama instead, it would swing a net of about 1 percentage point in support to Mr. Obama. That is hardly a game-changer, but it could matter in an election that could be very close. If Mr. Romney treads softly on the issue, it may be to return the focus more to the economy. Many Hispanics were hit hard by the recession, and they are more of a swing vote than they are given credit for. The percentage of Hispanics voting for Democrats has varied in recent elections, from as low as 53 percent in 2004 to as high as 73 percent in 1996. A charge of flip-flopping on immigration policy might be the lesser of evils for Mr. Romney if he wants to maximize his competitiveness among these voters.

#### Economy and jobs get Latinos out to vote

Lightman 6/21 David [reporter based in Washington, D.C. He covers Congress and politics for McClatchy Newspapers] “Hispanics hold key to swing states in presidential election” *The Bend Bulletin* 6/21/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.bendbulletin.com/article/20120621/NEWS0107/206210446/> DR

ORLANDO, Fla. — Hispanic voters are poised this year to be the swing votes for president in many of the nation’s swing states. They’re expected to vote in big numbers again for President Barack Obama, and their numbers are growing. In Colorado, Nevada, Florida, North Carolina and Virginia, they very well could determine whether Obama wins another term or is succeeded by Republican Mitt Romney. If they turn out. “The president has consistently had broad voter support. The question was enthusiasm,” said Matt Barreto, a co-founder of Latino Decisions, which studies Hispanic voting behavior. That may be why Obama has vaulted immigration to the forefront of the 2012 campaign, at least for the moment. His announcement last Friday that the government will stop deporting thousands of young undocumented workers was a jolt of fresh energy for Hispanic voters. The president hopes to continue the momentum this Friday when he addresses the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials in Orlando. Romney, who’ll speak Thursday at the group’s convention, has a tougher task. Earlier this year, he urged illegal immigrants to engage in “self-deportation” and said he would have opposed Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the nation’s first Latino justice, nominated by Obama. Barreto’s swing state poll last week showed enthusiasm for Obama growing among Latino voters. The president won the Hispanic vote in 2008 by 67 percent to 31 percent, exit polls found, and he’s in position to put up similar margins this time. Whether he can sustain enough passion to get more people to show up at the polls is the open question, however. “People are concerned about the economy, and Romney talks a lot about job creation,” said Angeline Echeverria, the executive director of El Pueblo, a nonpartisan community organization in Raleigh, N.C. “He talks about things that might resonate.” Recent turnout lower Latino turnout has been lower than that of whites or blacks in recent presidential elections, partly because of the same factors that dampen turnout in the general population: The Hispanic population tends to be younger and less wealthy. Obama’s camp is confident. Adrian Saenz, a veteran Texas political strategist, has been working as the campaign’s national Latino vote director since November. Spanish-language ads have been running in Colorado, Nevada and Florida since April. The ads emphasize jobs, health care and education, which polls find are major concerns in the community. “Mitt Romney is on the wrong side of every issue important to Hispanics,” said Gabriela Domenzain, the Obama’s campaign’s director of Hispanic press. The Romney camp fired back that its candidate’s economic message will resonate. “Behind the depressing economic data are real people who are suffering because of the Obama economy. That’s why you see a lack of enthusiasm” for the president, said Alberto Martinez, a Tallahassee-based Romney adviser. Republicans have Hispanic outreach directors in at least six swing states and a national Hispanic outreach director, Bettina Inclan, who’s a campaign and Capitol Hill veteran. Two Spanish-language ads have been running in swing states.

### Jobs key blacks

#### Jobs key to swing independent Black votes that determine the election

Jackson 6/28 Raynard [Republican political consultant based in Washington, DC He has been involved in every Republican presidential campaign from George H. W. Bush to George W. Bush] “Romney will not Focus on the Black Vote” *Black Voice News* 6/28/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.blackvoicenews.com/news/news-wire/47894-romney-will-not-focus-on-the-black-vote.html> DR

Now that Romney is the de facto nominee for the Republican Party, I have been reflecting on the state of the presidential race as it enters the final stretch. As a political strategist, I understand the necessity to run to the right during the Republican primary and then migrate to the center during the general election. It is common knowledge that Romney has no intention of focusing on the Black vote during the general election. From a raw political perspective, I agree with his approach, but from a strategic perspective, I totally disagree. Below I will detail why this is a terrible strategy. There is absolutely no question that Obama will get in excess of 90 percent of the Black vote (in 2008 he received 96 percent). But this time he will receive 90 percent-plus of a smaller number of Blacks; there will be fewer numbers of Blacks voting because they are disillusioned with him. The first Obama run made history, his governing is a mystery when it comes to Blacks. Obama’s recent endorsement of homosexual marriage and support for amnesty for illegals has infuriated the Black community. The NAACP, Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, etc. have not represented the views of the average Black for decades. The NAACP will continue to hemorrhage support from within the Black community. Many Blacks are publicly withdrawing their memberships and support from this group. Under skilled Blacks are livid that Obama wants to legalize more than 1 million new people into the workforce to compete with them for jobs. It’s hard enough competing with Americans for jobs, now you have to compete with those in the country illegally? Who in their right minds feeds the neighborhood while their own children are starving? Nobody, but Obama. These issues give Romney an opportunity, by engaging with the Black community, to reach out to White, suburban, middle-class women voters to let them know that the Republican Party is OK to support. In other words, these are the Independent voters who will determine the outcome of the election. These voters want to support a candidate and party that are not “perceived” as racist or mean- spirited. So, by reaching out to Blacks, they are signaling to these Independent voters that it is OK to vote Republican.

#### Jobs and the economy get Black votes behind Obama

Chapman 6/28 Cornelius [writer for Boston Herald] “Obama neglecting black community” *The Boston Herald* 6/28/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.bostonherald.com/news/opinion/op_ed/view/20220628obama_neglecting_black_community/> DR

The time has come to ask whether the current occupant of the Oval Office is getting a reverse racial pass; that is, is he exempt from criticism of ignoring or worsening the welfare of blacks simply because he’s African-American? A few broad-based measures suggest that the answer is yes. The unemployment rate is up 1.4 percent since Obama took office, but the black unemployment rate has increased twice as much, from 12.5 percent to a staggering 15.5 percent. Median household income for whites fell by 1.3 percent last year, but the decline for blacks was 3.2 percent. Homeownership is down overall by about 1 percent, but for blacks it is down 2 percent. Not all the news is bad. There’s been a gradual improvement in black high school graduation rates. However, there’s a widening gap between graduation rates of white and black male students. These numbers are important since even a slight drop-off in support among black voters means that Obama will lose states he won in 2008 by a narrow margin, including North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Florida and Virginia. There are 95 electoral votes in that bunch, 35 percent of the total needed to win a second term. Obama spent his time in town going to one glitzy fundraiser after another, from a South End bistro (at $40,000 a head) to Symphony Hall (tickets priced at $250 to $10,000) to a private residence in Weston, where the price of admission was $35,800 a couple. That’s $3,800 more than the median black household income in America last year.

#### Pushing job creation gets votes mobilized

Tesfamariam 6/8 Rahiel [columnist and blogger for The Washington Post and The RootDC She is the founder/editorial director of Urban Cusp, an online lifestyle magazine highlighting progressive urban culture, faith, social change and global awareness] “Is Obama taking black voters for granted?” *The Washington Post* 6/8/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/she-the-people/post/is-obama-taking-black-voters-for-granted/2012/06/08/gJQAgjnaNV_blog.html> DR

It’s important to keep in mind that “black women carry the black vote,” says Melanie Campbell, president and CEO of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation and convener of Black Women’s Roundtable. Dismissing black voter apathy as a serious threat, Campbell stresses that black women have organized to ensure their voices are heard and that their “vote is not taken for granted by anybody.” Obama’s 2008 campaign was branded as a grass-roots movement via rhetoric, organizational structure and tactics. His 2012 bid for reelection can only build off the momentum of that era if he is committed to the same strategies. Obama should meet black voters where they are – in their community centers, schools and places of worship. Many agree that he hasn’t done it enough in the last 3 1/2 years. And even if he gets accused of playing politics, I don’t think it’s too late for him to – sincerely – reach out now. Khalilah L. Brown-Dean, associate professor of political science at Quinnipiac University, echoes this, stating that “Obama must revisit the grass-roots strategy that propelled him in 2008.” To her, this means “less star-studded fundraisers and more town hall meetings with the people in greatest need of progressive policies. Taking his message directly to black voters who are disproportionately affected by many of the challenges now facing our country. Chief among those must be an emphasis on strengthening education, creating jobs that are available and accessible to those living in urban centers, bolstering universal health care and protecting civil rights.” Baisden, Campbell and Brown-Dean all seemed less concerned about voter apathy than voter suppression. Their emphasis was less on whether black voters would come out to the polls and more on whether their votes would actually count, as mounting barriers threaten to repeat the black voter disenfranchisement that has plagued America’s past politics. With the very serious threat of voter apathy and voter suppression, Obama needs to take black voters more seriously than he has in times past. The infatuation with a young man holding on to “dreams from [his] father” has worn off for many of us and we’re looking to be actively courted – just like everyone else. Obama must remember that anything worth having is worth fighting for.

### Jobs key youth

#### Jobs and the economy key to young voter turnout

Dorning 6/14 Mike [reporter for Bloomberg News] “Obama’s young voters from 2008 face bleak job market” *Washington Post* 6/14/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/obamas-young-voters-from-2008-face-bleak-job-market/2012/06/15/gJQA9gGkeV_story.html> DR

