# Jackson-Vanik – Politics Disad for Starter Pack – Hoya-Spartan Scholars 2012

**1NC**

#### A. Uniqueness -- it’ll pass – top of the agenda – separate from Magnitsky.

Wasson and Needham 5-25. [Erik, Vicki, Hill reporters, “Russia trade, farm bill not on House summer calendar” The Hill -- http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/229563-russia-trade-farm-bill-not-on-house-summer-calendar]

Meanwhile, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp (R-Mich.) has said he plans to hold a June hearing on granting permanent normal trade relations to Russia. Camp and Trade Subcommittee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-Texas) have urged the White House to focus its efforts on convincing skeptical lawmakers that the long-standing and outdated Jackson-Vanik should be repealed and normal trade relations granted to Russia as that nation votes to join the World Trade Organization this summer. U.S. trade officials have said that ending Jackson-Vanik is a top priority of the White House because Russia joining the WTO gives the United States a new tool to enforce and handle any disputes over trade laws. Granting Russia permanent normal trade relations does not require the United States to make any changes to its tariffs and, if not completed, would leave U.S. exporters at a disadvantage with other international trading partners that would enjoy reduced duties. President Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin are scheduled to meet at the Group of 20 meeting next month in Mexico where the topic is likely to be discussed. The Russian Duma has until July 23 to vote on WTO membership and is currently scheduled to adjourn on July 15. Once the Duma votes, and Russia quickly notifies the WTO, its membership goes into effect in 30 days. Camp and Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) have said they would not hold up PNTR with Russia over questions of human-rights issues that they say would only hurt U.S. trade interests by indefinitely delaying lower tariffs for U.S. exporters with Russia. "Our ongoing relationship with Russia is a complex one, but to obtain the benefits of the concessions Russia made to join the WTO, we must grant Russia permanent normal trade relations," Camp said in April.

**B. Link –**

[insert one]

**Capital key.**

Moscow Times 11. [ “U.S. Senators Side With Georgia on WTO Issue” October 21 -- http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/us-senators-side-with-georgia-on-wto-issue/445990.html]

If Russia were to join the WTO, the United States would be required under world trade rules to establish “permanent normal trade relations,” or PNTR, by removing the Jackson-Vanik amendment. The 1974 amendment denies normal trade relations to countries with command economies that restrict emigration. Both the Senate and House of Representatives would have to approve PNTR. That is already expected to be a difficult pair of votes, so the White House cannot afford to alienate lawmakers whose support it will need. Blunt and Inhofe, two usually reliable votes for trade, said in their letter they could only support PNTR if Russia agrees to border and custom procedures that respect “Georgia’s security considerations and future sovereignty.”

**C. Impact -- Repeal key to solve relations – on the brink now.**

RT 12. [Dec 26 -- “Russia urges US to repeal Cold War era legislation” -- http://rt.com/politics/russia-jackson-vanik-lavrov-679/]

With US-Russian relations sliding from reset to regret, one way to brighten the economic and political picture is to repeal the Cold War-era Jackson-Vanik amendment, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told reporters on Monday. Interestingly, Lavrov said that Jackson-Vanik is more of a hindrance to American businesses than it is to Russian ones, especially with Russia set to enter the WTO in 2012. “Russia's entry into the WTO opens broad vistas for more intensive business contacts and a quality change of the entire economic relationship, naturally, on the condition the U.S. Congress repeals the notorious Jackson-Vanik amendment, which actually makes U.S.business its hostage," the minister said. Lavrov asserted Russia’s dedication to improving bilateral relations with the United States Russia "will continue to improve the atmosphere of bilateral cooperation and build confidence and mutual understanding. We aim for an air dialogue even on the most difficult subjects," he said. The Russian membership in the WTO is a totally new stage of the Russian integration into the world economic system, Lavrov said, which will redound to the world’s benefit. "We are ready to promote global economic stability, efficient solutions to crises, and strengthening of international institutions," the minister said. In 1972, Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev introduced the so-called "diploma tax” as a means of covering the cost of would-be emigrants who had received a higher education in the Soviet Union. This move caused US Congress in 1974 to enact Jackson-Vanik, which denied ‘most-favored nation’ status for states limiting the emigration rights of their citizens. In March, 2011, US Vice President Joe Biden urged a repeal of the law.

#### Nuclear war

Allison 11.[Graham, Director @ Belfer Center for Science and Int’l Affairs @ Harvard’s Kennedy School, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense, Robert D. Blackwill, Senior Fellow – Council on Foreign Relations, “10 Reasons Why Russia Still Matters”, Politico -- October 31 -- http://dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=161EF282-72F9-4D48-8B9C-C5B3396CA0E6]

That central point is that Russia matters a great deal to a U.S. government seeking to defend and advance its national interests. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin’s decision to return next year as president makes it all the more critical for Washington to manage its relationship with Russia through coherent, realistic policies. No one denies that Russia is a dangerous, difficult, often disappointing state to do business with. We should not overlook its many human rights and legal failures. Nonetheless, Russia is a player whose choices affect our vital interests in nuclear security and energy. It is key to supplying 100,000 U.S. troops fighting in Afghanistan and preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Ten realities require U.S. policymakers to advance our nation’s interests by engaging and working with Moscow. First, Russia remains the only nation that can erase the **U**nited **S**tates from the map in 30 minutes. As every president since John F. Kennedy has recognized, **Russia’s cooperation is critical to averting nuclear war**. Second, Russia is our most consequential partner in preventing nuclear terrorism. Through a combination of more than $11 billion in U.S. aid, provided through the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, and impressive Russian professionalism, two decades after the collapse of the “evil empire,” not one nuclear weapon has been found loose. Third, Russia plays an essential role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and missile-delivery systems. As Washington seeks to stop Iran’s drive toward nuclear weapons, Russian choices to sell or withhold sensitive technologies are the difference between failure and the possibility of success. Fourth, Russian support in sharing intelligence and cooperating in operations remains essential to the U.S. war to destroy Al Qaeda and combat other transnational terrorist groups. Fifth, Russia provides a vital supply line to 100,000 U.S. troops fighting in Afghanistan. As U.S. relations with Pakistan have deteriorated, the Russian lifeline has grown ever more important and now accounts for half all daily deliveries. Sixth, Russia is the world’s largest oil producer and second largest gas producer. Over the past decade, Russia has added more oil and gas exports to world energy markets than any other nation. Most major energy transport routes from Eurasia start in Russia or cross its nine time zones. As citizens of a country that imports two of every three of the 20 million barrels of oil that fuel U.S. cars daily, Americans feel Russia’s impact at our gas pumps. Seventh, Moscow is an important player in today’s international system. It is no accident that Russia is one of the five veto-wielding, permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, as well as a member of the G-8 and G-20. A Moscow more closely aligned with U.S. goals would be significant in the balance of power to shape an environment in which China can emerge as a global power without overturning the existing order. Eighth, Russia is the largest country on Earth by land area, abutting China on the East, Poland in the West and the United States across the Arctic. This territory provides transit corridors for supplies to global markets whose stability is vital to the U.S. economy. Ninth, Russia’s brainpower is reflected in the fact that it has won more Nobel Prizes for science than all of Asia, places first in most math competitions and dominates the world chess masters list. The only way U.S. astronauts can now travel to and from the International Space Station is to hitch a ride on Russian rockets. The co-founder of the most advanced digital company in the world, Google, is Russian-born Sergei Brin. Tenth, Russia’s potential as a spoiler is difficult to exaggerate. Consider what a Russian president intent on frustrating U.S. international objectives could do — from stopping the supply flow to Afghanistan to selling S-300 air defense missiles to Tehran to joining China in preventing U.N. Security Council resolutions.

**--- Uniqueness ---**

**2NC: Uniqueness Wall**

#### Will pass – Bipartisan and Israeli support.

Kampeas 6/22/12 (Ron, Israel backs lifting Jackson-Vanik, http://www.jta.org/news/article/2012/06/22/3098876/israel-backs-lifting-jackson-vanik)

Israel endorsed removing Russia from Jackson-Vanik trade restrictions. "Israel supports Russia's graduation from Jackson-Vanik," a senior Israeli official told JTA this week. "The reasons Russia is included in Jackson-Vanik are no longer relevant." The official made the comment in the wake of a bill introduced in the U.S. Senate earlier this week by a bipartisan slate of senators that would find Russia "in full compliance with the freedom of emigration requirements" of the law. The original amendment, named for the late U.S. Sen. Henry Jackson (D-Wash.) and the late U.S. Rep. Charles Vanick (D-Ohio) was passed in the early 1970s -- over the strident objections of the Nixon administration -- at a time when the former Soviet Union was inhibiting Jewish emigration. Russia wants the 1970s-era restrictions on trade lifted to facilitate its joining the World Trade Organization. The WTO in November invited Russia to join. NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States & Eurasia also back the repeal bill. "Russia has satisfied the central requirement of the amendment's intent: the right to emigrate," NCSJ Chairman Richard Stone said in a statement. "Jews are able to decide to emigrate or to choose to remain in Russia, where they can practice Judaism and participate in Jewish culture without reservation."

#### JV will pass – Vilsack says and top of the docket

Sorensen 6/27/12 (Loretta, Vilsack: Repeal Jackson-Vanik amendment or lose trade with Russia, http://www.midwestproducer.com/news/markets/vilsack-repeal-jackson-vanik-amendment-or-lose-trade-with-russia/article\_dc5cff3e-c07b-11e1-a016-0019bb2963f4.html)

If Congress fails to act before mid-August in repealing the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment, American farmers, ranchers and producers could lose a significant opportunity to capture market share for American ag products when Russia joins the World Trade Organization (WTO) this fall. In an interview with Midwest Producer, USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack noted that delaying the repeal doesn't make good business sense or common sense. "Every one of our 100 legislators has a 'beef' if you will with Russia," Vilsack said. "It may be in regard to intellectual property, Internet issues, Russia's approach to Syria or any other of a host of issues. They're using this discussion (about Jackson-Vanik) as a vehicle for having all these other discussions which have nothing to do with trade. This is not the time nor the place to inject all these issues that have nothing to do with exports. If Congress fails to act before mid-August in repealing the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment, American farmers, ranchers and producers could lose a significant opportunity to capture market share for American ag products when Russia joins the World Trade Organization (WTO) this fall. In an interview with Midwest Producer, USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack noted that delaying the repeal doesn't make good business sense or common sense. "Every one of our 100 legislators has a 'beef' if you will with Russia," Vilsack said. "It may be in regard to intellectual property, Internet issues, Russia's approach to Syria or any other of a host of issues. They're using this discussion (about Jackson-Vanik) as a vehicle for having all these other discussions which have nothing to do with trade. This is not the time nor the place to inject all these issues that have nothing to do with exports. "We saw a 70 percent increase in U.S. beef sales to Russia in the past 12 months," Vilsack added. "There's obviously a desire and an interest in purchasing American products. If we lose this opportunity, it will be difficult and take time to regain the lost market share." The Jackson-Vanik amendment to the Trade Act of 1974 was implemented to pressure the Soviet Union to allow emigration of Soviet Jews, prisoners of conscience and victims of religious persecution. The legislation required the U.S. to enact annual certification of Russia's full compliance with the Jackson-Vanik amendment. With the collapse of the Soviet Union two decades ago, freedom of emigration became a reality for all citizens. If the amendment remains in place, the U.S. is the only country that will not be able to take full advantage of reduced tariffs, quotas and access to Russian markets once Russia completes the requirements for WTO membership. "Russian membership in the WTO is a good thing for the U.S.," Vilsack said. "Russia gains very little through repeal of the legislation. We gain far better access to Russian markets and a much leveler playing field to compete with other countries that will try to sell ag products to Russia." In December 2011, trade ministers at the 8th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization celebrated conclusion of 18 years of negotiations for Russia to agree to comply with WTO requirements. Russia was then invited to become the 154th WTO member. In the process of approving Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with Russia, Congress must pass a short and simple bill that grants Russia PNTR status and repeals Jackson-Vanik. Failure to do so will mean the U.S. will be in violation of WTO rules once Russia becomes a WTO member. Through Russia's WTO membership, Moscow will be required to enact a host of economic reforms that will further open the Russian market to U.S. goods and services and provide a process for addressing any future unfair or unsupported trade barriers that might arise. In an address to the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance on June 21, 2012, Vilsack noted that the USDA strongly supports establishing PNTR with Russia and ensuring that Russia remains one of the U.S. top export markets as it joins WTO. "PNTR is not a favor to Russia," Vilsack said. "It is a significant opportunity for America's farmers, ranchers and producers. It will provide improved, predictable access to Russia's 140 million consumers and an expanding middle class that has grown by more than 50 percent in the last decade." Vilsack explained that the U.S. has been extending market access to Russia since 1992 on an annual basis. U.S. agricultural exports to Russia in fiscal year 2011 were nearly $1.4 billion, contributing significantly to the U.S. agricultural trade surplus. The U.S. imported only $25 million of agricultural products from Russia in 2011. As part of its WTO membership agreement, Russia will reduce tariffs on a number of agricultural products. Soybean tariffs will be at zero. For soybean meal, tariffs will be reduced from 5 percent to 2.5 percent. Maximum bound tariffs on most cheeses will drop from 25 percent to 15 percent within three years. Russia's duties are already relatively low for many fruits and tree nuts, but those rates will be bound and, in many cases, reduced substantially within a few years of accession. Through the Russian WTO membership, U.S. farmers will have more certain and predictable market access, Russia will be obligated to apply its trade regime in a manner consistent with WTO rules, and they will be obligated to follow detailed rules governing transparency in development of trade policies and measures. Compliance with Russia's obligations will be enforceable through use of the WTO dispute settlement process. "I believe Jackson-Vanik will be repealed," Vilsack said. "There is bipartisan support for the repeal. I believe members of Congress realize farmers, ranchers and producers will be at a serious disadvantage if the repeal doesn't happen. We can't cede that much territory to our competitors."