“I didn’t anticipate that a year out I would be barely making any money at all,” said Foster, from Arlington, Virginia. Along with a degree in environmental sciences from the University of Vermont, her resume includes prestigious internships with a member of Congress and the National Park Service’s Conservation Study Institute and yet no job offers have come. In the hard economic times since 2008, when Foster voted for President Barack Obama’s message of hope, America’s young voters have been battered financially. They’ve disproportionately sustained job losses, wage declines and detours on their career paths. For many, even the normal rites of passage to adulthood have been disrupted, as they delay such life steps as leaving home, getting married and having children. “These people are stuck,” said William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution in Washington. “Their life is on hold in many different ways.” One in six 16- to 24-year-olds last year was idle, neither working nor attending school even for just an hour a week, according to an analysis of Labor Department data by Lawrence Katz, a Harvard economics professor. Among 20- to 24-year-old men, almost one in five was idle last year. Jobs Decline As of May, 41 percent of the nation’s net decline in full- time jobs from four years earlier was among under-25-year-olds, an age group that represents just 14 percent of the workforce, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Under-35-year-olds account for 65 percent of the decline in full-time employment, though they comprise only 35 percent of the labor force. Even among young people who have full-time work, real wages have dropped, while older workers’ pay has kept even or slightly improved. Median weekly earnings after inflation fell 6 percent among 18- to 24-year-olds in full-time jobs from 2007 to 2011, according to an analysis of Labor Department data by the Pew Research Center in Washington. “You’ve got a lot of very well-educated people and they’re stepping down many, many levels,” said Alex Rebeiz, 44, manager at the Arlington store for Eastern Mountain Sports, an outdoor gear retailer. Quality Clerks Applicants for part-time sales jobs have surged from recent college graduates, even some with master’s degrees, he said. Sales have increased more than 10 percent compared to a year ago, an improvement he largely attributes to the rising caliber of his staff. “The quality of our customer experience in the store has gone way up,” he said. Disillusionment is lowering the generation’s enthusiasm for Obama as he enters his re-election campaign. Young adults who experience economic hardship and watch Washington’s gridlock are turning cynical toward politics, concluding that voting “is not a valuable use of their time,” said John Della Volpe, director of polling at Harvard University’s Institute of Politics, which regularly surveys youth opinion. The portion of 18- to 24-year-olds who say they will definitely vote dropped to 47 percent this year from 64 percent in 2008, according to polls conducted by the Institute of Politics during March and April of each election year. Leading Margin Shrinks Support for Obama also has declined, with the president besting Republican Mitt Romney 41 percent to 29 percent in the age group compared with an edge of 53 percent to 32 percent against Republican John McCain in 2008, according to the poll. Sixty-six percent of voters under 30 cast their ballots for Obama in the last election, the highest share for a presidential candidate from that age group going back to the start of modern exit polls in 1980. Turnout in the age group was the highest in 16 years, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. That enthusiasm altered the electoral map. Support from the young supplied Obama’s 2008 victory margin in Indiana and North Carolina, both of which had not voted for a Democratic president for decades. Republican Mitt Romney has repeatedly reminded young voters that Obama has meant hard times. “Young people have been hit disproportionately hard by the Obama economy, and they understand that President Obama has not lived up to his promises or made things better,” said Andrea Saul, a Romney spokeswoman. Presidential Priority Clo Ewing, an Obama spokeswoman, said the president has made young Americans “a priority and has taken action important to their generation,” including ending the Iraq war and extending health care coverage. “We are confident that his vision for the future - a country where everyone gets a fair shake with a stronger middle class - stands in stark contrast with Republicans who believe we can cut our way to prosperity,” she said. Raja Duggal, a 26-year-old from San Francisco who voted for Obama last time, has since had to defer his own dreams. Three years after graduating from San Francisco State University with a psychology degree, his aspiration to counsel children remains unrealized. “I really wanted to help kids out. I understand where kids from broken families come from because I’ve been there,” said Duggal, who said his mother died when he was 8 years old and his father turned to alcohol. “I pushed through with everything I had to get through college.” Part-time Work Now, he works part-time at an antiques store and as an administrative assistant in an office. He’s grown “impatient” and has a “love-hate relationship” with Obama, though he said he will still probably vote for Obama again. Foster, in Virginia, said she will likely back Obama again, as well. “I do have questions,” she said. “But I’m pretty liberal. I’m not going to vote for Mitt Romney.” Republican strategist Karl Rove has started a political action committee under the name Crossroads Generation to appeal to young voters based on their economic travails. Obama’s been making regular stops at college campuses, promoting a bill to prevent an increase in student loan interest rates and highlighting a provision in the health care law that permits children to stay on family insurance policies until age 26. Prospects Remain Tough Still, until the economy improves, prospects for younger workers will remain tough. “The worse the labor market, the less employers are willing to take chances on young workers, and the more they are competing with other people who have lost their jobs,” Katz said. Compounding the difficulty, turnover in the workplace is sluggish. Though the layoff rate has dropped to pre-recession levels, few workers have been quitting their jobs the past three years and companies have been slow to make new hires. Older workers have postponed retirement after confronting depleted 401(k) saving balances and declines in home equity. The number of 70- to 74-year-olds in full-time jobs has swelled by almost a third since May 2008. The repercussions reach beyond the pocketbook. Thirty-one percent of young adults said they have postponed marriage or having a child during the downturn, according to a Pew Research Center Survey of adults between the ages of 18 and 34 conducted in December 2011.

# Internal – Fiscal discipline key

### Fiscal discipline key

#### Fiscal discipline is key issue for voters and gop base – fastest growing public priority

Pew, 12 (Pew Research Center, 1/23, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/01/23/public-priorities-deficit-rising-terrorism-slipping/>)

The new poll finds that the federal budget deficit stands out as the fastest growing policy priority for Americans, largely because of growing Republican concerns about the issue. In the national survey, conducted Jan. 11-16 among 1,502 adults, 69% rate reducing the budget deficit as a top priority – the most in any of the Pew Research Center’s annual policy priority updates going back to 1994. The number of Republicans rating the budget deficit as a top priority has spiked to 84% from 68% a year ago and just 42% five years ago. Meanwhile Republicans are placing far less emphasis on terrorism, which was their top priority in every year between 2002 and 2008. Today 72% rate it as a top priority, down from 83% a year ago and 93% five years ago. By contrast, the emphasis Democrats and independents give to terrorism and the budget deficit has changed far less.

#### Spending is key issue – top voter priority

Pew, 12 (Pew Research Center, 1/23, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/01/23/public-priorities-deficit-rising-terrorism-slipping/>)

Concern about the nation’s budget deficit, on the other hand, has been increasing in recent years. Currently, 69% say reducing the deficit is a top priority. In January 2009, only about half (53%) rated this as a top priority. The proportion citing the deficit as a top priority is now on par with the number that said this in December 1994 (65%), during Bill Clinton’s second year in office. Reducing the deficit or paying off the national debt became less of a priority in the late 1990s as the nation – and the federal government – benefited from a strong economy. Concern was also modest in the early years of the Bush administration, especially in the immediate aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks. But concern about deficits has increased steadily since 2009.

### Fiscal discipline key – GOP

#### It’s the vital issue for GOP base -

Pew, 12 (Pew Research Center, 1/23, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/01/23/public-priorities-deficit-rising-terrorism-slipping/>)

A Spike in GOP Deficit Concerns More than eight-in-ten Republicans (84%) say reducing the federal budget deficit is a top priority, up 16 points since last January and the highest percentage in a Pew Research Center survey. During the Bush administration, at most only about half of Republicans viewed reducing the budget deficit as a top policy priority. In January 2009, shortly before George W. Bush left office, 51% of Republicans rated reducing the deficit as a top priority. That percentage jumped 17 points (to 68%) by January 2011 and has increased by about the same amount (16 points) in the last year alone.

#### Unifies conservatives and mobilizes GOP base

Walsh, 12

Kenneth, Chief White House Correspondent, US News and World Report, USNews.com, 5/30, lexis

2. Unify conservatives. GOP strategists say Romney still has not shown some on the right that he is truly one of them. Many see him as a "moderate from Massachusetts," as his GOP rivals labeled him during the primaries based on his record as governor of the Democrat-leaning state of Massachusetts. Political scientist Bill Galston of the Brookings Institution, says one theme that would unify conservatives and not alienate independents is a blunt and often-repeated pledge to make government smaller, more efficient, and attuned to everyday people. This is something, ironically, that President Bill Clinton did when he declared that the era of "big government" was over. It went over very well. Galston is a former senior White House adviser to Clinton.

### Fiscal discipline key – Dems

#### Key issue for dem voters – top priority

Pew, 12(Pew Research Center, 1/23, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/01/23/public-priorities-deficit-rising-terrorism-slipping/>)

Democrats’ concerns over the deficit also have risen in recent years, though less sharply than Republicans’. Currently, 66% of Democrats say reducing the budget deficit should be a top priority for the president and Congress, up from 52% in January 2009.

### Fiscal discipline key – independents

#### Fiscal discipline is top issue for independent voters and they don’t trust federal investments so there’s no perception of benefit

NSOR, 10 (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, 7/7, <http://www.resurgentrepublic.com/summaries/independents-support-conservative-policies-in-health-care-energy-and-fiscal-issues>)

With Independent voters siding overwhelmingly with Republican voters again in our latest survey, conservative and market-oriented policies now consistently trump the liberal and government-oriented policies pursued by President Obama and the Democrats in Congress. In three key policy areas – health care, energy, and fiscal issues – conservative policies are more popular than liberal ones. Voters agree that offshore drilling should continue by a 56 to 37 percent margin, including a 56 to 36 percent margin among Independents and a 71 to 24 percent margin among Republicans. (Democrats oppose any new offshore wells by a 50 to 44 percent margin). This survey also finds that predictions of increased support for the health care bill once voters learned more about it have proved inaccurate. Voters support an argument urging repeal of the new health care reform law by a 53 to 41 percent margin, even when juxtaposed against a strong populist message that “we should stand up to the insurance companies, not give in to them.” Independents agree that the health care law should be repealed by a 52 to 39 percent margin, compared to a 77 to 21 percent margin among Republicans. Democrats oppose repealing the law by a 61 to 33 percent margin. Fiscal issues, starting with the passage of the stimulus package last spring, are at the vanguard of Independent dissatisfaction with Congress, and this survey shows Independents continue to oppose new spending and support corporate and capital gains tax cuts. In fact, voters overall agree that “we should freeze total federal spending at 2010 levels for the next five years,” by a 54 to 38 percent margin, even against a counterargument that “freezing total federal spending at 2010 levels for five years is irresponsible. That would require either not paying guaranteed benefits like Social Security and Medicare, or making drastic cuts in the defense budget.” Independents agree that we should freeze federal spending for five years by a 52 to 35 percent margin.

#### Our link outweighs perception of economic benefits for swing 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/summaries/independents-support-conservative-policies-in-health-care-energy-and-fiscal-issues>)

As shown repeatedly in past Resurgent Republic surveys, a majority of Americans continues to believe that the federal government should be "spending less to reduce the deficit" rather than "spending more to help the economy recover." Voters overall want the federal government to spend less by 54 to 40 percent, including Republicans by 78 to 20 percent and Independents by 58 to 35 percent. Only Democrats want to spend more, by 63 to 30 percent.

### Fiscal Discipline Key – Pennsylvania

#### Pennsylvania key Obama – voters could switch

Colby Itkowitz (Washington Bureau, Morning Call) May 5 2012 <http://articles.mcall.com/2012-05-05/news/mc-pennsylvania-swing-state-presidential-20120505_1_pennsylvania-voters-obama-campaign-presidential-battlefield>

Pennsylvania's status could change in an instant, of course, and Romney will be poised to pounce if the opportunity warrants. But for now, the state sets up as more Obama's to lose than Romney's to win, considering the state has about one million more registered Democrats than Republicans. And presidential elections tend to bring out voters. Four years ago, John McCain's campaign took a risk on investing heavily in Pennsylvania. Bob Heckman, a senior McCain strategist, said the team thought it could reach culturally conservative Democrats in western Pennsylvania or woo women with Sarah Palin on the ticket. "We felt we had to roll the dice and make a gamble early on a take-away state, one state that ought to be in the 'D' column that we can take away from Obama to make up for any states that he could take away from us," said Heckman, a Washington-based Republican consultant. McCain lost Pennsylvania to Obama by more than 10 percentage points. "Sometimes facts are facts," Heckman said. "Pennsylvania in presidential races tends to be a Democratic state." Still, Heckman and other Republicans insist it could be different this time. Romney is better financed than McCain, and other Republican candidates have since swept the state: Tom Corbett won the governor's mansion and Pat Toomey won a U.S. Senate seat. Discontent over a fragile economy is the albatross around Obama's neck that could make him vulnerable. Some are baffled by the suggestion that Pennsylvania might not be a major player in November. T.J. Rooney, the chairman of the Pennsylvania Democratic Party in 2008, described it as a "head scratcher." "I'm just not one of those people who believe for a second this state is locked down," Rooney said. "I just don't understand it, to be quite honest. I haven't seen any poll that suggests this state is out of reach." Larry Ceisler, a longtime Democratic operative in Philadelphia, echoed that, saying the Obama campaign and its surrogates will need to work hard to defend the state. "I believe Romney can win Pennsylvania and I didn't think that a few weeks ago," Ceisler said. Quinnipiac University, based in Connecticut, includes Pennsylvania (along with Ohio and Florida) in its periodic "swing state" poll. Still, early television ad buys — the most expensive and targeted campaign tool — have not been made in Pennsylvania. Last week the SuperPAC supporting Romney, Restore Our Future, bought television ad time in nine so-called "swing states," but not in Pennsylvania. Also last week, the Obama campaign began airing an attack spot on Romney in Ohio, Virginia and Iowa. Previously, Obama's team had placed ad buys in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Ohio, Nevada and Virginia. Other SuperPACs have taken the same tack. The conservative Americans For Prosperity and American Crossroads have run ads in six to eight battlegrounds, but not Pennsylvania. The pro-Obama SuperPAC Priorities USA Action, aired ads in April in Ohio, Virginia, Florida and Iowa. Sean Trende, senior elections analyst for Real Clear Politics, which aggregates political news and polls, said in recent times Pennsylvania has tended to be a few points more Democratic than the nation overall. It makes sense that groups would make their early investments in states truly up for grabs, he said. For Romney, winning Pennsylvania would be "icing" — not a state Romney is looking at to get the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency, Trende said. On the flip side, "if Obama is fighting over Pennsylvania," Trende said, "it probably means he's losing the election." State Republican Party Chairman Rob Gleason said he is prepared for "hand-to-hand combat" in the Lehigh Valley and Philadelphia suburbs, where voters tend to swing. He described himself as positive, yet realistic. When Romney was in Harrisburg for a fundraiser, Gleason told him they would win Pennsylvania. He said Romney responded, "Really?" "I don't think anyone thinks we can carry Pennsylvania, I don't think even Romney thinks we can win Pennsylvania; they're not counting on it, but they'll play here," Gleason said. "We're not asleep at the switch. We've been working on this for four years. This is the big one." A Quinnipiac "swing state" poll of Pennsylvania, Florida and Ohio voters confirmed last week that Romney is better poised to take Ohio or Florida. The poll shows that Obama is leading Romney by eight points in Pennsylvania, and is favored by key demographic groups: women, youth and independent voters. In Florida and Ohio, Obama and Romney are statistically tied. If the polls tightens, the math could change quickly as Nov. 6 nears. Obama must win Pennsylvania to stay in office — no Democrat since Harry Truman in 1948 has won the presidency without Pennsylvania — and Romney will watch for any opening.

#### Voter opposition to perception of wasteful big government spending uniquely powerful in Pennsylvania – could swing

Earl Ofari Hutchinson (author and political analyst) May 8 2012 Political Machine, lexis

Ohio is hardly a special case. An equally strong hint that defecting white Democrats could pose a danger for Obama came in Pennsylvania's primary in 2008. A huge percent of Pennsylvania voters are blue collar, anti-big government, socially conservative, pro-defense, and intently patriotic, and there's a tormenting history of a racial polarization in the state. If Obama had not decisively won the state's two big, racially diverse cities primarily with black and youth votes, Clinton would have trounced Obama by an even wider margin than she did. The same percent of white Democrats as in Ohio told exit poll interviewers that they would not back Obama. Race was the prime reason. Clinton racked up victories in the West Virginia, Kentucky and South Dakota primaries. Again, a significant percent of white Democrats said they would not back Obama, and the reason was race and many made no effort to hide it.

### Fiscal discipline key – ohio/florida

#### Perception of wasteful spending alienates key voters in ohio and florida

Jasinowski, 12

(Jerry Jasinowski, an economist and author, served as President of the National Association of Manufacturers for 14 years and later The Manufacturing Institute, Political Machine, 6/8, lexis)

Second, the attempt to recall Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, in which the Democrats invested tremendous time and resources, was a flop. Walker won decisively. Organized labor is probably the largest and most influential sector in the Democratic alliance, and public sector unions are the most influential sector of organized labor. But labor took a whipping. It is now clear that many voters believe public sector employees are better off than private sector employees and wield too much influence. The vote in Wisconsin suggests most voters are receptive to the Republican message that public sector unions need to be reined in and budget deficits reduced. This will spread to other states like Ohio and Florida.

### Fiscal discipline key – Virginia

#### It’s the key issue for Virginia voters and swings the election

Fuller et al, 12 (Stephen, Center For Regional Analysis @ George Mason, Tom Hudson and Darren Gersh, Nightly Business Report Correspondents, Nightly Business Report, 6/6, lexis)

HUDSON: JPMC, JPMorgan (NYSE:JPM) Chase. Curry blamed the bank`s loss on weak risk management practices in JPMorgan`s chief investment office. Today`s hearing comes as regulators work to finalize the Volcker rule, which would prevent banks from making risky bets for their own profits. But the comptroller said it`s not clear whether that rule would have prevented this loss. President Obama is in California tonight while Mitt Romney is in Texas, both attending campaign fundraisers. We take a look at the key swing state of Virginia tonight, as we continue our look at the election, jobs and the economy. The unemployment rate in Virginia is just 5.6 percent, well below the national rate. That makes the state competitive for President Obama, but as Darren Gersh reports, that is only half the story. GERSH: There are really two Virginias. Northern Virginia is Barack Obama`s Virginia: urban, diverse, high tech and highly educated. As home to the Pentagon, Virginia receives more Federal spending than any other state and three out of every four of those dollars ends up here in northern Virginia. That may explain why students in the area are willing to give the president the benefit of the doubt. PATRICK ALLEN, STUDENT, NOVA: Given the state of the United States and the economy that he came in with, he`s done a wonderful job so far. It wouldn`t have been easy to turn this around no matter who was elected. GERSH: But the president isn`t taking votes here for granted. Since he was elected, he`s visited Northern Virginia Community College campuses five times. And even here, with all the Federal spending and an unemployment rate around 4 percent, his handling of the economy is a tough sell. FEIVEN ZIGITA, GRADUATE, GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY: Everyone that I`ve known in my class that have graduated, they are working like unpaid internships, which is kind of like feeling like an indentured servant. GERSH: The president may be popular here, but for students, the thrill is gone. JENNIFER SAYASITHSENA, ASSISTANT PROF., NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE: Now they are really reevaluating, I think, how they are going to vote in the fall, whether they`ll continue to participate. GERSH: Get away from a college campus and head further south and you`ll find more long-time Virginians and they aren`t happy with what sounds like presidential excuses on the economy. BARBARA TIVNAN, REAL ESTATE BROKER: I think he thinks he`s done a much better job than he really has. GERSH: In the other Virginia, small town, southern Virginia, Federal spending and jobs are harder to come by. STEPHEN FULLER, CENTER FOR REGIONAL ANALYSIS, GEORGE MASON UNIV.: And they don`t like government particularly. They don`t think government helps them. They don`t understand how dependent the state has been on government money. GERSH: For Mitt Romney, that discontent with Washington spending is an opportunity. So too, is the fear of losing Federal spending. Defense spending is critical to the Virginia economy and the threat of automatic spending cuts scheduled for early next year could worry voters this fall. FULLER: It might point to the failure of leadership on the executive branch. It shouldn`t have let this happen. And so you throw the guy out who let it happen, thinking that maybe the new guy will be better. GERSH: The president will have a tough time keeping his job in November, if he can`t keep at least one of Virginia`s economies happy. Darren Gersh, NBR, Arlington, Virginia.

#### Fiscal restraint is specifically top issue for Virginia voters - Wasteful spending perception swings the vote

Pershing, 12

(Ben Pershing, author of Capitol Briefing, joined washingtonpost.com from the Capitol Hill newspaper Roll Call, where he worked for a decade, serving as Deputy Editor, Washington Post, 5/9, lexis)