**Obama push.**

Russia & CIS Business & Financial Daily 6-6. [lexis]

"The Obama administration, as well as the American business community, has been working very hard to communicate the importance of repealing Jackson-Vanik and making sure that American businesses have the opportunities that will come as a result of Russia's accession to the WTO, and we will continue to work hard in communicating the importance of moving forward on this issue to our Congress, as well as to the American public," he said.

**Jackson Vanik will pass this year – top priority.**

Bloomberg 6-7-12. [“US official urges repeal of Russia trade law” -- http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2012-06/D9V877M80.htm]

U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk said Thursday that the repeal of a U.S. law that can be used to put trade restrictions on Russia **is a top priority** for his office this year. The Cold War-era Jackson-Vanik amendment denies normal trading arrangements to non-market countries that restrict emigration. It was originally a reaction to hurdles the Soviet Union put up for Jews who wanted to leave the country in the 1970s. Although Russia has not restricted emigration in any way since 1991 and the U.S. has granted Russia annual waivers since 1994, the law remains in force and is an irritant to investors and Russian politicians. Russia has wrapped up negotiations on membership in the World Trade Organization, and its parliament is expected to ratify Russia's membership on July 4. "Once Russia becomes a member of the World Trade Organization, we need to make sure that American businesses have the full advantages of that, and therefore it's necessary for us to lift Jackson-Vanik," Kirk told the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia.

**JV will pass independent of amendments – administration officials.**

Needham 6-10. [Vicki, reporter, “Human rights concerns complicated efforts to ramp up Russia trade” The Hill -- http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/231947-human-rights-concerns-complicate-efforts-to-ramp-up-russia-trade]

Some lawmakers have suggested they would support repealing Jackson-Vanik as a trade-off in exchange for passage of the so-called Magnitsky bill. "There is growing recognition in the business community and on the Hill to do something meaningful and send a message on human rights," Gerwin said. "The Russians are hacked off about it but they can't deny us any trade rights because then they would be in violation of WTO rules," he said. "We've got a good track record at the WTO so it's unlikely Russia would do something blatant." Kirk said repealing Jackson-Vanik is a top priority for his office this year but he is opposed to linking it to a Magnitsky bill. “Our priority is for the Congress to lift Jackson-Vanik in a clean bill which deals only with the issue relevant to our ability to maintain our competitiveness,” Kirk said. The administration will "continue our work" with lawmakers concerned about human rights, Kirk said. Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) has talked about linking his chamber's measure. Still, while a human rights bill gives Congress an opportunity to express its dissatisfaction with Russia's track record on human rights, it **is separate from the repeal** and no bearing on the results for businesses of getting rid of Jackson-Vanik, Gerwin said.

**Obama push.**

Kagan and Kramer 6-7. [Robert, senior fellow @ Brookings, David, president of Freedom House, former assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor, “A stand against Russian corruption” Washington Post – lexis]

One element of that is Russia's expected entry into the World Trade Organization. That is why we favor lifting the Jackson-Vanik amendment, legislation dating to 1974 that denied most-favored nation status to countries, including the Soviet Union, that restricted the ability of its citizens to emigrate and travel. That legislation has long outlived its utility, since Russian authorities for years have eliminated such restrictions. The Obama administration and U.S. businesses that operate in Russia have been pushing Congress to lift Jackson-Vanik; doing so, and thereby granting Russia most-favored nation status, would level the playing field for U.S. companies.

**Top of Docket**

#### JV is at the top – done before August recess.

WSJ 6/26/12 (Wall Street Journal, A New Russia Rights Standard, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303640804577488971542850272.html?mod=googlenews\_wsj)

For nearly four decades, the Jackson-Vanik amendment kept the pressure on Kremlin rulers to treat their people better. The hallmark 1974 human-rights legislation can now be honorably retired—as long as a worthy successor, the Magnitsky Act, takes its place. Both measures currently before Congress could be acted on before the August recess. Prompt repeal of Jackson-Vanik trade restrictions would level the playing field for U.S. companies in Russia when it joins the World Trade Organization later this summer. And the Magnitsky Act can keep the heat on the Kremlin by banning Russian officials implicated in abuses from travelling or banking in the U.S. Jackson-Vanik and Magnitsky are rare good models of Congressional activism in foreign affairs. Championed by the late Democratic hawk Henry "Scoop" Jackson, the 1974 law denied most favored nation status to the Soviet Union as long as it restricted free emigration. The law coaxed the Kremlin to let Soviet Jews leave.

**JV is top of the docket – vote by August.**

Needham 6-10. [Vicki, reporter, “Human rights concerns complicated efforts to ramp up Russia trade” The Hill -- http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/231947-human-rights-concerns-complicate-efforts-to-ramp-up-russia-trade]

Russia's decision to vote July 4, ahead of the July 23 deadline, on its WTO accession means lawmakers will have to pass a repeal before the August recess to gain the full benefits. Once the Russian Duma passes the bill, the nation joins the WTO 30 days later. For the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, normalizing trade relations with Russia is the top legislative priority this year, Christopher Wenk, the Chamber's senior director for international policy, told The Hill.

**Top priority**

Russia & CIS Business & Financial Daily 6-6. [lexis]

U.S. Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Francisco Sanchez thinks that U.S. and Russian businessmen will equally loose, if WTO rules are not applied to U.S.-Russian relations, which may happen if the Jackson-Vanik amendment remain in effect. "As it relates to who is hurt, if we are no able to move forward in a timely manner, I think there is no question that at least initially American businesses will not have benefits of Russia's accession to the WTO. However, I think that in the long term Russian may loose out on opportunities to engage with American companies that have state-of-the-art technologies and know-how," Sanchez said in an interview with Interfax. "It's all in our interest to move forward on this issue, and the Obama administration is going to continue to work very hard on moving forward with this," he said.

**More ev.**

Russia & CIS Business & Financial Daily 6-5. [lexis]

U.S. INTERESTED IN CANCELLING JACKSON-VANIK AMENDMENT TO IMPROVE TRADE RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA The U.S. administration will continue to convince the U.S. Congress to cancel the Jackson-Vanik amendment, U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Ron Kirk said in an interview with Interfax. "Our objective in the United States is to work with our Congress towards the lifting of the Jackson-Vanik application to Russia, so that we can extend permanent normal trade relations status," Kirk said. The U.S. presidential administration is convincing the Congress that U.S. companies will benefit from Russia's accession to the WTO, he said.

**AT: Magnitsky**

**Magnitsky just proves capital key – Obama use of capital getting concessions to weaken Magnitsky now – won’t hurt relations.**

Inside US Trade 12. [April 17 -- lexis]

While the Obama administration recognizes the need to pass human rights legislation in Congress in order to gain political support for a separate vote to graduate Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment, it is pressing Congress to substantially weaken the legislation such that it would have little effect in practice, congressional sources said. The continuing exchange between administration officials and members supporting the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012 has included some reasonable suggestions from the administration, but many others that have been unacceptable to the bill's supporters, these sources said. Administration officials are also exerting pressure on the timing of when Congress takes up the Magnitsky bill, in light of their preference that Congress mark up the legislation after Russian President-elect Vladimir Putin and other world leaders conclude their May 18-19 G-8 summit hosted by President Obama at Camp David, sources said. The administration made clear to Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry (D-MA) that it does not want action on the Magnitsky bill to overshadow conversations between Putin and Obama. As a consequence, Kerry this week delayed a markup of the bill that had been scheduled for yesterday (April 26), sources said. The Magnitsky legislation requires the administration to publish a public list naming Russian officials who have been banned from entering the United States as a result of being involved in gross violations of human rights. The bill also requires the administration to freeze the assets of Russians included on the visa ban list. The administration, in a recent draft proposal submitted to Congress, has proposed replacing all the mandatory language now included in the bill -- including that the administration "shall" publish the public list naming Russian officials in the first place -- with less binding terms, such as "shall be authorized to," congressional sources said. **Making such a change would essentially maintain the status quo** in terms of what the administration can do to sanction individuals. For instance, the State Department has said it already has the authority to ban visas, and already maintains a list of individuals who cannot enter the United States, although it is not publicly released.

**Obama will stop it – opposition and reforms solve the impact.**

Rogin 6-7. [Josh, reporter, “Magnitsky bill moves forward in the House” Foreign Policy -- http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/06/07/magnitsky\_bill\_moves\_forward\_in\_the\_house]

The Obama administration is publicly opposed to the Magnitsky bill, especially the effort to connect it to Jackson-Vanik repeal, and has been working behind the scenes with bill sponsors such as Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD) to alter the legislation. "From our point of view this legislation is redundant to what we're already doing," U.S. Ambassador Russia Mike McFaul said in March.

**Magnitsky can’t pass as a standalone and it won’t be linked.**

Bloomberg 6-7-12. [“US official urges repeal of Russia trade law” -- http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2012-06/D9V877M80.htm]

Some U.S. lawmakers have indicated they would support repeal of Jackson-Vanik in exchange for passage of the so-called Magnitsky bill that would bar Russian officials accused of human rights abuses from the United States. That bill calls for publicly identifying Russians tied to human rights abuses, but the Obama administration worries that could affect relations with Moscow. The bill was introduced by two Democrats and also is backed by prominent Republicans, including Sen. John McCain. The bill was named for lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who had accused Interior Ministry officials of corruption. He died in jail in 2009 from untreated pancreatitis. Proponents of the bill say the death, and allegations of torture in jail, highlight corruption in Russia's judicial system. Prospects for passing the measure as a stand-alone bill are uncertain, and senators saw an opportunity to boost its chances by tying it to the repeal of Jackson-Vanik. Kirk said the two measures should not be linked. "Our priority is for the Congress to lift Jackson-Vanik in a clean bill which deals only with the issue relevant to our ability to maintain our competitiveness," he said, adding the administration will "continue our work" with lawmakers concerned about Russian human rights.

**Competitiveness concerns outweigh human rights.**

Needham 6-10. [Vicki, reporter, “Human rights concerns complicated efforts to ramp up Russia trade” The Hill -- http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/231947-human-rights-concerns-complicate-efforts-to-ramp-up-russia-trade]

Congress, the Obama administration and business groups are ramping up efforts to pave the way this summer for improved trade relations with Russia, but that work is being complicated by parallel efforts to address human rights concerns in that country. While the push is being made to repeal the Jackson-Vanik amendment and grant permanent normal trade relations, some lawmakers are also eager to pass a measure designed to signal to Moscow that human rights and national security violations won't be tolerated as that nation prepares to join the World Trade Organization (WTO). In the ever complicated realm of U.S.-Russia relations, supporters of repealing Jackson-Vanik — a 37-year-old provision designed to put pressure on Communist nations for human-rights abuses and emigration policies — are emphasizing that Russia's entry into the WTO does not require the U.S. to pass any additional measures . "The United States gives up nothing and won't be required to change its laws," said Edward Gerwin, senior fellow for trade and global economic policy at Third Way, told The Hill. Not only are normal trade relations denied to nations that restrict emigration, but without a repeal, U.S. businesses would lose the benefits derived from a more open Russian market, putting companies at a competitive disadvantage. "We're not rewarding the Russians," Gerwin said. "From a policy standpoint keeping Jackson-Vanik doesn't get us anywhere," he said.

#### PC is key to compromise on Magnitsky that prevents from derailing relations.

AP 6/27/12 (Clinton cites concerns over human rights in Russia, http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/06/27/clinton-optimistic-over-us-russian-relations/)

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says she's optimistic that relations with Moscow will not suffer despite planned legislation in Congress that would impose tough sanctions on Russian human rights violators. Clinton says she expects "something to move" on both the repeal of the Jackson-Vanik law and on Congress' concerns about Russian human rights. She told reporters in Finland on Wednesday that the concerns could be expressed "without derailing the relationship (with Moscow) and that is what we are working with our Congress to do and we have every reason to believe we can accomplish that." The 1974 Jackson-Vanik Act tied trade with the then-Soviet Union to Moscow's willingness to allow Jews and other minorities to leave the country. The repeal of Jackson-Vanik is necessary if U.S. businesses are to enjoy lower tariffs and increased access to Russian markets when Russia joins the World Trade Organization this summer. Following talks with Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, Clinton told reporters that "we discussed this directly with President (Vladimir) Putin when I was with President Obama in Mexico. We made it very clear that, you know, we do have concerns about human rights in Russia." A Senate panel in Washington moved forward Tuesday on a bill that would impose tough sanctions on Russian human rights violators, a measure certain to be linked to congressional efforts to lift the Cold War-era Jackson-Vanik trade restrictions. The Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate approved the measure that would impose visa bans and freeze the assets of those held responsible for gross human rights violations in Russia, as well as other human rights abusers. Specifically, it targets those allegedly involved in the imprisonment, torture and death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who died in a Russian jail in 2009. Clinton said, "We think there is a way of expressing those concerns without derailing the relationship" with Moscow, and she added that is "what we are working with our Congress to do, and we have every reason to believe we can accomplish that." "We are very keen in the administration for repealing the Jackson-Vanik bill because we want to open doors to greater trade and investment between our two countries," the secretary said. "However there is great concern in our country, and in particular in our Congress over human rights in Russia," she added, "and in particular the case of the lawyer Mr. Magnitsky, who died in prison." "There's a lot of interest in our Congress over a full, transparent investigation of the circumstances of his death in prison," Clinton said. "And so our Congress, while they are being asked by the administration to repeal Jackson-Vanik, want to pass legislation that will require the United States government to take action against any persons who are connected with the death of Mr. Magnitsky."