In the 13 months since Kaine entered the race, the two campaigns have combined to raise and spend millions of dollars, outside groups have poured cash into television ads and Allen has reinforced his position as the Republican front-runner against a handful of challengers. Yet none of those developments has budged the basic narrative - two titans of Virginia politics battling to a draw in a state widely viewed as swing territory, both in the Senate and presidential contests. Kaine, who served as President Obama's handpicked Democratic National Committee chairman, might benefit from the fact that Obama holds a seven-point lead over former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney, the presumed Republican nominee, in Virginia and will drive turnout among liberals and African Americans. Yet the new poll includes some negative trends for Kaine: Registered voters are now equally divided in their impression of him, with 41 percent apiece viewing the Democrat favorably and unfavorably. A year ago, Kaine's rating was 2 to 1 positive, at 57 to 28 percent. Kaine's decline could be the partial result of negative ads that have aired against him in the state and efforts by Republicans to link him to health-care reform, the stimulus package and other controversial Obama administration policies. Although his popularity is down across the board, Kaine actually suffered the steepest fall among people planning to support Obama in November. His favorability rating dropped 20 percentage points among that group, even though Kaine has not broken with Obama on any high-profile issues recently. The percentage of non-white respondents viewing Kaine unfavorably climbed 17 points, and his decline in popularity has been pronounced among lower-income voters and those without college degrees. But the overall portion of registered voters saying they planned to cast their ballot for Kaine hasn't moved a bit, including among Obama supporters, indicating that backers of the president aren't planning to abandon the Senate candidate in November. Stuart Rothenberg, editor of the nonpartisan Rothenberg Political Report, said he had long assumed that for Allen to win, the Republican nominee would need to capture Virginia, while Kaine could potentially scrape out a victory even if Obama lost narrowly. So Rothenberg was taken aback by the fact that Kaine runs behind Obama in the new poll. "It doesn't make a lot of sense to me," he said. "It's a surprise, and, frankly, it's counterintuitive." Arthur Diggs, an African American college professor and Air Force veteran from Virginia Beach, said he planned to vote the straight Democratic ticket this fall. But Diggs said there was no particular reason for him to support Kaine "other than the fact that he leans toward Obama." "He's the lesser of two evils," Diggs, 63, said. "If it was somebody else [as the Democratic nominee], I would probably vote for them." Allen's rating is also now under 50 percent with voters, though with a smaller slide. His favorability has dipped from 52 to 47 percent in a year, and his unfavorability has inched up from 28 to 31 percent. Allen's campaign has focused on presenting him as a fiscal conservative who will halt the burgeoning deficits of the Obama administration, while emphasizing Virginia's strong economic performance during the Republican's gubernatorial tenure. But Kaine has sought to remind voters of Allen's record as a senator, when he voted to raise the debt ceiling and for tax and spending policies that boosted the deficit. Of more immediate importance, the new poll shows Allen is in a dominant position ahead of his June 12 Republican primary. Among likely primary voters, Allen gets 62 percent, Del. Robert G. Marshall (Prince William) gets 12 percent, former Virginia Tea Party Patriots head Jamie Radtke receives 5 percent and Chesapeake minister E.W. Jackson brings up the rear at 3 percent. Though all three opponents have accused Allen of being insufficiently conservative, the former governor has no obvious weakness on his right flank. A big majority of self-identified conservatives call him "about right" ideologically, and he takes 68 percent of their votes in the primary. Allen's foes have been hurt by their lack of statewide name recognition - 57 percent of all respondents say they didn't know enough about Marshall to form an impression of him, while 66 percent say the same of Radtke. The four Republicans held a primary debate recently in Roanoke and have two more scheduled this month. In the general election matchup, Allen and Kaine enjoy massive support from their respective parties, while among independent voters, Kaine gets 46 percent to Allen's 45 percent. Kaine leads among moderates, 53 to 38 percent. And the Democrat is up 84 percent to 8 percent among African American voters, a commanding lead that still doesn't quite match Obama's 97 to 1 percent advantage over Romney. Like Obama, Kaine has a solid lead in the suburbs closest to Washington, but the race is far closer in the rapidly growing exurban counties. The poll shows a clear gender gap: Allen has an eight-point edge among male registered voters, while women lean toward Kaine by seven. Kaine has the advantage among better-educated voters, but the two candidates are running close to even among lower- and upper-income Virginians. Asked which issues were most important to their choice in the Senate contest, voters most often highlight the economy, health care and the federal budget deficit. Allen leads among those who named the economy, the deficit and taxes as their primary issues. Kaine has the edge among voters most concerned about education. Kaine and Allen run about evenly among those emphasizing health care, an issue that Republicans have sought to use against Kaine.

# Internal – X group key

### Independents key

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

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

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

#### Independents key to election – more independents now than ever before

Agiesta 6/4 Jennifer [Deputy Director of polling for The Associated Press] “Poll: Political independents outweigh partisans” *Associated Press* 6/4/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/huff-wires/20120604/us-independent-voters-poll/> DR

WASHINGTON — Call it a pox on both the Republican and Democratic houses. More Americans now call themselves politically independent than at any point in the last 75 years, according to a new poll. The survey also shows that those who do align themselves with a party are more ideological and have become more polarized than at any point in the last 25 years, particularly on issues important in this year's presidential and congressional campaigns. Party loyalty, however, only goes so far; neither Republicans nor Democrats say their own party is doing a good job standing up for its traditional positions. Five months before the November elections, the Pew Research Center poll released Monday sheds light on how the electorate feels about the nation's two major political parties. And sour seems to be an understatement. The results indicate a collective thumbs down to both the Democratic and Republican Party, showing that an unprecedented 38 percent of adults rejected both parties and call themselves independents. Only 32 percent now say they are Democrats and 24 percent now call themselves Republicans. This flight away from the two major political parties began in 2008, a time of intense partisanship as President Barack Obama battled Republican Sen. John McCain for the White House. Then as now, independent voters are a critical constituency that candidates must win over to prevail in competitive general elections. Exit polls show these voters have sided with the winning candidate in all but two of the past 10 presidential elections. Independents broke for Obama, 52 percent to 44 percent for McCain four years ago. And recent polling suggests independents are about evenly divided now between Obama and Mitt Romney, his likely Republican rival. Independent voters also have been on the winning side in congressional contests eight out of nine times since the 1994 election, when Republicans took control of the House for the first time in 40 years.

#### Independent voters are swing close elections

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

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

#### Independent voters key – determine battleground states

Walsh, 12

Kenneth, Chief White House Correspondent, US News and World Report, USNews.com, 5/30, lexis

3. Pivot to swing voters. Once he is formally nominated, Romney needs to show independent voters--who will be crucial in the battleground states such as Colorado, Florida, and Ohio--that he hasn't been captured by right-wing orthodoxy. He might do this in his choice of a vice-presidentlal running mate--selecting someone who is conservative but is not seen as extreme. Ohio Sen. Rob Portman or former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush are among those who would fill the bill. Of course this effort could run counter to his objective of unifying conservatives, demonstrating the tightrope walk that Romney faces. A central part of this strategy also is to persuade swing voters that President Obama has been a failure, especially on the economy.

#### Independent swing voters key and outweigh base support– economic issues determine outcome

Defrank, 12 (Thomas, Columnist @ Daily News, 1/24, lexis)

Obama has been shaping and test-driving his election message for months and will reinforce it to the 9 p.m. TV audience. He will offer a bipartisan hand to Republicans and urge them to set politics aside to advance the national interest. But he's been making the same overture for months and been repeatedly slapped down by GOP lawmakers intent to defeating him this fall. "It took a long time for him to get the message, but now he understands the Republicans won't do him any favors for as long as he's President," a White House official said. Obama handlers say he will offer some soothing words to Democrats to shore up and energize his political base. But for the most part he'll direct his message at the 20% of the electorate, mostly independent swing voters, who historically provide the margin of victory in presidential elections. That bloc broke for Obama in 2008 but abandoned Democrats in 2010, giving Republicans control of the House. Obama will also use Tuesday's address to reinforce his spin on what both sides agree is this election's make-or-break issue: the economy.

#### Independent Swing voters key – not dem base

Saunders, 12

Debra J. Saunders, Columnist @ San Fransisco Chronicle, Creators Syndicate, January 7, 2012, lexis

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

### Youth key

#### Jobs and the economy persuade young voters, determine election

Dunford 6/4 Kara [at The George Washington University majoring in political communication] “Republicans Make A Bid for Young Voters” *NextGen Journal* 6/4/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://nextgenjournal.com/2012/06/republicans-make-a-bid-for-young-voters/> DR

In addition to dedicating large amounts of resources to the fight for votes in crucial swing states, both President Barack Obama and Republican nominee Mitt Romney, former governor of Massachusetts, are vying for the support of a key voting bloc: young Americans. President Obama is seeking to continue the success he achieved among young voters in 2008. In his first presidential campaign, Obama captured roughly two-thirds of voters between the ages of 18 and 29, creating a 34-point margin between himself and Republican candidate Senator John McCain. A national poll released in April by Harvard University’s Institute of Politics (IOP) showed a 17-point advantage between Obama and Romney, giving the president the edge among young Americans. In an effort to engage young voters in the current election cycle, Obama embarked on a college tour, visiting campuses across the country to plug his student loan interest rate policies. To attract young voters to their side of the aisle, Governor Romney and the Republicans have focused on an issue 58 percent of voters surveyed by IOP selected as their issue of top concern: jobs and the economy. Romney and the Republican National Committee have aggressively criticized Obama’s economic policies, highlighting high unemployment among young college graduates as proof of the hurt for which they believe the current administration is responsible. Chairman of D.C. Students for Mitt Romney Elie Litvin said he believes Romney has a message that will appeal to young voters this November, even if it did not four years ago. “It is clear that young Americans will be important in this campaign,” Litvin, a junior at George Washington University, said. “Job prospects are not up to par, but Mitt Romney offers tangible business experience and an economic message that really resonates.” In addition to a focus on the economy on the presidential campaign trail, Republicans have launched a super PAC to attract young voters. Crossroads Generation uses social media to communicate its criticisms of the Obama administration’s economic policies to voters under the age of 30. In light of the country’s focus on the economy, Litvin said he believes Republican candidates will be more attractive to voters. “The youth vote is going to be far more favorable to Republican candidates, particularly Governor Romney, because the economy is front and center,” he said. Romney also began to emphasize his education policies last week as a means to persuade young Americans to cast their ballot for him. In a speech to The Latino Coalition’s Annual Economic Summit in Washington, D.C. , Romney announced potential solutions to what he deemed a “National Education Emergency,” including expanded parental choice, block grants for states that adopt innovative policies to improve teacher quality, and a stop to “skyrocketing [college] tuition prices.”

#### Youth vote and the economy key – now is key

Malone 6-7-12 (Jim, VOA national correspondent, "Romney Rising, Obama Slipping," <http://blogs.voanews.com/2012-election/2012/06/07/romney-rising-obama-slipping/>//LL)

More than anything, this year’s election will probably be decided first of all how people feel about the economy, and secondly, how they feel about the candidates. 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. A Referendum or a Choice? The Obama team, on the other hand, wants voters to look at the election as more of a choice than a referendum. So the president and surrogates like former president Bill Clinton continue to warn that electing Romney will be turning the reins of power back over to the same crowd responsible for the economic meltdown in the first place. The president desperately needs better economic news at some point, either on jobs, economic growth or housing. Minus that, the Democrats will really need to fire up their base supporters and try to replicate the massive turnout they had in 2008 that propelled then-candidate Obama to a comfortable victory over John McCain. But few believe that the Democrats can get a repeat of the turnout among young people, especially in 2008, so they have their work out for them in the months ahead. 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.

### Women/soccer moms key

#### Women and “Soccer Mom” groups key to the election

[Stacy DeBroff](http://www.stacydebroff.com/) 6/25/2012 (founder and CEO of [Mom Central Consulting](http://www.momcentralconsulting.com/), a social media consulting firm,“2012 Election: Social Media Will Play Key Role In Women's Vote”, http://www.forbes.com/sites/deborahljacobs/2012/06/25/in-2012-election-social-media-will-play-key-role-in-womens-vote/,CF)

Politicians who want to win the women’s vote should take a lesson from consumer marketing. In that arena, women use blogs, social media platforms and web site comment spaces to influence each other’s purchasing decisions. They will use the same communication tools to affect the 2012 presidential election. Women have a lot at stake in this election. They have skin in the game on everything from social issues to the economy. And with 66% of women on voter registration rolls according to U.S. Census Bureau figures, they stand poised to make their mark in the voting booth come November. The last time provocative discussions about the women’s vote gained such traction was during the 1996 presidential contest between incumbent [Bill Clinton](http://www.forbes.com/profile/bill-clinton/) and Senator Bob Dole when the phrase “Soccer Mom” became part of our lexicon. Moms have definite opinions on what we need to ensure our families grow and thrive, but until recently, we had no way of making our voices heard amidst the steady drumbeat of national advertisements, celebrity endorsements, and marketplace messages. While moms may not have a multimillion dollar advertising budget, we have enormous power in social media. Moms have embraced social media, including blogs, [Facebook](http://www.forbes.com/companies/facebook/), and Twitter, in dramatic fashion. Our Mom Central research studies show that 3 out of 5 moms blog, and 9 out of 10 moms list Facebook as their go-to social media destination. And while moms may have initially learned about social media to monitor on our kids’ internet use, we quickly found that blogs and other social media platforms allowed us to make connections with other moms. By tapping into the Internet’s sites and forums geared toward a host of specific interest areas, moms make online connections. We turn to this network when we need advice and counsel. When we can’t decide which new stroller or laptop to buy, 65% of us poll our mom friends for their first-person experience and insights – instead of factoring into our decision what the latest celebrity thinks. And 90% of us trust products more after hearing about them from friends. Our trust of online recommendations from other women empowers us to speak our minds about what matters to us, and seek opinions from fellow moms. We share our perspective on our blogs; on our Facebook or Pinterest pages; and through our tweets to our network of followers. We couple this insight with online reviews, which provide us the in-depth information we need to expand our consumer footprint into areas not previously frequented by moms on a regular basis – including cars, sports, and technology. At the same time, social media provides women with a way to convey our views to brand marketers. No longer do women rely on sending a letter or email to a company to share our warmth or wrath regarding a new product. Today, moms actively engage with brands via social media; a majority of us follow 10 or more brands on Facebook or Twitter. We want brands to engage with us, but we expect them to come to us, build relationships with us, and not just drive us to their websites. Marketers, too, see the upside in this shift. With regular interaction, moms feel more informed about a company and its promotions, more connected to a brand, and more inclined to recommend the brand to a friend. Social media also helps marketers see moms as a group of individuals with our own viewpoints, interests, passions, and voices – rather than simply as a convenient demographic, as the Soccer Moms were. No one knows what the November election will bring, but we do know this: Women will be at the polling place, in the blogosphere, throughout social media platforms, and on the airwaves. Politicians need to create an open, ongoing dialogue to earn the women’s vote.

#### Women Voters Key

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

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.

### Latino key

#### Latin Vote key to the general election

Smith ‘12

Adam C. Smith, Tampa Times Political Editor, Politico, May 6th – http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0512/75949.html#ixzz1xKvkkz6v

Hispanic voters hold key to 2012 Electoral College map At a private fundraising reception in Palm Beach recently, Mitt Romney was overheard acknowledging his weakness among Hispanic voters. If it’s not turned around, he said, “It spells doom for us.” Take a look at the electoral map, and you’ll see why. President Barack Obama starts the general election with a sizable electoral vote lead over Romney, looking strong in states totaling 247, while Romney has a strong edge in states totaling 191. It takes 270 to win. And if Romney can’t narrow Obama’s considerable lead among Latino voters, key battlegrounds including Nevada, New Mexico, Colorado and Florida could be out of reach for the Republican nominee. Even reliably Republican Arizona could wind up in play, and Obama already has five campaign offices there. “It’s about holding down the margins,” said Nathan Gonzales, deputy editor of the nonpartisan Rothenberg Political Report. “Romney doesn’t need to get a majority of Hispanics nationwide, but he has to avoid getting swamped by Obama among Hispanic voters.”

# Internal – X group key Obama

### Base turnout key Obama

#### 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.

### Jobs key Obama

#### If Obama creates these jobs he will win the election

Bickmore 2012, (political writer for business based website Incbeat), “2012 US presidential election hinges on job creation issue”, <http://www.incbeat.com/business-news/2012-presidential-election-hinges-job-creation-issue/> AP

**The unemployment rate continues to rise and more Americans are left jobless, many are now keen as to who can provide the most plausible solution to the job shortage problem the United States is facing right now. Americans want jobs, and they are looking for someone who can deliver them. It seems that the candidate with a sound job creation plan in tow will likely win the 2012 US presidential race.** According to a [survey](http://blog.sparkhire.com/2012/02/08/2012-presidential-election-rests-heavily-on-jobs-creation-plans/) conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation International on behalf of Adecco Staffing US, 49% of those who were surveyed said the candidate with the most impressive and actionable job creation strategy will get their votes.

**The presidential candidates seem to be very aware of this trend amongst voters.** Just recently, incumbent US President Barack Obama met with the Business Roundtable Group, an organization of several business leaders and CEOs, to discuss and create a plan that will lead to the creation of job opportunities in the country. Other candidates have also paraded their solutions to the unemployment problem as well.Joyce Russell, president of Adecco Staffing US, says it is understandable why people are focused on the issue. **“With economic growth and recovery still taking place, job creation is still understandably one of the most important things on the minds of Americans.”** “**Given how many people are still looking for work, it should be no surprise that this issue has the power to ultimately decide who will win the 2012 presidential election**,” Russell added.In a related survey by a career website, [LiveCareer](http://www.livecareer.com/news/Getting-Hired/Will-the-election-affect-your-job-search-_$$02730.aspx), 64% of 6,100 respondents believed that a job creation solution will be the biggest factor in determining the 2012 presidential election winner, and about 41% concur that the winner will have to address the rising unemployment rate.Contrasting and comparing both surveys produced interesting results. The research conducted be Adecco Staffing revealed that 36% of the respondents are satisfied with the current administration’s action and 15%  are convinced that Mitt Romney has the solution

#### Obama needs to help the economy and jobs in order to win

Cass 6/2 Connie [Associated Press reporter writing about politics, polls, national issues and what it all means] “Ugly jobs numbers rattle Obama's re-election bid” *The Associated Press* 6/2/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2012-06/D9V4SLHO1.htm> DR

Nothing upsets a president's re-election groove like ugly economic numbers. A spring slowdown in hiring and an uptick in the unemployment rate are weighing on Barack Obama, while enhancing Republican challenger Mitt Romney's argument that the president is in over his head. Some questions and answers about how Friday's economic news may play in a close presidential race: Q: How bad is this for Obama? A: Pretty awful. Polls show Obama's handling of the economy is his biggest weak spot. Americans overwhelmingly rate the economy as their biggest worry. And jobs are what they say matters most. But the president still has time for the jobs outlook to improve. Five more monthly unemployment reports are due -- the last coming just four days before the Nov. 6 election. The fall numbers will mean more when voters head to the polls. Q: What can Obama tell voters if the job picture stays bleak? A: After 3 1/2 years in office, it's getting harder to blame the painfully slow recovery on the mistakes of his predecessor, George W. Bush. But Obama keeps reminding Americans how bad things were when he took office in January 2009. The economy was deep into the Great Recession and losing jobs month after bleak month. In contrast, over the past two years, Obama notes, businesses have been consistently adding jobs -- just not as quickly as needed. He's also tried shifting blame to congressional Republicans, saying they've held up the recovery by refusing to pass most elements of his jobs bill. And he says some factors dragging down the U.S. economy are beyond a president's control, such as the European economic crisis and fluctuating gasoline prices. The weakening economy in China and turbulence in the Middle East haven't helped, either. Q: Is Romney seizing this opportunity? A: With both hands. The lousy jobs numbers fit neatly into Romney's central campaign pitch: That guy doesn't have a clue how to fix the economy, so let me get it done. He called the jobs news "devastating" and a "harsh indictment" of Obama. Romney says his own experience with a private equity firm, making millions of dollars by overhauling struggling companies, taught him how to revive the economy and create jobs. Q: So which guy do the voters believe? A: It's a toss-up so far. There hasn't been time to measure the impact of Friday's figures. But in an Associated Press-GfK poll last month, people were split over who they'd trust most to handle the economy, Romney or Obama. Asked specifically whether they approve of the way Obama has dealt with unemployment, about half did and half didn't, mostly along party lines. Still, jobs are clearly a weakness for Obama. His poll numbers are stronger than Romney's on many other qualities, such as which candidate understands regular people, is a strong leader and says what he really believes. He may benefit from the perception that the mess is so big no one knows what to do. In an NBC/Wall Street Journal poll, two-thirds of those surveyed said they were only somewhat confident or not at all confident that Obama has the right goals and policies to improve the economy. Asked this about Romney, three-quarters were only somewhat or not at all confident. Q: Sure, people care about jobs, but do they really follow the latest economic reports? A: One number seems to break through: the unemployment rate. That easy-to-understand figure -- representing what share of Americans are looking for work and can't find it -- edged up to 8.2 percent in May, from 8.1 percent the month before. And Obama has yet to get it down to even the troublingly high 7.8 percent in place when he took office. (It zoomed to a peak of 10 percent in October 2009.) Since the government began closely tracking unemployment in 1948, no president has won re-election with numbers as high as those Obama's staring down. The champ is Ronald Reagan, who coasted to a second term in 1984 despite 7.4 percent unemployment in October. And a far greater percentage of Americans were out of work in 1936, when Franklin Roosevelt won re-election in a landslide amid the Great Depression. Prospects for the unemployment rate to drop sharply before November aren't good. The economy needs to generate at least 125,000 jobs per month just to keep up with population growth -- a mark it's fallen far short of for the past two months. And it would take tens of thousands more jobs each month to bring the rate down. Q: Couldn't the economic outlook brighten before Election Day?

#### Lowering job growth means Obama must increase jobs to win election

Rees 6/2 Jennifer [based in Seattle, Washington, United States of America, and is an Anchor for Allvoices] “Jobs report delivers major blow to Obama’s re-election prospect” *AllVoices* 6/2/12 accessed: 6/28/12 <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/12299664-jobs-report-delivers-major-blow-to-obamas-reelection-prospect> DR

President Obama’s proclamation that he has revived the economy received a major blow when the jobs report delivered miserable news to the nation on Friday. The jobs report, coupled with some surprising statements from former US President Bill Clinton, briskly reminded Obama and his team that the upcoming presidential election would be largely a referendum on his record. Besides, team Obama came to know that the success depends largely on winning the fight of ideology with the GOP and not on discrediting Mitt Romney. According to the latest jobs report, just 69,000 new jobs were created the previous month. The report presented a grim picture of the US economy and elevated the White House nervousness about the international challenges and dangers directed at the U.S. economic recovery besides threatening Obama’s political future. The report made it clear that jobs creation was far worse than economic analysts had forecasted. Still, the Obama administration boasts the economy has created jobs for the twenty-seventh successive month. The response of the administration to the jobs report is so weak that it actually accentuates the threats Obama is facing as he struggles to persuade the nation that he has the means and the political will and ability to put the troubled economy back on the right track. According to a report in the Business Week, Obama confessed Friday that the economy "is not growing as fast as we want it to.” "Europe is having a significant crisis in part because they haven't taken as many of the decisive steps as were needed to deal with the challenge, and that's weakened Asia and that means it's harder for our exports. All this stuff makes a difference in the global economy,” Obama further said, according to the report. The new jobs report provided the widely accepted Republican rival Mitt Romney an opportunity to go harsh and hard on Obama. While trying to take home political advantages from the findings of the jobs report, Romney said that the country is apparently moving backward. Obama’s political position for re-election was further weakened when Bill Clinton said Mitt Romney has a genuine record in business. Besides, he said that private equity is a legal element of the financial system and that not all funds in declining corporations turn out to be victors. The Democrat and former U.S. president added that the Romney’s practice in business coupled with his experience as Massachusetts’ governor make him ideally ready to lead the country.