**AT: Vote = After Election**

**Business group support ensures vote before election.**

Wasson 6-5. [Erik, staff writer, “US companies alarmed by Russia sanctions bill” The Hill -- http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/231091-us-companies-alarmed-by-russia-sanctions-bill]

The groups are pleased that House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp (R-Mich.) has come out in favor of a “clean” PNTR bill but are worried that Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.), who favors strong Russia trade, has not come out against any link to the human-rights measure. One option being pursued is getting the business-friendly Senate Banking Committee to use parliamentary procedures to gain a role in crafting the bill, which is currently in the hands of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The groups are urging lawmakers to water down the bill so that it only deals with visa restrictions, rather than asset freezes. Reinsch said the sponsors of the sanctions bill only intend for it to apply to the “thugs” committing human-rights abuses, and not entities like accountants or computer makers only tangentially related to them. Still, he said, the draft bill does not contain the precise language to prevent such a wide interpretation. The business groups are lobbying against any effort to put PNTR and the Magnitsky measure on hold until after the election, since U.S. exports could suffer after August. “The companies feel an urgency to get PNTR before or soon after Russia accedes,” NFTC representative Dan O’Flaherty said. “This offends the Russians. They are afraid they will buy Komatsu instead of Caterpillar, Airbus instead of Boeing. Delay is not going to solve the problem.”

### AT: Infrastructure Thumper

#### Recent Bill didn’t drain capital – but the plan still does.

Reuters 6/29/12 (US Congress to vote on transportation, student loan bill, http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/06/29/usa-transportation-idINL2E8HS60520120629)

Congressional negotiators have cleared the way for votes on legislation covering transportation construction, student loan rates, and flood insurance after finalizing a compromise agreement on how to pay for those priorities. The House and Senate were set to consider the measure on Friday, one day before temporary funding for highway, bridge and transit projects was to expire and three days before an increase in federal student loan rates was set to take effect. "We have a number of issues we're trying to work through," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said, expressing disappointment that Congress would not act on the legislation Thursday night. "That's the way it is." Congress took more than two years to reach a transportation bill covering millions of construction jobs, and did so only because the potential consequences of inaction in a shaky economy proved too risky in an election year. Ambitious proposals to shore up U.S. infrastructure gave way to a bill that basically keeps transportation funding at current levels. The blueprint was based on a bipartisan proposal by the Democratic-led Senate that is supported by the Obama administration.

**--- Link Section (General) ---**

### Politics links – Agenda Disad – 1NC

#### ( ) Plan drains Presidential capital. Even once-popular transportation issues now hurt the White House.

Freemark ‘12

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “On Infrastructure, Hopes for Progress This Year Look Glum” – January 25th, 2012 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/01/25/on-infrastructure-hopes-for-progress-this-year-look-glum/)

President Obama barely mentions the need for improvements in the nation’s capital stock in his State of the Union. The contributions of the Obama Administration to the investment in improved transportation alternatives have been significant, but it was clear from the President’s State of the Union address last night that 2012 will be a year of diminished expectations in the face of a general election and a tough Congressional opposition. Mr. Obama’s address, whatever its merits from a populist perspective, nonetheless failed to propose dramatic reforms to encourage new spending on transportation projects, in contrast to previous years. While the Administration has in some ways radically reformed the way Washington goes about selecting capital improvements, bringing a new emphasis on livability and underdeveloped modes like high-speed rail, there was little indication in the speech of an effort to expand such policy choices. All that we heard was a rather meek suggestion to transform a part of the money made available from the pullout from the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts — a sort of war dividend whose size is undefined — to “do some nation-building right here at home.” If these suggestions fell flat for the pro-investment audience, they were reflective of the reality of working in the context of a deeply divided political system in which such once-universally supported policies as increased roads funding have become practically impossible to pursue. Mr. Obama pushed hard, we shouldn’t forget, for a huge, transformational transportation bill in early 2011, only to be rebuffed by intransigence in the GOP-led House of Representatives and only wavering support in the Democratic Senate. For the first term at least, the Administration’s transportation initiatives appear to have been pushed aside. Even so, it remains to be seen how the Administration will approach the development of a transportation reauthorization program. Such legislation remains on the Congressional agenda after three years of delays (the law expires on March 31st). There is so far no long-term solution to the continued inability of fuel tax revenues to cover the growing national need for upgraded or expanded mobility infrastructure. But if it were to pass, a new multi-year transportation bill would be the most significant single piece of legislation passed by the Congress in 2012. The prospect of agreement between the two parties on this issue, however, seems far-fetched. That is, if we are to assume that the goal is to complete a new and improved spending bill, rather than simply further extensions of the existing legislation. The House could consider this month a bill that would fund new highways and transit for several more years by expanding domestic production of heavily carbon-emitting fossil fuels, a terrible plan that would produce few new revenues and encourage more ecological destruction. Members of the Senate, meanwhile, have for months been claiming they were “looking” for the missing $12 or 13 billion to complete its new transportation package but have so far come up with bupkis. The near-term thus likely consists of either continued extensions of the current law or a bipartisan bargain that fails to do much more than replicate the existing law, perhaps with a few bureaucratic reforms.

### 2NC-1NR Link Wall (Agenda, Obama Good)

#### Extend the 1NC Freemark ev. It proves political *timing* makes plan unpopular with both GOP and Dems.

#### ( ) Transportation Infrastructure Spending drains capital – escalates *fights with GOP*.

Tomasky ‘11

(Newsweek/Daily Beast special correspondent Michael Tomasky is also editor of Democracy: A Journal of Ideas – Newsweek – September 19, 2011 – lexis)

Finally, Barack Obama found the passion. "Building a world-class transportation system is part of what made us an economic superpower," he thundered in his jobs speech on the evening of Sept. 8. "And now we're going to sit back and watch China build newer airports and faster railroads? At a time when millions of unemployed construction workers could build them right here in America?" Obama's urgency was rightly about jobs first and foremost. But he wasn't talking only about jobs when he mentioned investing in America--he was talking about our competitiveness, and our edge in the world. And it's a point he must keep pressing. In a quickly reordering global world, infrastructure and innovation are key measures of a society's seriousness about its competitive drive. And we're just not serious. The most recent infrastructure report card from the American Society of Civil Engineers gives the United States a D overall, including bleak marks in 15 categories ranging from roads (D-minus) to schools and transit (both D's) to bridges (C). The society calls for $2.2 trillion in infrastructure investments over the next five years. On the innovation front, the country that's home to Google and the iPhone still ranks fourth worldwide in overall innovation, according to the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation (ITIF), the leading think tank on such questions, which conducts a biannual ranking. But we might not be there for long. In terms of keeping pace with other nations' innovation investments--"progress over the last decade," as ITIF labels it--we rank 43rd out of 44 countries. What's the problem? It isn't know-how; this is still America. It isn't identifying the needs; they've been identified to death. Nor is it even really money. There are billions sitting around in pension funds, equity funds, sovereign wealth funds, just waiting to be spent. The problem--of course--is politics. The idea that the two parties could get together and develop bold bipartisan plans for massive investments in our freight-rail system--on which the pro-business multiplier effects would be obvious--or in expanding and speeding up broadband (it's eight times faster in South Korea than here, by the way) is a joke. Says New York University's Michael Likosky: "We're the only country in the world that is imposing austerity on itself. No one is asking us to do it." There are some historical reasons why. Sherle Schwenninger, an infrastructure expert at the New America Foundation, a leading Washington think tank, says that a kind of anti-bigness mindset developed in the 1990s, that era in which the besotting buzzwords were "Silicon Valley" and "West Coast venture capital." Wall Street began moving away from grand projects. "In that '90s paradigm, the New Economy-Silicon Valley approach to things eschewed the public and private sectors' working together to do big things," Schwenninger says. "That model worked for software, social media, and some biotech. But the needs are different today." That's true, but so is the simple point that the Republican Party in Washington will oppose virtually all public investment. The party believes in something like Friedrich von Hayek's "spontaneous order"--that is, get government off people's backs and they (and the markets they create) will spontaneously address any and all problems. But looking around America today, can anyone seriously conclude that this is working?

#### ( ) Transportation spending drains capital – *election* magnifies the link

Szakonyi ‘12

(Mark Szakonyi is an Associate Editor for the Journal of Commerce – focusing on the reporting of rail and intermodal issues, regulation and policy out of the JOC's Washington, D.C., bureau. Journal of Commerce – March 20, 2012 – lexis)

House Republicans are considering a short-term extension of the surface transportation bill instead of adopting the Senate's two-year plan. The decision to seek an extension as the March 31 deadline nears signals that the fight over transportation spending could become even more partisan as the presidential election nears. House Republicans are looking to push an extension of current spending for the ninth time, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica, R.-Fla., told attendees of an American Association of Port Authorities conference, where he was honored as Port Person of the Year. His statement on Tuesday was a clear sign that Republicans won't heed Senate leaders' and President Obama's call to adopt the Senate's $109 billion plan. Mica said he hoped the extension would be exempt from riders, which helped lead to a shutdown of the Federal Aviation Administration last summer .

#### ( ) Transportation policy ensures loss of political capital – party demographics prove

Freemark ‘11

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “Understanding the Republican Party’s Reluctance to Invest in Transit Infrastructure”

January 25th, 2011 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2011/01/25/understanding-the-republican-partys-reluctance-to-invest-in-transit-infrastructure/)

Conservatives in Congress threaten to shut down funding for transit construction projects and investments in intercity rail. One doesn’t have to look far to see why these programs aren’t priorities for them. Late last week, a group of more than 165 of the most conservative members of the House of Representatives, the Republican Study Committee, released a report that detailed an agenda to reduce federal spending by $2.5 trillion over ten years. Spurred on by increasing public concern about the mounting national debt, the group argues that the only choice is to make huge, painful cuts in government programs. With the House now in the hands of the Republican Party, these suggestions are likely to be seriously considered. Transportation policy is prominent on the group’s list, no matter President Obama’s call for investments in the nation’s transportation infrastructure, expected to be put forward in tonight’s state of the union address. Not only would all funding for Amtrak be cut, representing about $1.5 billion a year, but the Obama Administration’s nascent high-speed rail program would be stopped in its tracks. A $150 million commitment to Washington’s Metro system would evaporate. Even more dramatically, the New Starts program, which funds new rail and bus capital projects at a cost of $2 billion a year, would simply disappear. In other words, the Republican group suggests that all national government aid for the construction of new rail or bus lines, intercity and intra-city, be eliminated. These cuts are extreme, and they’re not likely to make it to the President’s desk, not only because of the Democratic Party’s continued control over the Senate but also because some powerful Republicans in the House remain committed to supporting public transportation and rail programs. But how can we explain the open hostility of so many members of the GOP to any federal spending at all for non-automobile transportation? Why does a transfer of power from the Democratic Party to the Republicans engender such political problems for urban transit? We can find clues in considering the districts from which members of the House of Representatives of each party are elected. As shown in the chart above (in Log scale), there was a relatively strong positive correlation between density of congressional districts and the vote share of the Democratic candidate in the 2010 elections. Of densest quartile of districts with a race between a Democrat and a Republican — 105 of them, with a density of 1,935 people per square miles or more — the Democratic candidate won 89. Of the quartile of districts with the lowest densities — 98 people per square mile and below — Democratic candidates only won 23 races. As the chart below demonstrates (in regular scale), this pattern is most obvious in the nation’s big cities, where Democratic Party vote shares are huge when densities are very high. This pattern is not a coincidence. The Democratic Party holds most of its power in the nation’s cities, whereas the GOP retains greater strength in the exurbs and rural areas. The two parties generally fight it out over the suburbs. In essence, the base of the two parties is becoming increasingly split in spatial terms: The Democrats’ most vocal constituents live in cities, whereas the Republicans’ power brokers would never agree to what some frame as a nightmare of tenements and light rail. What does this mean? When there is a change in political power in Washington, the differences on transportation policy and other urban issues between the parties reveal themselves as very stark. Republicans in the House of Representatives know that very few of their constituents would benefit directly from increased spending on transit, for instance, so they propose gutting the nation’s commitment to new public transportation lines when they enter office. Starting two years ago, Democrats pushed the opposite agenda, devoting billions to urban-level projects that would have been impossible under the Bush Administration. Highway funding, on the other hand, has remained relatively stable throughout, and that’s no surprise, either: The middle 50% of congressional districts, representing about half of the American population, features populations that live in neighborhoods of low to moderate densities, fully reliant on cars to get around. It is only in the densest sections of the country that transit (or affordable housing, for instance) is even an issue — which is why it appears to be mostly of concern to the Democratic Party. Republicans in the House for the most part do not have to answer to voters who are interested in improved public transportation. This situation, of course, should be of significant concern to those who would advocate for better transit. To put matters simply, few House Republicans have any electoral reason to promote such projects, and thus, for the most part they don’t. But that produces a self-reinforcing loop; noting the lack of GOP support for urban needs, city voters push further towards the Democrats. And sensing that the Democratic Party is a collection of urbanites, those from elsewhere push away. It’s hard to know how to reverse this problem. Many Republicans, of course, represent urban areas at various levels of government. No Democrat, for instance, has won the race for New York’s mayoralty since 1989. And the Senate is a wholly different ballgame, since most states have a variety of habitation types. As Bruce McFarling wrote this week, there are plenty of reasons for Republicans even in places of moderate density to support such investments as intercity rail. But the peculiar dynamics of U.S. House members’ relatively small constituent groups, in combination with the predilection of state legislatures to produce gerrymandered districts designed specifically to ensure the reelection of incumbents, has resulted in a situation in which there is only one Republican-controlled congressional district with a population density of over 7,000 people per square mile. And that’s in Staten Island, hardly a bastion of urbanism. With such little representation for urban issues in today’s House leadership, real advances on transport issues seem likely to have to wait.