### Latino key Obama

#### Latino turnout low – unemployment && Latino vote key to Obama’s re-election

Jaffe 3-29-12 (Matthew, covering the 2012 campaign @ ABC News andd Univision, "Latinos Could Swing Election, But Turnout Might Disappoint," <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/03/latinos-could-swing-election-but-turnout-might-disappoint/>//LL)

Latinos, the nation’s fastest-growing voting bloc, are poised to [play a potentially decisive role](http://univisionnews.tumblr.com/post/11732752286/obama-gop-battle-for-latino-vote) in this fall’s presidential election, but new data suggests that turnout might fall short of lofty projections, which could change the fate of the race for the White House. The number of registered Latino voters has dropped significantly in recent years, from 11.6 million in 2008 to 10.9 million in 2010, according to new data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey. While 2008 was a presidential election year and 2010 was only a midterm congressional election, that is still a sizable decline, especially given [the increase in the Latino population](http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-04.pdf) nationwide. In the past decade alone, the Latino population has increased by 43 percent. There are more than 50 million Latinos in this country, nearly one in six Americans. A record 12.2 million Latinos are set to vote in November, a 26 percent increase from 2008, according to projections released in the fall by the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO). But that was before the new Census numbers revealed the surprisingly steep decline in registered Hispanic voters. The William C. Velasquez Institute (WCVI), a non-partisan organization focused on Latinos’ political and economic participation, [crunched the Census numbers](http://www.wcvi.org/press_room/press_releases/2012/120308_release.htm) earlier this month and found that “a significant decline in national Latino voter registration in 2010 may diminish the size of Latino voter turnout in November 2012 by more than a million votes,” according to the organization’s president, Antonio Gonzalez. The off-year decline in Latino voter registration is not unexpected: Registration fell by 4,000 voters after the 2004 presidential election. What is unexpected is that the drop in registration after the 2008 election was far bigger, a fall-off of 626,000 voters, down 5 percent. Nine states “experienced significant declines” in Latino voter registration in 2009-2010, WCVI found: California, Texas, [Nevada](http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/OTUS/republicans-mitt-romney-newt-gingrich-rick-santorum-ron/story?id=15514969#.T3SMOGFumSo), [Florida](http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/01/how-the-unique-makeup-of-florida-latinos-could-make-a-difference-in-2012-elections/), Washington, New Mexico, Michigan, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Some possible reasons for this decline, the group stated, are “a spike in residential mobility” coupled with “intensive downward economic mobility due to the combined effect of significant (and disproportionate) unemployment and mortgage foreclosures” in these nine states in the past two years. In January, for instance, a survey by the Pew Hispanic Center found that a majority of Latinos believed that the country’s economic downturn had hit their ethnic group harder than other Americans. The Velasquez Institute predicts now that national Latino turnout this fall will be “no higher than 10.5 million votes cast.” While Latino voter turnout might not appear crucial at first glance, it could potentially determine [the fate of November’s election](http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2011/11/new-poll-puts-obama-far-ahead-of-gop-with-latino-voters/), and who occupies the Oval Office for the next four years. Latinos cast 6.6 million votes in 2008 and, with more than two-thirds for President Obama, paving the way for the Illinois Democrat’s resounding win. Generally speaking, Latinos are liberals, tending to disagree with Republicans on key issues such as immigration reform and the government’s role in improving the economy. For Obama, Latino turnout could be the difference between winning and losing the White House.

#### Latino vote could help Obama win election – swing states

Blake 6/20 Aaron [overs national politics at the Washington Post, where he writes regularly for the Fix, the Post’s top political blog A Minnesota native and summa cum laude graduate of the University of Minnesota, Aaron has also written about politics for the Minneapolis Star-Tribune and The Hill newspaper] “Latino vote looms larger in this and future elections” *The Washington Post* 6/20/12 accessed: 6/27/12 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/latino-vote-looms-larger-in-this-and-future-elections/2012/06/20/gJQAMQjXrV_story.html> DR

The U.S. Latino population increased from about 35 million in 2000 to 50 million in 2010, and about 45 percent of that growth occurred in eight states: Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Nevada, North Carolina, Texas and Virginia. (Romney’s speech to the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, or NALEO, is in Florida). Of that 15 million-person increase, nearly 20 percent came in five key swing states — Florida, Colorado, Nevada, North Carolina and Virginia. The common thread between those five states is that all of them had gone regularly for Republicans, at least before 2008. In the seven elections between Jimmy Carter’s win in 1976 and Obama’s election, Democrats won only four of 35 contests in those five states. But they carried all five in 2008. In addition, in every state but Florida, President Obama improved on Al Gore’s 2000 showing by between seven and 12 points — far better than his 4.6 percent overall improvement nationwide. In other words, these states are trending in Democrats’ favor. And the Latino population growth is both the reason that has happened and the reason it could continue if Republicans don’t do something about it. If the Latino population keeps expanding and voting Democratic, there’s little reason to think these states won’t get bluer. Beyond those five swing states are three other states with fast-growing Latino populations that Democrats hope to put in play in the near future. There are two states that Democrats hope to target at the presidential level soon: Arizona and Georgia. And beyond that is the biggest potential game-changer of all: Texas. While the five swing states mentioned above combined for about 20 percent of the Latino population growth over the last decade, another 20 percent came in Texas alone, and about 7 percent came in Arizona and Georgia. In the latter two states, Democrats have flirted with investing real resources after a decade in which minorities have accounted for most of the growth. In each state, non-Hispanic white voters dropped by six points to below 58 percent of the total population. As white voters trend downward toward 50 percent of the population (and at this rate, it will happen by 2020 or 2024 in both states), Democrats should have a real chance in states where Obama already got at least 45 percent of the vote in the 2008 election. Whites in Texas, meanwhile, are already less than a majority. And the rapid Latino growth there has Democrats eagerly awaiting the day when they may have a shot at the state’s 34 electoral votes. More Latinos, of course, doesn’t necessarily mean more Democratic voters. Latinos are both registered at lower rates than white voters and also vote at lower rates, diminishing their importance in today’s elections. And in some states, such as Florida and Texas, they are more apt to vote Republican than they are nationwide. Democrats are definitely a couple of election cycles (at least) away from competing in states such as Texas, but that day may not be that far off. The state experienced the biggest population growth in the country over the last decade, and two-thirds of it came in the Latino community. By the 2020 election, it’s quite possible that the state will feature more Latinos than whites, and whites could constitute fewer than two in five Texans. Giving Democrats a leg up in five key swing states where the Latino population is growing rapidly could help Democrats in the near-term and may play a role if Obama can win a second term this year. Further down the line, adding Arizona, Georgia and Texas to the mix would throw 59 solidly GOP electoral votes into the mix, and surely change the electoral college game.

### Economy key Obama

#### Obama needs strong economy to get re-elected

Chris **Edwards** on April 14th, 20**11**, A Sure Way to Lose Re-Election, the director of tax policy studies at Cato and senior economist on the congressional Joint Economic Committee, <http://www.downsizinggovernment.org/a-sure-way-lose-re-election>

President **Obama** says that he **supports a “balanced” plan** of tax increases and spending cuts to tackle the government’s huge debt**. The** **problem is that the fiscal mess** in Washington **is far from balanced**.

Politicians have dug a giant debt hole by overspending, not by undertaxing. Federal revenues will rise to the normal level of 18 percent of gross domestic product in coming years as the economy recovers. But **spending is expected to explode** as **a share of gross domestic product to 40 percent** from 24 percent within three decades. That is why House Republicans are focusing on spending cuts. Tax increases stand no chance of passing in the House, but the president keeps on trying. **His new plan proposes a “debt fail-safe trigger”** to reduce “tax expenditures,” **but** **that is just a sneaky way of raising taxes on** average **families**. Republicans are open to getting rid of tax expenditures, or loopholes, but they favor the revenue-neutral approach of 1986. That year’s bipartisan tax deal cut special tax breaks, but it used the money to reduce overall tax rates. The president was on sounder footing calling for a tax code that is “simpler, fairer and not rigged in favor of those who can afford lawyers and accountants to game it.” I agree, but it’s our high tax rates that induce people and companies to hire the lawyers. Obama seemed to get this with his call to reduce our high corporate tax rate. Yet similar logic escaped him in his call for tax hikes on “millionaires and billionaires.” These people — **entrepreneurs**, venture capitalists, angel **investors and others** — are **the ones that** really **drive the American economy.** They **will move their investments abroad if their taxes go up**. The top U.S. income tax rate — including state taxes — is already as high as the average top rate in major industrial countries of 42 percent. President **Obama wants to get reelected, and he will need a strong economy to succeed**. Penalizing millionaires won’t help, but **partnering with Republicans on corporate tax reforms and spending cuts would boost the economy and his job prospects**

### Popularity key Obama

#### 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.

# Internal – X group key Romney

### Soccer moms key Romney

#### 2004 and 2008 elections prove Romney must win soccer moms

Heinze 12 Christian [writes about the 2012 presidential election for The Hill] “Soccer moms will be crucial for Romney” *The Hill* 4/25/12 accessed: 6/27/12 <http://thehill.com/blogs/ballot-box/christian-heinze/223541-soccer-moms-will-be-crucial-for-romney> DR

First, to win this more liberal demographic, he’d have to make dramatic shifts in ideology that would threaten his standing with conservatives, and second, there’s no evidence that he even needs to perform better with single women to win the election. To wit: in 2004, George W. Bush won the presidential election while losing single women by 29 percent, which is roughly where Romney stands right now. But Bush won by 15 percent among married women. That’s fertile territory for Romney and picking up an extra 6 percent with a more ideologically-friendly demographic like that would be far easier than an abrupt turn to the left for single women. Exit polls from the 2008 presidential election offer further support for this idea. The fiercest battle in the gender wars came among married women with kids, also known as, you guessed it, soccer moms. While women were voting for Obama, overall, by 13 percent, married women with kids gave him only a slight 4 percent edge. This subelectorate was the “swing county” of the gender wars. The big question is whether Romney can flip this demographic in much the same way he’ll have to flip key swing counties that voted for Obama in 2008, and there will probably be plenty of strategizing in the Romney war room about ways to do this. One possible start lies in picking a female vice-presidential candidate. Some critics have charged that Sarah Palin’s failure to win women is proof that gender doesn’t matter in vice-presidential picks, but that misses a crucial point.

# Internals – A2 specific blocks

### A2 Independent Key

#### Independent voters not key

Alan I. Abramowitz (Senior Columnist, Center for politics) June 7 2012 <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

Alan I. Abramowitz (Senior Columnist, Center for politics) June 7 2012 <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.