#### ( ) Specific link turns don’t matter – even popular infrastructure bills will get sucked-into *fights over Keystone.*

Schor ‘12

Elana Schor is a reporter with Greenwire and environment and energy daily. She covers budget issues – Environment and Energy Daily – January 30, 2012 – lexis

The House GOP this week will edge closer to a high-stakes, two-track confrontation with Senate Democrats and the Obama administration with a politically popular infrastructure measure serving as the battlefield. House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) announced yesterday that he will seek to override the president's veto of the Keystone XL pipeline as part of a long-term transportation bill -- if the oil link is not already advanced during bicameral payroll tax-cut talks. The move adds a second volatile issue to a typically noncontroversial infrastructure package that his chamber wants to pay for in part by expanding offshore and Alaskan drilling, which is opposed by most Democrats and the White House (see related stories). "If [Keystone XL is] not enacted before we take up the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act, it will be part of it," Boehner said of the pipeline in an interview with ABC's "This Week," referring to the GOP's title for its drilling-and-transportation package. Boehner's comments stand to put new pressure on his Senate counterparts to go beyond the bipartisan, middle-ground approach to the infrastructure measure taken so far by their Environment and Public Works Committee. A two-year federal transportation bill passed unanimously last year by panel Chairwoman Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) and ranking Republican James Inhofe of Oklahoma did not include language allowing new coastal oil production and in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Greenwire, Nov. 9, 2011).

#### ( ) GOP exploits guise of fiscal moderation to oppose *any* increase in transportation spending.

Freemark ‘12

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What a contrast to the U.S. Congress, an allusion to which I can hardly overlook in this context. Last week, House and Senate officials pushed forward an extension of the existing surface transportation legislation — the ninth such extension since SAFETEA-LU, the previous law, originally was supposed to expire in 2009. The problem, suffice it to say, is not cowardice or nonsense political wheeling-dealing, but rather relatively minor — but painfully partisan — differences in perspective on the national transportation system. Over in the House, Republicans have campaigned for no increase in spending on mobility infrastructure (under the guise of fiscal moderation, with the goal of remaining within the constraints imposed by revenues provided by the Highway Trust Fund). Transit and other alternative mobility programs have been put under threat. In the Senate, Democrats promoted (and passed) a small increase in overall funding through a diversion of money from general (non-gas tax) revenues.

### Agenda/Obama Good – Neg Turn Shields

#### ( ) Positive spins of plan won’t matter. Transportation infrastructure drains capital – *drilling*, *district politics* and *tea party* all prove.

Johnson ‘12

Fawn Johnson is a correspondent for National Journal, covering a range of issues including immigration, transportation and education. Johnson is a long-time student of Washington policymaking, previously reporting for Dow Jones Newswires and the Wall Street Journal. She has an M.A. from the Annenberg School for Communication at University of Pennsylvania and a B.A. from Bates College. National Journal Daily AM – March 13, 2012 – lexis

Bipartisanship, investment, job creation: What's not to love about the two-year surface-transportation bill that the Senate is poised to pass on Wednesday? Maybe that it's not going anywhere. Despite threatening, there is no indication that House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, will actually bring the Senate-passed version to the floor when the House returns next week. House GOP leaders are still hammering out a five-year bill akin to the speaker's original plan that would streamline transportation programs and tie additional highway funding to domestic oil drilling. They can't count on any Democratic votes, so Republican leaders face the task of appeasing their own caucus. House Republicans don't like the idea of passing a Senate bill. It's just not clear whether they can agree on anything else. Boehner spokesman Michael Steel said House members are "actively pursuing" a "better alternative." Another staffer called the Senate bill "a crap sandwich that we're going to have to eat" if members can't agree on a different transportation bill. This week, House leaders, Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman John Mica, R-Fla., and other committee members are doing a lot of explaining about how Mica's surface-transportation bill would affect the federal government or their districts. One member sought adjustments already contained in the bill, according to an aide. Committee Republicans also are inserting minor tweaks into the bill when they can. For example, some rural members wanted to change a provision pertaining to horse trailers. But the real persuasion game comes from beating up the White House. Some rank-and-file members worry that in passing the Senate's two-year bill, they would hand President Obama another political win, according to another aide. Two years is extremely short in terms of highway planning and construction funding, and going with a short-term measure could give Obama another crack at enacting an ambitious highway package if he's reelected. Reversing themselves now could be a dicey bit of jockeying for some of the new, hard-line House GOP members, since they protested the most about Boehner's original plan. But they may have no choice. The idea that Obama would write the next bill is likely to irk the tea party, and that's exactly whose support Boehner needs to pass his version. The Transportation Department has no problem advocating for big increases in infrastructure investment, precisely the opposite of tea party dogma. In his 2013 budget proposal, the president proposed $476 billion for a six-year surface-transportation mechanism, which is about $200 billion more than House Republicans are proposing, and at least $150 billion more than current infrastructure spending. Members also are getting pressure in their districts. With so many new members of Congress, it's hard for some freshmen to grasp the (albeit wonky) importance of a fairly unwieldy government program. On its face, the federal transportation system runs counter to their ideology. So committee members and staff have told the transportation industry to target members at home during recess and explain the need for a long-term bill.

#### ( ) Turn shield – funding sources. Content of Aff is irrelevant – GOP will insist it’s financed via drilling.

Laing ‘12

Keith Laing is a national political journalist who works for The Hill newspaper in Washington, D.C. At The Hill, Keith covers transportation policy in Congress and manages the paper’s Transportation Report blog. Prior to coming to The Hill, Keith worked for the News Service of Florida, where he tracked the Florida state legislature with a focus on transportation and energy issues. The Hill

February 1, 2012 – lexis

House Republicans teed up an election-year battle over jobs Tuesday, announcing a $260 billion transportation bill designed to put Democrats on the defensive. The package from House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica (R-Fla.) would spend $260 billion over five years on road and transit projects — funding that congressional Democrats and President Obama have long championed as stimulus for the economy. But the GOP bill would pay for some of the transportation work with an expansion of oil-and-gas drilling, including in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), a nonstarter for many Democrats and their supporters in the environmental movement. Sensing an advantage, Mica on Tuesday warned Democrats that the bill is the only vehicle for highway funding that Republicans would support. “This is the only piece of legislation” that can pass the House, Mica said at a news conference in front of the Capitol. “This is a major start,” he said. “Look where we’ve been, and look where we are today.” Republicans also touted the bill as a job creator as they made the case that obstruction by Senate Democrats is standing in the way of legislation that would help the economy. “This bill will put Americans back to work rebuilding our roads and bridges and developing new sources of low-cost energy,” Mica said in a news release. “This legislation may be the most important jobs measure to pass Congress this year.” Transportation and business groups have been pushing Congress for years to approve a multiyear appropriations bill for transportation and infrastructure. The last such funding bill expired in 2009. But advocates Tuesday expressed reservations about Mica’s revised proposal. “Certainly we are happy the House and Senate are opening a discussion, but there’s a lot of work to be done,” said Edward Wytkind, president of the AFL-CIO’s transportation trades department. Wytkind lamented the vast differences between the version of the highway bill announced by Mica on Tuesday and the proposal that has begun moving in the Senate. In the past, “they have always moved these bills as ‘Big Four’ authorizations,” he said, referring to the chairmen and ranking members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation committees. “They moved them as impenetrable, avoided ideological fights and increased the funding so that the next authorization would always be higher than the last one,” Wytkind said. The Senate’s version of the transportation bill is shorter, but it appropriates more money for road projects annually. The upper chamber has proposed spending $109 billion per year on the new highway bill, and its version of the legislation relies more on traditional sources of funding, such as the gas tax. Mica defended the highway bill as a team effort and told reporters to pack a lunch Thursday because he plans to allow amendments during the markup of the bill — a process that could drag on for days. “Everybody needs to find a way to fund these things,” Mica said. The plan to pay for highways with drilling has riled up environmental groups such as the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). The New York-based group argued Tuesday that not only is linking highway spending to oil drilling bad for the environment, it also imperils the bill’s prospects for being approved by the Democratic-controlled Senate. “Instead of going the bipartisan route taken by the Senate, House Republican leaders have loaded the bill with environmental protection rollbacks, extreme measures that mandate oil drilling just about everywhere and a permit for the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline,” NRDC President Frances Beinecke said in a news release. “The American people need a transportation bill; this bill will prevent them from getting one.” Another provision of the GOP proposal that drew criticism Tuesday was a provision that would increase the weight of trucks allowed on highways from 80,000 to 97,000 pounds. “Americans don’t want 97,000-pound trucks or huge multitrailers up to 120 feet long on our nation’s highways,” the lobbying group for a competing method of shipping, the Association of American Railroads, said in a news release. “Nor is it fair that even more of the public’s tax dollars will be used to pay for the road and bridge damage inflicted by massive trucks.” The Coalition for Transportation Productivity, which argues the other side of the truck-weight issue, was more enthusiastic about the House highway bill proposal. “The American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act recognizes that states need the ability to create safer, greener, more efficient shipping on their interstate highways,” CTP Executive Director John Runyan said in a news release. “Truck capacity has dropped by 16 percent since the recession started, and the 30-year-old federal vehicle weight limit compounds the problem by forcing many trucks to travel when they are only partially full.” For his part, Mica stressed Tuesday that the bill he announced “wasn’t final.” “I tried to do everything I could … to work with everyone,” he said.

### 2NC-1NR – A-to “Obama won’t be involved”

#### First – White House involvement is normal means.

#### Our Freemark ev proves *prior* reforms have empirically involved Obama. It also proves any *future* meaningful reform would require Obama to get involved, draining capital.

#### Prefer our empirics and specifics.

#### And – *Gridlock* and *GOP scuttling* will force White House involvement. That drains capital.

Nance ‘12

(Scott Nance is the editor and publisher of the news site The Washington Current. He has covered Congress and the federal government for more than a decade. The Democratic Daily – February 15, 2012 – lexis)

Partisanship has begun to overtake the bipartisanship which Sens. Inhofe, left, and Boxer once forged on the new transportation bill. Last fall, Democrats and Republicans on the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee together linked arms to unanimously approve a new federal transportation bill. The committee's liberal chairwoman, Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) and conservative ranking Republican, Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma, alike cheered the ability of the legislation, known as S. 1813, to put Americans back to work nationwide. Sadly, that Kumbaya moment just couldn't last. Now that it's moved from committee to the Senate floor, even this rare bill to achieve extraordinary bipartisan support has fallen victim to partisan sniping. Boxer complained Monday about an effort by Republican senators to introduce controversial, unrelated amendments to the highway bill, which would authorize the government to spend $109 billion over two years on roads, bridges and other transportation infrastructure. "We're trying to get out of this recession. This is a jobs bill that's just waiting to happen. We have myself and Senator Inhofe as partners in this effort. We want to get to this highway bill," she says. "Listen, we have to put aside these wedge issues, these 'gotcha' issues. We have business after business after business that is struggling. This is a bipartisan bill. This will save 1.8 million jobs and create an additional million jobs." Meanwhile, Inhofe himself was busy making sure President Obama couldn't take any credit for the transportation bill, if it were to pass. "The bottom line is that the President's involvement is detrimental to our bipartisan efforts. Whenever the President gets involved in transportation infrastructure, he turns it in to a partisan, political issue," Inhofe says. "Remember back to his $787 billion failed stimulus bill, the one he claimed was an infrastructure bill? Despite all of his talk, only 3% went for infrastructure, 3% went for defense, and the rest went to liberal social engineering."

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

Freemark ‘12

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

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

Freemark ‘11

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

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

#### ( ) Normal means forces Presidential involvement in some aspect of the negotiation. Given GOP composition in Congress, some White House wrangling must take place. They can’t sever this – it makes debate less educational and they become a moving target. It’s a voter – we could never win.

#### ( ) White House gets blame for everything

Teitelman ‘11

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The debt ceiling looks like it will be raised, though who knows? The House Republicans believe they have won -- they at least are spinning that furiously, which presents the unlikely sight of a blackmailer crowing about his successful operation, joined by a variety of seething left-of-center pundits -- and with the scent of Obama blood in the water, maybe they'll hold out for even greater cuts or a deal that protects defense spending. Generally, as the media emerges in full-throated roar, Obama is being declared the big loser from both sides of the aisle; see http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/01/opinion/the-diminished-president.html?ref=todayspaper|Ross Douthat and http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/01/opinion/the-president-surrenders-on-debt-ceiling.html?\_r=1&ref=global|Paul Krugman in today's New York Times. Perhaps. Obama's polls have been falling, probably because the president these days gets blamed for everything from a bad economy to Mississippi flooding to lousy student test scores, as if he's less a political leader and more a medicine man. We elect shamans, not people. Perhaps he did play this all wrong; in politics, substance -- "reality" that we've heard so much about these days -- means little. Obama's big mistake, at the end of the day, was his belief that he could occupy a center in a viciously polarized arena. As the columns and blogs suggest this morning, we've got a deal, but we've also got a nasty political problem. From an electoral perspective -- and part of that political problem is that we can't seem to forget, for even a moment, the permanent campaign -- Obama is already being declared a loser in 2012. We'll see. The electoral issue, particularly in a presidential campaign, is what's more important: deficit reduction (with all the affiliated issues: tax hikes or entitlement cuts) or the blackmail problem, which is to say, the Congress problem. How big is the center these days? How will that center recall these events -- and the possibility that we may see more hostage taking in years ahead? The debt ceiling struggle was a long and ugly tussle, managing to confirm the conventional wisdom of Washington inaction, bloviation, stalemate and failure. It was wildly irresponsible, dangerous and absurd. It shook people up. Several weeks ago, the Times' Thomas Friedman saw the crisis as an opportunity for a "radical center" to emerge, independent of both increasingly toothless, in terms of discipline, parties. I'm skeptical of the formation of an actual center party but not of center bloc. Today, in the blitz of punditry and spin, the center seems to have vanished. But electorally, it does feel as if there's stirring discontent with the highly ideological approach to politics from both parties. That, of course, may be wishful thinking. &nbsp;I take it as good news -- I'm undoubtedly grasping at straws here -- that the commentary today has a thread of reflection about the deeper governance problems. In The New York Times, Jacob Hacker and Oona Hathaway http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/01/opinion/our-unbalanced-democracy.html?ref=global|offer a bracing perspective on a Congress that has increasingly over time eluded accountability, distorting the relationship with the executive. "The debate has threatened to play out as a destructive but all too familiar two-step, revealing how dysfunctional the relationship between Congress and the president has become. The two-step begins with a Congress that is hamstrung and incapable of effective action. The president then decides he has little alternative but to strike out on his own, regardless of what the Constitution says. Congress, unable or unwilling to defend its role, resorts instead to carping at 'his' program, 'his' war or 'his' economy -- while denying any responsibility for the mess it helped create." This helps explain the ease of which Republicans have walked away from the wild spending of the George W. Bush years. &nbsp;In fact, all this feels familiar, both the congressional fecklessness -- remember the plague of earmarks -- and the accrual of presidential power in the form of executive orders, signing powers and Bushian arguments of pre-eminent executive power in warmaking, eavesdropping or torture. Everyone understands the barriers to congressional action: supermajority requirements, like the Senate's filibuster rule, and, as Hacker and Hathaway argue, legislative my-way-or-the-highway mechanisms, like a debt ceiling or a balanced budget amendment. But there are far more problems than those. Campaigns have grown more and more expensive, and PACs and corporate donors have become more and more essential. Lobbyists proliferate. Congress has evolved a system to avoid the big issues while keeping a flow of benefits going to their supporters and constituents. Party discipline has broken down, replaced by fundraising prowess. The demands of the permanent campaign are such that it demands a kind of branding for candidates: clear, simple, straightforward, ideological and mostly idiotic. Compromise, complexity and dealmaking become deeply suspect to an electorate that believes they've been sold down the river. Paradoxically, the creation of permanent campaigns fosters the opportunity to challenge from the extreme -- particularly in the House. Hard times makes this likelier.Brad DeLonghttp://delong.typepad.com/sdj/2011/07/are-we-shifting-toward-a-parliamentary-system.html| touches on some of this, but then takes it to another place. He writes today, "One possibility is that Cantor and Boehner have figured out something that has been inherent in the system since FDR but that few people recognized. Perhaps the president is now the ultimate status quo player in the government: Whatever goes wrong the public takes to be his fault and his responsibility. If anything goes badly wrong his political adversaries pick up the pieces and are strengthened. In that case, whenever the desires of the president conflict with the desires of the speaker of the House, the president has little leverage. Any speaker who does not fear disaster can roll any president. In this future, any bill that a speaker insists is must-pass gets attached to a debt-ceiling increase, and -- unless there are people in the Senate equally willing to risk disaster, which is unlikely because senators are status-quo players too -- so becomes law. It's like a parliamentary system, with the debt-ceiling votes filling the role of votes of confidence."Much of this makes eminent sense, though I'm not convinced that we're heading toward a parliamentary system; there's simply no way to discipline the members in any way except at the polls. But what it does point out is how weak the forces of the status quo can be when arrayed against the extremes. That's the real worry here.

### Solid General Links to Agenda/Obama Good

#### ( ) Any transportation legislation drains capital. Angers the GOP

Freemark ‘10

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The next few years are likely to be difficult for advocates of public transportation because of increased hostility to government investment. 1987, 1991, 1995, 1998, and 2005 share a significant feature: In each of those years, members of Congress were able to come together to pass a multi-year bill that codified how the U.S. government was to collect revenues for and allocate expenditures on transportation. Not coincidentally, in each of those years, one political party controlled both the House and Senate. In the 112th Congress, set to enter office in just one month, Democrats will run the Senate and Republicans the House. This split control will make passing any legislation difficult. Unlike in those aforementioned years, there is little chance that this group of legislators will be able to pass a multi-year transportation bill either in 2011 or 2012. These circumstances, combined with increasingly strident conservative rhetoric about the need to reduce government expenditures, may fundamentally challenge the advances the Obama Administration and the Democratic Congress have been able to make over the past two years in expanding the nation’s intercity rail network, promoting a vision for livable communities, and reinforcing funding for urban transit. Continuing those efforts would require identifying sources of increased revenue and a steadfast commitment to reducing the role of the automobile in American society. But there is little support for increased taxes from any side of the political table and there is a fundamental aversion from the mainstream Republican Party to the investments that have defined the government’s recent transportation strategy. Meanwhile, declining power of the purse resulting from a fuel tax last increased in 1993 means that the existing situation is unacceptable, at least if there is any sense that something must be done to expand investment in transportation infrastructure. Gridlock — and myopic thinking about how to improve mobility in the United States — will ensue.

#### ( ) Our “Anything-but-roads” link – GOP will block any transportation bill that’s not solely about roads.

Freemark ‘10

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “Growing Conservative Strength Puts Transit Improvements in Doubt” – December 1st, 2010 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2010/12/01/growing-conservative-strength-puts-transit-improvements-in-doubt/)

Mr. Christie is considering allocating to road improvement $1.25 billion once supposed to help to pay for the ARC tunnel. Outgoing Ohio Senator George Voinovich is hoping to change the law before he leaves to allow his state to transfer to highway construction funds once designated for the Cincinnati-Cleveland intercity rail line. The expected new speaker of the House, Ohio Congressman John Boehner, simply doesn’t think the federal government should be getting involved with funding bike and pedestrian improvement projects, which are at the heart of the Obama Administration’s livable cities goals. Cutbacks to the overall federal transportation budget, at least according to preliminary reports on GOP efforts, are likely to hit transit far harder than highways. Some have suggested that this is acceptable policy, that the Obama Administration was failing to address the needs and desires of the U.S. population in its focus on developing new and better modes of transportation. I would suggest that the alternative is disastrous: More sprawl, more environmental devastation, more repetitive, identity-less cities. Thus the issue here is not so much fiscal sanity as it is remarkably differing visions about how Americans should get around in the future. Whereas the current Congress and the White House have staked out relatively progressive policies in terms of providing adequate and equal funding to non-automobile modes of transportation, the incoming House leadership appears poised to take advantage of fears about increases in the federal budget deficit to reduce spending on everything but roads.

#### ( ) Transportation infrastructure unpopular with GOP – election year politics and spending squabbles.

Lowy ‘12

Joan Lowy is a reporter covering transportation issues for the Associated Press including FAA, NTSB and the department of transportation – Associated Press Financial Wire – May 1, 2012 -- lexis

The bill is driven partly by election-year politics. Both Congress and President Barack Obama have made transportation infrastructure investment the centerpiece of their jobs agendas. But the political imperative for passing a bill has been complicated by House Republicans' insistence on including a mandate for federal approval of the Keystone XL oil pipeline. The White House has threatened to veto the measure if it retains the Keystone provision. And there are other points of disagreement between the GOP-controlled House and Democratic-controlled Senate, including how to pay for transportation programs and how much leverage the federal government should have over how states spend their aid money. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has said it's unlikely Congress will pass a final bill until after the November elections.

### A-to “Plan popular with the Public, helps Obama agenda”

#### ( ) Public popularity does not help Obama on this issue – prefer issue-specific internal link.

Tomasky ‘11

(Newsweek/Daily Beast special correspondent Michael Tomasky is also editor of Democracy: A Journal of Ideas – Newsweek – September 19, 2011 – lexis)

The most pertinent bill in Congress is the one Obama name-checked in his speech: an infrastructure-bank proposal sponsored by Democratic Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts and Republican Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas. It's designed specifically to try to win bipartisan backing: the bank's initial funding would be only $10 billion; it would have to become self-sufficient within a few years; it would be overseen by an independent board; there's even a provision for making sure rural projects don't get shafted. The public-private nature of the proposal is key, says Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut, lead sponsor of a companion House bill. "If we can really bring clarity to that," she says, "we have a shot." Hutchison, who got interested in infrastructure when George H.W. Bush appointed her to a commission, says she thinks the bill could appeal to Republicans, but she hasn't spent much time talking it up to her colleagues. "It's a kind of complicated and in-the-weeds type of legislation, so I have not tried to get a big sponsorship," she says. Kerry holds on to optimism. "The idea is so powerful and such common sense that my hope is that the better angels will prevail for the good of the country," he says. A member of the recently formed "supercommittee" tasked with meeting the spending numbers agreed to in the debt-ceiling deal, Kerry says that the panel has a broad-enough mandate that his bill could be included in any deficit-cutting agreement. But that's an awfully tall order. Janet Kavinoky of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce says the chamber endorsed the Kerry-Hutchison plan and has backed the infrastructure-bank idea since 1982. Trying to get Republicans on board, she says, has been daunting. "We've got several who say, 'We believe you, and we'd like to do this,' but getting people to say publicly that they want to make infrastructure an exception is a real challenge." This is all the more maddening because support for such investments among the general public is broad and deep and crosses ideological boundaries, notes Nicholas Turner, who heads transportation initiatives for the Rockefeller Foundation. "The bipartisan support was stunning," Turner says. In a poll the foundation commissioned in February, even 59 percent of Tea Party supporters considered infrastructure investment to be vital. But as long as Barack Obama is for it, the Tea Partiers in Washington will fight it.

### A-to “Plan builds Dems Unity”

#### ( ) Plan can’t even build capital with Dems – agreement over substance gets overwhelmed by funding fights

Freemark ‘10

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “After Two Years of Democratic Control in Washington, A Transportation Roundup” –

December 29th, 2010 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2010/12/29/after-two-years-of-democratic-control-in-washington-a-transportation-roundup/)

Advances on livability and intercity rail were overshadowed by the inability of the Congress to legislate multi-year transportation funding. Republican control of the House beginning in January changes the equation significantly. The 2008 elections brought the full reigns of the executive and legislative branches of the U.S. government under the control of the Democratic Party, power that enabled the passage of the stimulus, health care reform, and, this month, a huge package of tax cuts. Though transportation policy was clearly not the priority of either the Obama Administration or the Congress, the decision by voters last month to install a Republican Party-controlled House of Representatives is likely to alter the government’s approach on the issues quite significantly. Thus it is worth looking back to examine the record of federal government over the last two years. The Obama Administration and the Democratic Congress have changed some aspects of federal policy significantly, advancing grant programs that reward cities for developing alternative transit systems and seriously promoting the national intercity rail project. A full-scale change in Washington’s approach to transportation, however, has yet to be accomplished. The most significant lost cause has been, of course, the inability of the Congress to move forward on a multi-year transportation reauthorization bill. Though then-Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure James Oberstar (D-MN) proposed a draft of such legislation in June 2009, his effort went mostly unnoticed on Capitol Hill. It was never brought to the attention of the full House of Representatives and the relevant Senate committees never bothered to consider it. The biggest problem: Party control over Washington or not, the Democrats could not come to any sort of agreement about how to fund transportation, an increasing problem because gas tax revenues are falling relative to both inflation and the public need. President Obama refused to consider raising fuel fees in the midst of the recession and directed his press secretary to shoot down a promising alternative, the vehicle miles traveled fee. This meant repeated temporary extensions of the expired transportation legislation, SAFETEA-LU, paid for through general fund expenditures rather than the fuel tax. These problems have yet to be resolved, and are unlikely to change over the course of the next two years.