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

Alan I. Abramowitz (Senior Columnist, Center for politics) June 7 2012 <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/>

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.

### A2 Labor Unions Key

#### Times Have Changed – labor unions lack election influence

Jasinowski, 12

(Jerry Jasinowski, an economist and author, served as President of the National Association of Manufacturers for 14 years and later The Manufacturing Institute, Political Machine, 6/8, lexis)

Second, the attempt to recall Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, in which the Democrats invested tremendous time and resources, was a flop. Walker won decisively. Organized labor is probably the largest and most influential sector in the Democratic alliance, and public sector unions are the most influential sector of organized labor. But labor took a whipping. It is now clear that many voters believe public sector employees are better off than private sector employees and wield too much influence. The vote in Wisconsin suggests most voters are receptive to the Republican message that public sector unions need to be reined in and budget deficits reduced. This will spread to other states like Ohio and Florida. And third, there is a growing consensus that President Obama will have to trim his sails and cooperate with Congressional Republicans on extending the Bush tax cuts. The President has made taxing the rich a pillar of his campaign rhetoric, but the pressure on him is building. Even former President Bill Clinton has weighed in in favor of renewing the tax cuts. Everyone knows we have to bring the deficit down, but as Great Britain has demonstrated, too much austerity too fast will abort economic growth and leave an even bigger deficit in its wake. It's a long time until November, but this week will surely cause the White House to reassess its campaign strategy, as it should.

#### Labor unions NOT key to the election -- declining membership and weak clout and it’s going to get worse

Washington Post, 12

Washington Post, “The End of Unions?” 6-11-2012 (http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/post/the-end-of-unions/2012/06/11/gJQAngBhTV\_blog.html)

Over the last several decades, unions have increasingly fallen out of favor with the American public. While Gallup polling showed 72 percent approved of unions in 1936 and 60 percent did in 2007, that number has since dipped below 50 percent. That means that, when these unions are embattled, there are fewer people ready to stand up for them. The result, as we saw in Wisconsin and on ballot measures in San Jose and San Diego [stripping public employees of pension benefits](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/voters-in-san-diego-san-jose-back-cutting-pensions-for-public-workers-in-early-returns/2012/06/06/gJQAdzzTHV_story.html), is that efforts to fight back don’t have as much might behind them. The [same Gallup poll](http://www.gallup.com/poll/149279/approval-labor-unions-holds-near-low.aspx) in August showed that 55 percent of Americans thought unions would be weaker in the future than they are today, versus 20 percent who thought they’d be stronger. Americans aren’t fortune-tellers, of course, but they can spot a trend. And lastly – and perhaps most importantly – union membership continues to decline. While about one-quarter of Americans were in unions in the 1960s, that number has fallen by half, to just 11.8 percent in 2011. While 37 percent of public sector employees belong to a union, just 7 percent of private sector employees are still in unions — a reversal of the historical balance between the too. The public sector union’s lifeline, though, is the will of the public itself. While Americans may be less approving of unions than they were in the past, they are still in favor of the concept of unions. A [Fox News poll](http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/03/18/fox-news-poll-concerned-public-employee-unions-influence/) conducted after the brouhaha in Wisconsin early last year showed that 60 percent of Americans said unions are necessary to protect workers. And when Ohio’s Republican governor stripped his public employees of collective bargaining rights, voters overturned that decision with a ballot amendment; so it’s not like unions haven’t notched any wins in the last couple years. When you combine that with the fact that about half of Americans still approve of unions (52 percent approve, 42 percent disapprove in the most recent Gallup poll), it’s not hard to see how they will stick around. The question for now seems to be what role they will play. The election in Wisconsin was certainly an embarrassment for unions – capped off by the concurrent votes in San Jose and San Diego and the fact that [nearly half of people who live with union members](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CAsQqQIwAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com%2Fblogs%2Fthe-fix%2Fpost%2Fwisconsin-recall-union-voters--union-households%2F2012%2F06%2F06%2FgJQA3l6VHV_blog.html&ei=ZnDVT4CODOTC6AGuxYH8Ag&usg=AFQjCNFKmYRPlZyutRAvyr8hjmvxg6n7Kg) voted for Walker. It may also have the unhelpful effect of making other Republican governors and legislatures bolder in their efforts to fight unions. And as we saw in Wisconsin, [it doesn’t take much to cause union membership to take a nosedive](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304821304577436462413999718.html).

#### Labor unions not key -- lack political muscle

Cassata, 12

Donna Cassata, Associated Press, “After Wisconsin Recall Defeat, Labor Unions Have to Play More Defense in Other States,” Printed in the Coshocton Tribune, 6-7-2012 (http://www.coshoctontribune.com/article/20120607/NEWS01/206070304/After-Wisconsin-recall-defeat-labor-unions-may-play-more-defense-other-states)

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Gov. Scott Walker's definitive victory in Wisconsin's recall election is reverberating in other state capitals. It exposed the shrunken political muscle of the unions that tried to oust him, underscoring their vulnerability to attacks from the right and inability to retaliate. Republicans in some nearby states where anti-union measures failed this year said they plan to use Walker's victory to mount renewed efforts in 2013. Instead of ejecting the Republican who slashed state and local government workers' job benefits and bargaining rights, the union-instigated recall has made Walker a heroic model for conservatives five months before the November election. "I think it's bad news for the labor movement," said John Russo, a labor studies professor at Youngstown State University. "It gives the impression they are not as strong as they once were, which they are not."

# Internals – states

### States not key

#### Swings states not real – national results matter most

Jonathan Bernstein (political scientist who contributes to the Washington Post) June 9 2012 Star Tribune, <http://m.startribune.com/opinion/?id=158323795&c=y>

Republicans can't win without Ohio. You'll hear plenty of similar pronouncements every election season. The Republicans have never won without Ohio, therefore they can't win without Ohio. Or: There is a "blue wall" of states that the Democrats have captured consistently since 1992, so the party has a built-in minimum in the electoral college. That could mean that any poll showing a strong Republican tilt in one of those states indicates that Obama is doomed - or that Gov. Scott Walker's recall victory in "blue wall" Wisconsin shows that Democrats are in trouble. Forget all these "rules." When Republicans won three consecutive presidential elections in the 1980s, pundits became convinced that the GOP had an electoral college lock. That view lasted exactly as long as the party's national vote lead did; as soon as Bill Clinton took the national lead in 1992, it turned out that some of the Republican "lock" states were swingers after all. Sure, if Romney wins Democratic California, he's going to win the election, but that's because if Romney wins California, he's going to be in the process of a huge national landslide. The United States has national elections, and what matters almost every time is the national results. Yes, a candidate must find 270 electoral votes in order to win. But in most years, the electoral college margin will be much larger than the popular vote difference. And the rare times, such as in 2000, when the popular vote is very close, it's not possible to guess in advance which states will be the one or two that really make a difference. So the campaigns will put their resources into those states they expect to be close, because it certainly doesn't hurt, but our elections are much more national than our obsession with swing states implies.

#### Impossible to predict which state will be key

Jonathan Bernstein (political scientist who contributes to the Washington Post) June 9 2012 Star Tribune, <http://m.startribune.com/opinion/?id=158323795&c=y>

It's true that some states will perpetually be competitive, but over time, some experience significant changes. West Virginia, for instance, went from being one of the strongest Democratic states in 1980 to being one of the strongest Republican states now. It's very hard to know in advance, certainly until the last few weeks of the campaign, what the key swing states - the ones that will truly determine the winner - will turn out to be. The best illustration of that is to note which states have been closest to the national margin of victory in the past few elections. For example, when Obama won by seven percentage points in 2008, which state results most closely matched that number? Those states would have determined the winner, had the electoral college count been very narrow. The five states closest to the overall margin of victory in 2008 were Virginia, Iowa, New Hampshire, Florida and Minnesota. In 2000, they were Oregon, Iowa, New Hampshire, New Mexico and Florida; and in 2004, they were Pennsylvania, Nevada, Ohio, Michigan and Minnesota. That's 11 states over three cycles, including completely different sets in 2000 and 2004. Sure, we don't expect solidly Republican Wyoming or solidly Democratic Vermont to be competitive. But the past three cycles show that we can't know right now whether the state that puts Romney or Obama over the top will be Colorado, Ohio, or any of a dozen or more possibilities.

### National polls best

#### Default national polls – most accurate

Jonathan Bernstein (political scientist who contributes to the Washington Post) June 9 2012 Star Tribune, <http://m.startribune.com/opinion/?id=158323795&c=y>

But much of what we think we know about these key states, which switch party allegiances with some frequency, has been knocked down by political science research - and sometimes, by recent history. Here are a few misperceptions about these in-demand states. 1. Swing-state polls are the key to predicting the winner. In fact, the opposite is true, especially this far from November. Generally, elections are determined by a "uniform swing." That is, if the Republican candidate does a little better overall, then he's going to do a little better in close states such as Ohio and Nevada, too. So even though the candidates will spend most of their time and money in the states they expect to matter most, it won't make much difference. Any candidate who wins the popular vote by at least three percentage points is certain to win the electoral college, and any candidate who wins the popular vote by as much as a full percentage point is overwhelmingly likely to win the electoral college. So the best way to follow the election is to read the national polling averages. National polls have a key advantage: There are a lot more of them, so we're less likely to be fooled by the occasional outlier. And the frequency of national polls, conducted by the same handful of firms, means informed readers can catch any obvious partisan tilts in the results and interpret them accordingly. Granted, political junkies like me won't be able to stop themselves from peeking at what the Des Moines Register thinks is happening in the Hawkeye State. But if we're smart, we'll look at the national polls to find out what's really going on.

### Florida Key GOP

#### Florida is key to the election

Matthew Falconer (member of the statewide Workforce Florida board of directors) August 21 2011 The Workforce Florida Board seeks to improve workforce issues – Florida Political Press – http://www.floridapoliticalpress.com/2011/08/21/election-2012-and-the-swing-states/

Many Democrats feel Obama is a lock to win reelection. History has shown most incumbent presidents win reelection. The economy and the 2010 election suggest a Republican victory. But the presidential election of 2012 will come down to “swing states.” It is a numbers game. The winner of the United States presidency needs 270 “electoral votes.” The number of votes each state receives is based on population. Because of the large populations in coastal cities the Democrats have a “base” of approximately 215 electoral votes. In that group are Wisconsin and Minnesota that can go Republican. The Republicans have a “base” of 155 electoral votes. This means they need to win most of the swing states to take back the White House. These swing states include; Florida (29), Ohio (18), Pennsylvania (20), Iowa (6), Virginia (13), North Carolina (15), Georgia (16), Oregon (7), Nevada (6), Arizona (11), New Mexico (5) and Colorado (9). This group represents 155 electoral votes. Obama needs just 55 and the Republicans need 115. For the sake of this analysis let’s assume the parties split Pennsylvania and Ohio, and Virginia and North Carolina. Nevada and Colorado lean left so these four victories give the Democrats 50 electoral votes. We know anything can happen because Reagan won 49 states. With the economy on the brink and “hope” is becoming “despair” the Democrat base is in jeopardy. But given the electoral math it is difficult to see the Republicans winning back the White House without a victory in Florida. The biggest swing state is the biggest prize in 2012 and will decide the fate of our nation.