### A-to “Plan Spun as Jobs-Creation”

#### ( ) Spinning plan as “jobs creation” hurts the President.

Snider ‘11

Adam Snider is a transportation reporter for POLITICO Pro. Before joining POLITICO, he covered transportation issues for nearly four years at BNA, where his work won the company’s Beltz Award for Editorial Excellence. Politico.com – October 17, 2011 – lexis

The Obama administration continues to fight for its American Jobs Act as a way to boost the sagging transportation construction sector. But Democrats, Republicans and the construction industry have all said the White House's focus is misdirected. A six-year highway and transit reauthorization is the best possible way to boost the economy, lawmakers say. And backers of the long-term plans say singular focus on the jobs bill - though it puts a positive light on pressing infrastructure issues that don't always receive national attention - has been a distraction. "Mr. President, the country doesn't need another stimulus like the last one" Pete Ruane, president of the American Road & Transportation Builders Association, wrote in a Washington Times op-ed in September. "The 2009 Recovery Act road and bridge initiative set the movement toward really improving the nation's transportation infrastructure back big time." Opponents of President Barack Obama's proposal for $50 billion in stimulus-style transportation spending, along with $10 billion to capitalize a national infrastructure bank, say it's akin to putting a Band-Aid on a bullet wound. A better solution, they say, is a long-term, well-funded reauthorization that would create far more jobs than another round of stimulus spending. For all the talk about a second round of stimulus spending, Obama's proposal would offer less money for roads and transit systems than one year of regular program funds. The stimulus-style spending also suffers from bad timing - a number of states will soon halt construction for the winter, meaning the sought-after jobs largely won't appear until next spring anyway. But the White House wants to create jobs as quickly as possible and recognizes that if something sidetracks the reauthorization, Obama might not be around to sign a multiyear bill when it is finally approved. Eyeing the immediate future, the administration keeps fighting for another stimulus while staying out of the reauthorization debate. West Virginia Rep. Nick Rahall, the top Democrat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, says the White House's focus on the jobs proposal distracts from the much-needed long-term bill. "We ought to plow ahead and do a robust six-year bill and step up to the plate and do what the American people are in need of - and that's jobs," Rahall said last week.

### A-to: Recent Bill Proves Plan = Bipart

#### Recent bill only extended current funding – it didn’t massively increase spending like the plan.

Reuters 6/29/12 (US Congress to vote on transportation, student loan bill, http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/06/29/usa-transportation-idINL2E8HS60520120629)

Congressional negotiators have cleared the way for votes on legislation covering transportation construction, student loan rates, and flood insurance after finalizing a compromise agreement on how to pay for those priorities. The House and Senate were set to consider the measure on Friday, one day before temporary funding for highway, bridge and transit projects was to expire and three days before an increase in federal student loan rates was set to take effect. "We have a number of issues we're trying to work through," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said, expressing disappointment that Congress would not act on the legislation Thursday night. "That's the way it is." Congress took more than two years to reach a transportation bill covering millions of construction jobs, and did so only because the potential consequences of inaction in a shaky economy proved too risky in an election year. Ambitious proposals to shore up U.S. infrastructure gave way to a bill that basically keeps transportation funding at current levels. The blueprint was based on a bipartisan proposal by the Democratic-led Senate that is supported by the Obama administration.

## --- High-Speed Rail Specific Links – Neg ---

### Neg Link – High-Speed Rail = Hurts Agenda

#### ( ) High Speed Rail policy would suck-in the White House and drain capital.

Freemark ‘11

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The White House Stakes Its Political Capital on a Massive Intercity Rail Plan $53 billion proposed for investments over the next six years. The President wants to “Win the Future,” but will his Republican opponents relax their opposition to rail spending? Vice President Joe Biden spoke in Philadelphia this morning to announce that the Obama Administration intends to request from Congress $8 billion in federal funds for the advancement of a national high-speed rail system as part of a six-year transportation reauthorization bill. The White House’s commitment to fast trains has been evident throughout the Administration’s two-year lifespan, beginning with the addition of $8 billion for the mode in the 2009 stimulus bill and continued with $2.5 billion included in the Fiscal Year 2010 budget. Yet this new funding, which would add up to $53 billion over the six-year period, is remarkable for its ambition. It is clear that President Obama’s 2012 re-election campaign, already being framed in terms of “winning the future,” will hinge partially on whether voters agree with his assessment of the importance of investing in the nation’s rail transport infrastructure. In his speech, Mr. Biden argued that American wealth was founded on “out-building” the competition. Infrastructure, he noted, is the “veins and the arteries of commerce.” The President and his team will be making this case to the American people the next two years, hoping that the public comes to endorse this message of national advancement through construction. Whether the proposal — to be laid out in more detail with next week’s introduction the President’s full proposed FY 2012 budget — has any chance of success is undoubtedly worth questioning. Republicans have campaigned wholeheartedly against rail improvement projects in Iowa, Ohio, and Wisconsin; even Florida’s project, which would require no operating subsidies once in service, hangs in the balance. But as part of the larger transportation reauthorization legislation, which is apparently slated to move forward by this summer, a real expansion in high-speed rail funding seems possible, especially if Mr. Obama pressures the Democratic-controlled Senate to push hard for it.

#### ( ) Supporting High=Seed Rail drains capital – Election demographics prove

Freemark ‘12

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With a House like this, what advances can American transportation policy make? Actions by members of the U.S. House over the past week suggest that Republican opposition to the funding of alternative transportation has developed into an all-out ideological battle. Though their efforts are unlikely to advance much past the doors of their chamber, the policy recklessness they have displayed speaks truly poorly of the future of the nation’s mobility systems. By Friday last week, the following measures were brought to the attention of the GOP-led body: The Ways and Means Committee acted to eliminate the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund, destroying public transportation’s source of steady federal financing for capital projects, first established in the 1980s. The members of the committee determined that to remedy the fact that gas taxes have not been increased since 1993,\* the most appropriate course was not to raise the tax (as would make sense considering inflation, more efficient vehicles, and the negative environmental and congestion-related effects of gas consumption) but rather to transfer all of its revenues to the construction of highways. Public transit, on the other hand, would have to fight for an appropriation from the general fund, losing its traditional guarantee of funding and forcing any spending on it to be offset by reductions in other government programs.\*\* This as the GOP has made evident its intention to reduce funding for that same general fund through a continued push for income tax reductions, even for the highest earners. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved a transportation reauthorization bill on partisan lines (with the exception of one Republican who voted against it, Tom Petri of Wisconsin) that would do nothing to increase funding for transportation infrastructure in the United States over the next five years despite the fact that there is considerable demand for a large improvement in the nation’s road, rail, and transit networks just to keep them in a state of good repair, let alone expand them to meet the needs of a growing population. The committee voted to eliminate all federal requirements that states and localities spend 10% of their highway funding on alternative transportation projects (CMAQ), such as Safe Routes to School, sidewalks, or cycling infrastructure, despite the fact the those mandated investments are often the only ones of their sort that are actually made by many states. The committee eliminated the Obama Administration’s trademark TIGER program, which has funded dozens of medium-scale projects throughout the country with a innovative merit-based approach. Instead, virtually all decisions on project funding would be made by state DOTs, which not unjustly have acquired a reputation as only interested in highways. Meanwhile, members couldn’t resist suggesting that only “true” high-speed rail projects (over 150 mph top speed) be financed by the government — even as they conveniently defunded the only such scheme in the country, the California High-Speed Rail program. The same committee added provisions to federal law that would provide special incentives for privatization of new transportation projects — despite the fact that there is no overwhelming evidence that such mechanisms save the public any money at all. And under the committee’s legislation, the government would provide extra money to localities that contract out their transit services to private operators, simply as a reward for being profit-motivated. Meanwhile, House leadership recommended funding any gaps in highway spending not covered by the Trust Fund through a massive expansion in domestic energy production that would destroy thousands of acres of pristine wilderness, do little for decreasing the American reliance on foreign oil, and reaffirm the nation’s addiction to carbon-heavy energy sources and ecological devastation. New energy production of this sort is highly speculative in nature and would produce very few revenues in the first years of implementation. As a special treat, the same leadership proposed overruling President Obama’s decision to cancel the Keystone XL pipeline by bundling an approval for it into the transportation bill. This litany of disastrous policies were endorsed by the large majority of Republicans on each committee, with the exception of two GOP members in House Ways and Means\*\*\* and one in the Transportation Committee who voted against the bill, though the vote was entirely along party lines for an amendment attempting to reverse course on the elimination of the Mass Transit Account. Fortunately, these ideas are unlikely to make it into the code thanks to the Senate, whose members, both Democratic and Republican, have different ideas about what makes an acceptable transportation bill. I’ll get back to that in a bit. The House’s effort to move forward on a new multiyear federal transportation bill — eagerly awaited by policy wonks for three years — follows intense and repeated Republican obstructions of the Obama Administration’s most pioneering efforts to alter the nation’s transportation policy in favor of investments that improve daily life for inhabitants of American metropolitan areas. As part of that process, federally funded high-speed rail, streetcar, and transit center projects have been shot down by local politicians as a waste of money, even as road construction has continued apace. The Tea Party’s zany obsession with the supposed U.N. plot to take over American land use decisions through Agenda 21 seems to have infected GOP House members and even presidential contenders. Michele Bachmann’s claim in 2008 that Democrats are attempting to force people onto light rail lines to travel between their housing “tenements” and government jobs may have made it into the mind of Newt Gingrich, who recently made the claim that the “elite” in New York City who ride the subway and live in high-rise condos don’t understand “normal” Americans. What kind of language is this? In the Senate, there is clear evidence that the hard-core proposals of the House will not become law. The upper body’s Environment and Public Works Committee unanimously endorsed a different type of transportation reauthorization, one that would last only two years but that would reform and simplify the grants provided by the Department of Transportation so that they are more based on merit in such matters as ecological sensitivity and the creation of livable communities. Similarly, in the Senate Banking Committee, the transit portion of the proposed bill (approved unanimously) would maintain funding guarantees and allow transit agencies to use federal dollars for operations spending during periods of high unemployment, which would be an excellent policy if pushed into law. How the Senate will be able to compromise with the House in time for the March 31st deadline set by the current legislation is up in the air. The strange and laudable part of the Senate side of the story — at least as compared to the House — is the bipartisan nature of decision-making there. Why are Republicans in the Senate promoting a transportation bill that explicitly would promote multimodalism as a goal, in a contrast to the highway focus of their peers in the House? Why are they accepting environmental criteria as appropriate measures of quality in transportation policy? Perhaps the Democratic Party’s control of the Senate makes fighting such ideas a waste of time. Or perhaps longer Senate terms in office allow clearer, more reasonable thinking. Whatever the reason, in the long-term, it is hard to envision reversing the continued growth of the GOP’s strident opposition to sustainable transportation investments in the House. As I have documented, density of population correlates strongly and positively with the Democratic Party vote share in Congressional elections; the result has been that the House Republicans have few electoral reasons to articulate policies that benefit cities. Those who believe in the importance of a sane transportation policy need to make more of an effort to advance a sane transportation politics to residents of suburban and rural areas, who also benefit from efforts to improve environmental quality, mobility alternatives, and congestion relief, but perhaps are not yet convinced of that fact. Doing so would encourage politicians hoping for votes outside of the city core — Democratic or Republican — to promote alternatives to the all-highways meme that currently rules the GOP in the House.

#### ( ) High Speed Rail policy ensures loss of political capital – party demographics prove

Freemark ‘11

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January 25th, 2011 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2011/01/25/understanding-the-republican-partys-reluctance-to-invest-in-transit-infrastructure/)

Conservatives in Congress threaten to shut down funding for transit construction projects and investments in intercity rail. One doesn’t have to look far to see why these programs aren’t priorities for them. Late last week, a group of more than 165 of the most conservative members of the House of Representatives, the Republican Study Committee, released a report that detailed an agenda to reduce federal spending by $2.5 trillion over ten years. Spurred on by increasing public concern about the mounting national debt, the group argues that the only choice is to make huge, painful cuts in government programs. With the House now in the hands of the Republican Party, these suggestions are likely to be seriously considered. Transportation policy is prominent on the group’s list, no matter President Obama’s call for investments in the nation’s transportation infrastructure, expected to be put forward in tonight’s state of the union address. Not only would all funding for Amtrak be cut, representing about $1.5 billion a year, but the Obama Administration’s nascent high-speed rail program would be stopped in its tracks. A $150 million commitment to Washington’s Metro system would evaporate. Even more dramatically, the New Starts program, which funds new rail and bus capital projects at a cost of $2 billion a year, would simply disappear. In other words, the Republican group suggests that all national government aid for the construction of new rail or bus lines, intercity and intra-city, be eliminated. These cuts are extreme, and they’re not likely to make it to the President’s desk, not only because of the Democratic Party’s continued control over the Senate but also because some powerful Republicans in the House remain committed to supporting public transportation and rail programs. But how can we explain the open hostility of so many members of the GOP to any federal spending at all for non-automobile transportation? Why does a transfer of power from the Democratic Party to the Republicans engender such political problems for urban transit? We can find clues in considering the districts from which members of the House of Representatives of each party are elected. As shown in the chart above (in Log scale), there was a relatively strong positive correlation between density of congressional districts and the vote share of the Democratic candidate in the 2010 elections. Of densest quartile of districts with a race between a Democrat and a Republican — 105 of them, with a density of 1,935 people per square miles or more — the Democratic candidate won 89. Of the quartile of districts with the lowest densities — 98 people per square mile and below — Democratic candidates only won 23 races. As the chart below demonstrates (in regular scale), this pattern is most obvious in the nation’s big cities, where Democratic Party vote shares are huge when densities are very high. This pattern is not a coincidence. The Democratic Party holds most of its power in the nation’s cities, whereas the GOP retains greater strength in the exurbs and rural areas. The two parties generally fight it out over the suburbs. In essence, the base of the two parties is becoming increasingly split in spatial terms: The Democrats’ most vocal constituents live in cities, whereas the Republicans’ power brokers would never agree to what some frame as a nightmare of tenements and light rail. What does this mean? When there is a change in political power in Washington, the differences on transportation policy and other urban issues between the parties reveal themselves as very stark. Republicans in the House of Representatives know that very few of their constituents would benefit directly from increased spending on transit, for instance, so they propose gutting the nation’s commitment to new public transportation lines when they enter office. Starting two years ago, Democrats pushed the opposite agenda, devoting billions to urban-level projects that would have been impossible under the Bush Administration. Highway funding, on the other hand, has remained relatively stable throughout, and that’s no surprise, either: The middle 50% of congressional districts, representing about half of the American population, features populations that live in neighborhoods of low to moderate densities, fully reliant on cars to get around. It is only in the densest sections of the country that transit (or affordable housing, for instance) is even an issue — which is why it appears to be mostly of concern to the Democratic Party. Republicans in the House for the most part do not have to answer to voters who are interested in improved public transportation. This situation, of course, should be of significant concern to those who would advocate for better transit. To put matters simply, few House Republicans have any electoral reason to promote such projects, and thus, for the most part they don’t. But that produces a self-reinforcing loop; noting the lack of GOP support for urban needs, city voters push further towards the Democrats. And sensing that the Democratic Party is a collection of urbanites, those from elsewhere push away. It’s hard to know how to reverse this problem. Many Republicans, of course, represent urban areas at various levels of government. No Democrat, for instance, has won the race for New York’s mayoralty since 1989. And the Senate is a wholly different ballgame, since most states have a variety of habitation types. As Bruce McFarling wrote this week, there are plenty of reasons for Republicans even in places of moderate density to support such investments as intercity rail. But the peculiar dynamics of U.S. House members’ relatively small constituent groups, in combination with the predilection of state legislatures to produce gerrymandered districts designed specifically to ensure the reelection of incumbents, has resulted in a situation in which there is only one Republican-controlled congressional district with a population density of over 7,000 people per square mile. And that’s in Staten Island, hardly a bastion of urbanism. With such little representation for urban issues in today’s House leadership, real advances on transport issues seem likely to have to wait.

#### ( ) Oil lobby link:

#### They strongly-oppose HSR

RePass ‘11

(James P. RePass - Principal Executive of the National Corridors Initiative, a bi-partisan business and environmental transportation advocacy group. Primarily engaged in operating the non-profit National Corridors Initiative since its founding in 1989, he has a private-sector background and broad private-sector experience. Providence Journal – June 9, 2011 – lexis)

Recently, word began to dribble out of the Midwest that a game-changing event regarding the future of America s high-speed-rail program might be afoot. Since the election of Barack Obama, pro-rail stories have made the national news more than at any time in decades; keeping his campaign promise, the new president committed $8 billion in stimulus funds in his April 2009 high-speed-rail plan, which identified 10 initial corridors ranging from 100 to 600 miles long. Another $5 billion in federal capital for new rail programs was also created that year. That $13 billion is kick-starting high-speed rail as the first Interstate Highway System construction programs did: States that organized and asked, got the money, and built their segments first. That s the technique President Eisenhower used, pitting one region against another in a competition to get superhighways built. There is, however, a big difference between rail now and highways then: Rail has a well-funded enemy, the oil lobby. It pays experts to issue reports that debunk rail, loudly and dishonestly. Still, America is going forward with high-speed rail, just as we did with the Interstate Highway System a half century ago, and the competition to be first is starting to get hot.

#### Oil lobby key to agenda and causes vote-switching

Stein ‘11

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In the month leading up to an early May vote over whether to expand oil drilling in the Gulf of Mexico and open the coastal waters of Virginia for exploration, three of the nation's top oil companies made donations through their political action committees to 26 House lawmakers. All but one of those lawmakers, including five Democrats, ended up supporting the oil-industry-backed bill. The 26th lawmaker, Rep. Sam Johnson (R-Tex.), abstained from voting, according to data compiled for The Huffington Post by the good government group Public Campaign. The House of Representatives ultimately passed the Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act by a 266 to 149 margin, meaning that even if these 26 lawmakers had flipped their votes, the measure would have passed anyway. The amount donated by Exxon, Chevron and ConocoPhillips -- information for other oil company PACs has not yet been made public -- was a relative pittance: Just $40,000 in total was distributed among the 26 House members in the month leading up to the vote. By contrast, the 67 co-sponsors of the Restarting American Offshore Leasing Now Act have received a combined total of $8.8 million in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry over the course of their careers. That said, the last minute tending the oil industry paid to House members is emblematic of how invested it was in the outcome of that particular legislation and its ability to quickly flex its political clout. "The pattern doesn't get more clear than this -- those who sided with Big Oil received campaign contributions," said David Donnelly, National Campaigns Director for Public Campaign Action Fund. "Those who didn't got nothing. Oil companies walk away with record profits while sticking it to Americans at the pump. But it's really these politicians who are in the tank."

#### ( ) Fossil Fuel lobby has enormous influence on Congress

Cobb ‘11

(Kurt Cobb is a columnist who writes frequently on energy and the environment. His column appears on the Paris-based science news site Scitizen and his work has been featured on Energy Bulletin, Common Dreams, Le Monde Diplomatique, and many other sites. He is a founding member of the Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas — and serves on the board of the Arthur Morgan Institute for Community Solutions. Economic Forecasts & Opinions – August 13, 2011 – lexis)

And so, I do agree with my economist acquaintance that taxation could be an elegant method for facilitating an energy transition. But is such taxation practical and even adequate? One might point to Europe where extremely high fuel taxes have been part of the reason that the average European uses one-half the amount of energy of the average American. Whether high fuel taxes could become a reality in the United States is an open question. So far no American politician has dared to propose a level of taxation comparable to Europe. The main reason for this is that the United States still has enormous fossil fuel reserves and as a consequence a well-funded fossil fuel lobby that has a stranglehold on the U.S. Congress. Europe is now largely bereft of fossil fuels and therefore has a fossil fuel lobby without the necessary influence to prevent high energy taxes and heavy expenditures on public transportation.

#### ( ) GOP opposes ANY support for High-Speed Rail

Freemark ‘11

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “With Diminished Expectations, President Obama Renews Attempt to Expand Transportation Financing” – September 9th, 2011 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2011/09/09/with-diminished-expectations-president-obama-renews-attempt-to-expand-transportation-financing/)

A year and two months away from the United States’ next big election, politics in Washington are at a virtual standstill, with Democrats and Republicans completely at odds with one another when it comes to government policies. The situation has aggravated an already difficult funding situation for the nation’s transportation, which lacks an adequate funding source and faces a murky future. Meanwhile, the unemployment situation worsens. President Obama’s speech tonight, in which he introduced a proposed American Jobs Act, was designed to stake a strong ground in opposition to the anti-investment GOP. In addition to a number of other policies, it promoted transportation investment as a great opportunity for reducing the rate of joblessness and improving the sometimes miserable condition of the country’s highways, rail, and transit. While the speech is unlikely to result in much Congressional action — Republicans do not seem inclined to support any of the President’s initiatives — it came across as thoughtful and in line with the nation’s great economic needs of the moment. For transportation, the bill would direct $50 billion to the construction of highways, transit, rail, and aviation. Another measure would deposit $10 billion into an infrastructure bank. Both funds would identify and sponsor the projects most likely to spur job growth as quickly as possible. Though the proposal was not laid out in further detail tonight, it represented another variation of the ramp-up in investments in transportation the Obama Administration has been attempting to promote for several years now. Even so, the project was a clear step back from the far more ambitious proposals Mr. Obama made at the beginning of the year, when he suggested directing $70.4 billion to highways, $18.5 billion to transit grants, and $8.0 billion to high-speed rail in 2012 alone. In response to the President’s new plans, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) criticized him for being unwilling to describe how the investments would be paid for, evidently unwilling to accept the Keynesian evidence that in difficult economic periods it is a good idea for governments to use deficit funding to support the economy. Chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee John Mica (R-FL) immediately articulated a position against the plans for the infrastructure bank, arguing that states should take on the responsibility. Just yesterday, the Republican leaders of the House Appropriations Committee unveiled their proposals for massive reductions in spending at the U.S. Department of Transportation, reducing highway expenditures to $27.7 billion in 2012 (from $41.8 billion in 2011) and transit formula spending to $5.2 billion (from $8.3 billion). No new New Start or Small Start transit capital grants would be funded. The high-speed rail program, which had once been one of Mr. Obama’s signature policies, would be entirely cut. These are austerity measures completely out of step with an economy desperately in need of stimulus, job creation, and infrastructure improvements.

#### ( ) Endorsing High Speed rail would drain White House capital

Freemark ‘10

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “For Advocates of Alternative Transportation, A Difficult Election Day” – November 3rd, 2010 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2010/11/03/for-advocates-of-alternative-transportation-a-difficult-election-day/)

With major exception of California, high-speed rail projects put in limbo nationwide after Republican gubernatorial wins. GOP takeover of the U.S. House is likely to result in continued difficulties passing a transportation bill, let alone a progressive one. The 2010 midterm election wasn’t about transportation. But the takeover of several governorships, many Senate seats, and the U.S. House of Representatives in general by the Republican Party portends difficult times ahead for both the Obama Administration’s agenda and the Democratic Party in general. For advocates who hope for the creation of a major high-speed rail system connecting the country’s largest cities, a Republican-led House is not good news: The party’s chosen spokesmen have been criticizing President Obama’s fast train initiative since it was announced in early 2009 and their rhetoric has been mostly unchanged. In general, Republican senators have been unwilling to vote for bills that have aided in the production of alternative infrastructure. The Bush Administration, the most recent example of Republican sentiment, was anti-rail and in favor of decreased funding for agencies like the Federal Transit Administration. There are, of course, some GOP members who haven’t been enemies of the program, notably likely new House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman John Mica of Florida; it is possible that he and people like him will play a more prominent role over the next two years. Yet the more problematic aspect of the GOP’s new power is the party’s unity around the issue of fiscal austerity. Whatever one’s personal thinking about the importance of reducing budget deficits, the fact remains that transportation is largely funded by the government, so a decrease in public expenditures in general likely means fewer funds for highway and transit projects. There is little hope for exceptionalism in transportation: Considering their votes on the 2009 Stimulus bill and their complete opposition to increasing taxes (which will be necessary for any transportation program), Republicans appear not to share the philosophy of the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom, for instance, whose leaders have cut back massively on social programs even as infrastructure spending has been maintained.

#### ( ) High-Speed Rail legislation drains capital – angers GOP

Freemark ‘10

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The next few years are likely to be difficult for advocates of public transportation because of increased hostility to government investment. 1987, 1991, 1995, 1998, and 2005 share a significant feature: In each of those years, members of Congress were able to come together to pass a multi-year bill that codified how the U.S. government was to collect revenues for and allocate expenditures on transportation. Not coincidentally, in each of those years, one political party controlled both the House and Senate. In the 112th Congress, set to enter office in just one month, Democrats will run the Senate and Republicans the House. This split control will make passing any legislation difficult. Unlike in those aforementioned years, there is little chance that this group of legislators will be able to pass a multi-year transportation bill either in 2011 or 2012. These circumstances, combined with increasingly strident conservative rhetoric about the need to reduce government expenditures, may fundamentally challenge the advances the Obama Administration and the Democratic Congress have been able to make over the past two years in expanding the nation’s intercity rail network, promoting a vision for livable communities, and reinforcing funding for urban transit. Continuing those efforts would require identifying sources of increased revenue and a steadfast commitment to reducing the role of the automobile in American society. But there is little support for increased taxes from any side of the political table and there is a fundamental aversion from the mainstream Republican Party to the investments that have defined the government’s recent transportation strategy. Meanwhile, declining power of the purse resulting from a fuel tax last increased in 1993 means that the existing situation is unacceptable, at least if there is any sense that something must be done to expand investment in transportation infrastructure. Gridlock — and myopic thinking about how to improve mobility in the United States — will ensue.

#### ( ) Their link turns are dated. HSR no longer builds capital.

St. Petersburg Times ‘11

(April 3, 2011 – lexis)

Rod Diridon, executive director of the Mineta Transportation Institute, says high-speed rail was a bipartisan issue before Obama's election, but now, "the policy of the Republican Party is to undermine any successes Obama might have." The exception: California, where former Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger advocated for high-speed rail. Ironically, California's high-speed environment is brighter because of money from projects cancelled in other states. Other factors play major roles in America's failure to embrace high-speed rail, Diridon says. "The automobile and petroleum industries have fought any kind of non-petroleum transportation," he says.