### Florida not key

#### Florida not a key swing state – polls are off

Nate Silver (pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center) June 7 2012 http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/07/election-forecast-obama-begins-with-tenuous-advantage/)

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. First, the polls showing a tie there were mostly conducted among registered voters rather than likely voters. Republicans typically improve their standing by a point or two when polling firms switch from registered voter to likely voter polls, probably because Republican voters are older, wealthier, and otherwise have demographic characteristics that make them more reliable bets to turn out. The model anticipates this pattern and adjusts for it, bolstering Mr. Romney’s standing by a point or two whenever it evaluates a registered-voter poll. 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 not key – Obama

#### 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.

#### Florida Not Key

Larry Sabato (UVA Center For Politics) April 26 2012 <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/plan-of-attack-obama-romney-and-the-electoral-college/>

Would winning Ohio guarantee the presidency for Romney? Not necessarily. Richard Nixon won Ohio in 1960 but lost the presidency (just like Dewey in 1944). When Nixon in 1968 won his first presidential victory, his winning coalition was built on three big-state pillars: California (40 electoral votes) and Ohio and Illinois (both with 26 electoral votes). Ohio is now down to 18 electoral votes as its population growth has sagged. It remains a prize, but Obama has paths to victory without it. One way of looking at this election is this: Obama took 52.87% of the popular vote in 2008, which was the best performance in the popular vote by a Democrat since 1964. In 23 of the 28 states he won (plus DC), Obama won a greater percentage of the vote than he did nationally. Conveniently for Obama, if he simply retains the states where he ran better than he did nationally, he will take 272 electoral votes — two more than necessary. This scenario assumes that Romney garners all 22 of John McCain’s states, plus Florida, Indiana, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia. Of all the states in 2008, Virginia (52.63% for Obama) came closest to matching the president’s national average. If one assumes that Obama can keep all of his overperforming states from 2008 minus New Hampshire — the fickle state next door to the one where Romney was governor — then the election comes down to Virginia, not to Ohio. Indeed, it’s not hard at this early point to imagine Romney winning Florida and/or Ohio but still losing the election. It is also easy to imagine Obama losing overall if he can’t win the Old Dominion, which gave Obama a considerably larger share of its 2008 votes than did Florida or Ohio.

### Florida not key – dems out

#### Florida not key – dems won’t even try to compete

Cook, 12(Charlie, The Cook Political Report, National Journal, 6/8, <http://cookpolitical.com/node/12599>)

Everyone who avidly follows politics has his or her own list of the true “swing states” in this presidential election. The lists that really matter, however, are the ones kept by top strategists for the Obama and Romney campaigns, and the ones kept by the one large Democratic and five Republican-oriented super PACs and by other major presidential advertisers this year. Figures compiled by Elizabeth Wilner of Kantar Media’s Campaign Media Analysis Group show that, beginning on April 10—the day Rick Santorum dropped his presidential bid, effectively making Mitt Romney the Republican nominee—and through May 29, there have been 63,793 television spots run in 57 out of the nation’s 210 media markets. CMAG figures look at all broadcast and cable, national, and local television ads in each of those 210 media markets. They are analyzed by CMAG’s staff and divided by the number of Electoral College votes that each state has. Nevada ranked first with $677,332 per Electoral College vote. Iowa came in second with $496,088, and Ohio was third with $467,068. In fourth place was Virginia with $331,680, followed by Colorado with $313,653. New Hampshire came in sixth with $283,342, and North Carolina came in seventh with $237,329. In eighth and ninth places, respectively, were Pennsylvania at $204,670 and Florida at $101,107. These data potentially call into question the Romney campaign’s seriousness about contesting Pennsylvania and about how long Democrats plan to compete for Florida.

### North Carolina not Key

#### North Carolina not key

Nate Silver (pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center) June 7 2012 http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/07/election-forecast-obama-begins-with-tenuous-advantage/)

Other states that are sometimes considered battlegrounds are even less likely to swing the national outcome. Mr. Obama has only about a 30 percent chance of carrying North Carolina again, according to the model. In the instances where he does, it will most likely come along for the ride only after Mr. Obama has already accumulated enough electoral votes elsewhere to win another term.

### Ohio Key

#### Ohio Key

Nate Silver (pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center) June 7 2012 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.

#### Ohio key – small shifts change the state

Earl Ofari Hutchinson (political analyst) may 8 2012, lexis

Obama simply can't afford a repeat of what happened in the Democratic primaries in 2008. In the Democratic primary in Ohio, Obama's Democratic rival Hillary Clinton beat him out and she did it mainly with white votes. But that wasn't the whole story. Nearly one quarter of whites in Ohio flatly said race did matter in voting. Presumably that meant that they would not vote for a black candidate no matter how politically attractive or competent he was. Four years later, the warning sign is still there that an undetermined number of white conservative Democrats have not relented one bit in their racial hostility to Obama. In recent interviews with Democratic voters in Ohio a small number flatly said they still wouldn't vote for him, and race was the reason. If even a small percentage of them meant it, that could result in a percentage point or two dropped from his Democratic vote total. This could be devastating in a state where the race is projected to be close and absolutely crucial for either Obama or Romney to win.

### Ohio key – Swing Voters Key

#### Independent swing voters key in 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 not key

#### Ohio Not key

Larry Sabato (UVA Center For Politics) April 26 2012 <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/plan-of-attack-obama-romney-and-the-electoral-college/>

Would winning Ohio guarantee the presidency for Romney? Not necessarily. Richard Nixon won Ohio in 1960 but lost the presidency (just like Dewey in 1944). When Nixon in 1968 won his first presidential victory, his winning coalition was built on three big-state pillars: California (40 electoral votes) and Ohio and Illinois (both with 26 electoral votes). Ohio is now down to 18 electoral votes as its population growth has sagged. It remains a prize, but Obama has paths to victory without it. One way of looking at this election is this: Obama took 52.87% of the popular vote in 2008, which was the best performance in the popular vote by a Democrat since 1964. In 23 of the 28 states he won (plus DC), Obama won a greater percentage of the vote than he did nationally. Conveniently for Obama, if he simply retains the states where he ran better than he did nationally, he will take 272 electoral votes — two more than necessary. This scenario assumes that Romney garners all 22 of John McCain’s states, plus Florida, Indiana, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia. Of all the states in 2008, Virginia (52.63% for Obama) came closest to matching the president’s national average. If one assumes that Obama can keep all of his overperforming states from 2008 minus New Hampshire — the fickle state next door to the one where Romney was governor — then the election comes down to Virginia, not to Ohio. Indeed, it’s not hard at this early point to imagine Romney winning Florida and/or Ohio but still losing the election. It is also easy to imagine Obama losing overall if he can’t win the Old Dominion, which gave Obama a considerably larger share of its 2008 votes than did Florida or Ohio.

### Pennsylvania not key

#### Pennsylvania not a swing state

Itkowitz, 12

Colby Itkowitz, Washington Bureau, Morning Call, 5/5, <http://articles.mcall.com/2012-05-05/news/mc-pennsylvania-swing-state-presidential-20120505_1_pennsylvania-voters-obama-campaign-presidential-battlefield>

Still, early television ad buys — the most expensive and targeted campaign tool — have not been made in Pennsylvania. Last week the SuperPAC supporting Romney, Restore Our Future, bought television ad time in nine so-called "swing states," but not in Pennsylvania. Also last week, the Obama campaign began airing an attack spot on Romney in Ohio, Virginia and Iowa. Previously, Obama's team had placed ad buys in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Ohio, Nevada and Virginia. Other SuperPACs have taken the same tack. The conservative Americans For Prosperity and American Crossroads have run ads in six to eight battlegrounds, but not Pennsylvania. The pro-Obama SuperPAC Priorities USA Action, aired ads in April in Ohio, Virginia, Florida and Iowa. Sean Trende, senior elections analyst for Real Clear Politics, which aggregates political news and polls, said in recent times Pennsylvania has tended to be a few points more Democratic than the nation overall. It makes sense that groups would make their early investments in states truly up for grabs, he said. For Romney, winning Pennsylvania would be "icing" — not a state Romney is looking at to get the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency, Trende said. On the flip side, "if Obama is fighting over Pennsylvania," Trende said, "it probably means he's losing the election."

### Virginia Key

#### Virginia matters most

Nate Silver (pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center) June 7 2012 <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 Key in 2012

Larry Sabato (UVA Center For Politics) April 26 2012 <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/plan-of-attack-obama-romney-and-the-electoral-college/>

Would winning Ohio guarantee the presidency for Romney? Not necessarily. Richard Nixon won Ohio in 1960 but lost the presidency (just like Dewey in 1944). When Nixon in 1968 won his first presidential victory, his winning coalition was built on three big-state pillars: California (40 electoral votes) and Ohio and Illinois (both with 26 electoral votes). Ohio is now down to 18 electoral votes as its population growth has sagged. It remains a prize, but Obama has paths to victory without it. One way of looking at this election is this: Obama took 52.87% of the popular vote in 2008, which was the best performance in the popular vote by a Democrat since 1964. In 23 of the 28 states he won (plus DC), Obama won a greater percentage of the vote than he did nationally. Conveniently for Obama, if he simply retains the states where he ran better than he did nationally, he will take 272 electoral votes — two more than necessary. This scenario assumes that Romney garners all 22 of John McCain’s states, plus Florida, Indiana, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia. Of all the states in 2008, Virginia (52.63% for Obama) came closest to matching the president’s national average. If one assumes that Obama can keep all of his overperforming states from 2008 minus New Hampshire — the fickle state next door to the one where Romney was governor — then the election comes down to Virginia, not to Ohio. Indeed, it’s not hard at this early point to imagine Romney winning Florida and/or Ohio but still losing the election. It is also easy to imagine Obama losing overall if he can’t win the Old Dominion, which gave Obama a considerably larger share of its 2008 votes than did Florida or Ohio.

### Virginia key Obama win

#### 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.

### Wisconsin not key

#### Wisconsin not a swing state

Nate Silver (pollster for New York Times’ 538 election polling center) June 7 2012 http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/07/election-forecast-obama-begins-with-tenuous-advantage/)

Likewise, although Republicans might be tempted to make a play for Wisconsin after winning the gubernatorial recall election there on Tuesday. The model suggests that it is over-hyped as a swing state. Mr. Obama has had a fairly consistent lead in the polls there, including in the exit poll among voters who turned out on Tuesday. Although Mr. Obama is unlikely to win Wisconsin by 14 points, as he did in 2008, all indications from the polls are that the state remains somewhat more favorable to him than the country as a whole, meaning that is not quite at the electoral tipping point and is more like Mr. Romney’s equivalent of North Carolina.