#### ( ) HSR drains capital – California HSR scandals.

Doyle ‘12

(Michael Doyle is a reporter based in Washington, D.C. He covers California issues for the Modesto Bee and Fresno Bee and legal affairs for the McClatchy's Washington Bureau. McClatchy Washington Bureau – March 8, 2012 – lexis)

Federal auditors are now scrutinizing California's politically embattled high-speed rail program, in a search for facts that could turn up the heat. Prompted by Republican congressional skeptics, the non-partisan Government Accountability Office has started examining some of the most crucial questions surrounding the California project, including cost, ridership and potential ticket prices. "The fact that they are looking at it is good news for the taxpayer, and it's good news for the high-speed rail authority itself," Rep. Jeff Denham, R-Turlock, Calif., said in an interview Thursday. "We shouldn't just go out and waste money." The government watchdog agency confirmed Thursday that it is undertaking the California high-speed rail study in response to a congressional request made last December. A dozen House members, including Denham, House Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy, R-Bakersfield, and eight others from California, made the original request. With the help of some $3.6 billion in federal funds, combined with state dollars, the California High-Speed Rail Authority intends to start construction on an initial route connecting Bakersfield to Merced. Ultimately, the state plan calls for high-speed rail lines connecting Los Angeles with San Francisco, at a currently estimated price tag of some $98 billion. The federal auditors are supposed to probe some of the plan's most sensitive aspects, including: -- The amount of state and federal money that will be needed both to complete the project and to operate it annually. --The accuracy of the ridership projections relied upon by state officials in determining cost-effectiveness. The California High-Speed Rail Authority has projected attracting between 88 million and 117 million passengers annually by the year 2030. -- The price of tickets necessary to keep the rail project self-sustaining without continued reliance on government subsidies. For its own studies, the rail authority pegged ticket costs at half the average airfare between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

### President Gets Involved – High Speed Rail-Specific

#### ( ) White House would have to get involved in High-Speed Rail policy

Freemark ‘10

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “After Two Years of Democratic Control in Washington, A Transportation Roundup” –

December 29th, 2010 -- http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2010/12/29/after-two-years-of-democratic-control-in-washington-a-transportation-roundup/)

Two years of Democratic Party power in Washington, then, meant quite a few improvements to the nation’s transportation policy-making, bringing to the fore projects that have been largely ignored by the government for decades. The Obama Administration and its allies in Congress have made clear their collective interest in funding projects that are founded on the idea that transportation can be an important element in the creation of livable cities. This represents a significant and positive change from past federal policy. But there is more work to be done. Republican control of the House of Representatives is unlikely to simplify the extension of many of the new programs undertaken over the past two years — from high-speed rail to TIGER. Though these programs have faced some controversy and should be made more transparent, they have been well-managed, largely fair in their distribution of grants, and, crucially, have spread funding to cities across the country, in both Red and Blue states. In order to assure their future, President Obama will have to articulate their positive effects nationwide and advance ways to fund them that appear bipartisan and consensus-worthy. Will he make the effort to do so when the nation has so many other pressing needs? Is there enough political support on either side of the aisle to maintain a major federal commitment to transport policies that do not revolve around the construction of highways?

#### Obama will push High Speed Rail irrespective of GOP opposition.

Laing ‘12

Keith Laing is a national political journalist who works for The Hill newspaper in Washington, D.C. At The Hill, Keith covers transportation policy in Congress and manages the paper’s Transportation Report blog. Prior to coming to The Hill, Keith worked for the News Service of Florida, where he tracked the Florida state legislature with a focus on transportation and energy issues. The Hill – May 30th – http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/railroads/230145-obama-administration-officials-to-speak-at-high-speed-rail-conference

The Obama administration has maintained its push for high-speed rail in the face of staunch opposition from Republicans in Congress and in state governments. The president called early in the first half of his tenure in office for a nationwide network of high-speed railways that he said would rival the reach of the interstate highway system, and he included $8 billion for construction in the 2009 economic stimulus.

**--- Links versus Other Specific Affs ---**

### Alternative Transportation Affs Drain Capital

#### ( ) Supporting Alternative transportation drains capital – Election demographics prove

Freemark ‘12

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – February 6th, 2012 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/02/06/time-to-fight/)

With a House like this, what advances can American transportation policy make? Actions by members of the U.S. House over the past week suggest that Republican opposition to the funding of alternative transportation has developed into an all-out ideological battle. Though their efforts are unlikely to advance much past the doors of their chamber, the policy recklessness they have displayed speaks truly poorly of the future of the nation’s mobility systems. By Friday last week, the following measures were brought to the attention of the GOP-led body: The Ways and Means Committee acted to eliminate the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund, destroying public transportation’s source of steady federal financing for capital projects, first established in the 1980s. The members of the committee determined that to remedy the fact that gas taxes have not been increased since 1993,\* the most appropriate course was not to raise the tax (as would make sense considering inflation, more efficient vehicles, and the negative environmental and congestion-related effects of gas consumption) but rather to transfer all of its revenues to the construction of highways. Public transit, on the other hand, would have to fight for an appropriation from the general fund, losing its traditional guarantee of funding and forcing any spending on it to be offset by reductions in other government programs.\*\* This as the GOP has made evident its intention to reduce funding for that same general fund through a continued push for income tax reductions, even for the highest earners. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved a transportation reauthorization bill on partisan lines (with the exception of one Republican who voted against it, Tom Petri of Wisconsin) that would do nothing to increase funding for transportation infrastructure in the United States over the next five years despite the fact that there is considerable demand for a large improvement in the nation’s road, rail, and transit networks just to keep them in a state of good repair, let alone expand them to meet the needs of a growing population. The committee voted to eliminate all federal requirements that states and localities spend 10% of their highway funding on alternative transportation projects (CMAQ), such as Safe Routes to School, sidewalks, or cycling infrastructure, despite the fact the those mandated investments are often the only ones of their sort that are actually made by many states. The committee eliminated the Obama Administration’s trademark TIGER program, which has funded dozens of medium-scale projects throughout the country with a innovative merit-based approach. Instead, virtually all decisions on project funding would be made by state DOTs, which not unjustly have acquired a reputation as only interested in highways. Meanwhile, members couldn’t resist suggesting that only “true” high-speed rail projects (over 150 mph top speed) be financed by the government — even as they conveniently defunded the only such scheme in the country, the California High-Speed Rail program. The same committee added provisions to federal law that would provide special incentives for privatization of new transportation projects — despite the fact that there is no overwhelming evidence that such mechanisms save the public any money at all. And under the committee’s legislation, the government would provide extra money to localities that contract out their transit services to private operators, simply as a reward for being profit-motivated. Meanwhile, House leadership recommended funding any gaps in highway spending not covered by the Trust Fund through a massive expansion in domestic energy production that would destroy thousands of acres of pristine wilderness, do little for decreasing the American reliance on foreign oil, and reaffirm the nation’s addiction to carbon-heavy energy sources and ecological devastation. New energy production of this sort is highly speculative in nature and would produce very few revenues in the first years of implementation. As a special treat, the same leadership proposed overruling President Obama’s decision to cancel the Keystone XL pipeline by bundling an approval for it into the transportation bill. This litany of disastrous policies were endorsed by the large majority of Republicans on each committee, with the exception of two GOP members in House Ways and Means\*\*\* and one in the Transportation Committee who voted against the bill, though the vote was entirely along party lines for an amendment attempting to reverse course on the elimination of the Mass Transit Account. Fortunately, these ideas are unlikely to make it into the code thanks to the Senate, whose members, both Democratic and Republican, have different ideas about what makes an acceptable transportation bill. I’ll get back to that in a bit. The House’s effort to move forward on a new multiyear federal transportation bill — eagerly awaited by policy wonks for three years — follows intense and repeated Republican obstructions of the Obama Administration’s most pioneering efforts to alter the nation’s transportation policy in favor of investments that improve daily life for inhabitants of American metropolitan areas. As part of that process, federally funded high-speed rail, streetcar, and transit center projects have been shot down by local politicians as a waste of money, even as road construction has continued apace. The Tea Party’s zany obsession with the supposed U.N. plot to take over American land use decisions through Agenda 21 seems to have infected GOP House members and even presidential contenders. Michele Bachmann’s claim in 2008 that Democrats are attempting to force people onto light rail lines to travel between their housing “tenements” and government jobs may have made it into the mind of Newt Gingrich, who recently made the claim that the “elite” in New York City who ride the subway and live in high-rise condos don’t understand “normal” Americans. What kind of language is this? In the Senate, there is clear evidence that the hard-core proposals of the House will not become law. The upper body’s Environment and Public Works Committee unanimously endorsed a different type of transportation reauthorization, one that would last only two years but that would reform and simplify the grants provided by the Department of Transportation so that they are more based on merit in such matters as ecological sensitivity and the creation of livable communities. Similarly, in the Senate Banking Committee, the transit portion of the proposed bill (approved unanimously) would maintain funding guarantees and allow transit agencies to use federal dollars for operations spending during periods of high unemployment, which would be an excellent policy if pushed into law. How the Senate will be able to compromise with the House in time for the March 31st deadline set by the current legislation is up in the air. The strange and laudable part of the Senate side of the story — at least as compared to the House — is the bipartisan nature of decision-making there. Why are Republicans in the Senate promoting a transportation bill that explicitly would promote multimodalism as a goal, in a contrast to the highway focus of their peers in the House? Why are they accepting environmental criteria as appropriate measures of quality in transportation policy? Perhaps the Democratic Party’s control of the Senate makes fighting such ideas a waste of time. Or perhaps longer Senate terms in office allow clearer, more reasonable thinking. Whatever the reason, in the long-term, it is hard to envision reversing the continued growth of the GOP’s strident opposition to sustainable transportation investments in the House. As I have documented, density of population correlates strongly and positively with the Democratic Party vote share in Congressional elections; the result has been that the House Republicans have few electoral reasons to articulate policies that benefit cities. Those who believe in the importance of a sane transportation policy need to make more of an effort to advance a sane transportation politics to residents of suburban and rural areas, who also benefit from efforts to improve environmental quality, mobility alternatives, and congestion relief, but perhaps are not yet convinced of that fact. Doing so would encourage politicians hoping for votes outside of the city core — Democratic or Republican — to promote alternatives to the all-highways meme that currently rules the GOP in the House.

### Neg Link – Sustainable Transportation Policies = Hurts Agenda

#### ( ) Sustainable transportation policies drain capital – The House will block based on voting demographics.

Freemark ‘12

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – February 6th, 2012 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/02/06/time-to-fight/)

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### Neg Link – Mass Transit Policies = Hurts Agenda

#### ( ) Mass transit policies are unpopular – GOP will block due to electoral demographics

Freemark ‘11

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “Understanding the Republican Party’s Reluctance to Invest in Transit Infrastructure”

January 25th, 2011 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2011/01/25/understanding-the-republican-partys-reluctance-to-invest-in-transit-infrastructure/)

Highway funding, on the other hand, has remained relatively stable throughout, and that’s no surprise, either: The middle 50% of congressional districts, representing about half of the American population, features populations that live in neighborhoods of low to moderate densities, fully reliant on cars to get around. It is only in the densest sections of the country that transit (or affordable housing, for instance) is even an issue — which is why it appears to be mostly of concern to the Democratic Party. Republicans in the House for the most part do not have to answer to voters who are interested in improved public transportation. This situation, of course, should be of significant concern to those who would advocate for better transit. To put matters simply, few House Republicans have any electoral reason to promote such projects, and thus, for the most part they don’t. But that produces a self-reinforcing loop; noting the lack of GOP support for urban needs, city voters push further towards the Democrats. And sensing that the Democratic Party is a collection of urbanites, those from elsewhere push away. It’s hard to know how to reverse this problem.

#### ( ) Public transit legislation drains capital – angers GOP

Freemark ‘10

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “Growing Conservative Strength Puts Transit Improvements in Doubt” – December 1st, 2010 – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2010/12/01/growing-conservative-strength-puts-transit-improvements-in-doubt/)

The next few years are likely to be difficult for advocates of public transportation because of increased hostility to government investment. 1987, 1991, 1995, 1998, and 2005 share a significant feature: In each of those years, members of Congress were able to come together to pass a multi-year bill that codified how the U.S. government was to collect revenues for and allocate expenditures on transportation. Not coincidentally, in each of those years, one political party controlled both the House and Senate. In the 112th Congress, set to enter office in just one month, Democrats will run the Senate and Republicans the House. This split control will make passing any legislation difficult. Unlike in those aforementioned years, there is little chance that this group of legislators will be able to pass a multi-year transportation bill either in 2011 or 2012. These circumstances, combined with increasingly strident conservative rhetoric about the need to reduce government expenditures, may fundamentally challenge the advances the Obama Administration and the Democratic Congress have been able to make over the past two years in expanding the nation’s intercity rail network, promoting a vision for livable communities, and reinforcing funding for urban transit. Continuing those efforts would require identifying sources of increased revenue and a steadfast commitment to reducing the role of the automobile in American society. But there is little support for increased taxes from any side of the political table and there is a fundamental aversion from the mainstream Republican Party to the investments that have defined the government’s recent transportation strategy. Meanwhile, declining power of the purse resulting from a fuel tax last increased in 1993 means that the existing situation is unacceptable, at least if there is any sense that something must be done to expand investment in transportation infrastructure. Gridlock — and myopic thinking about how to improve mobility in the United States — will ensue.

### Neg Link – Tiger Extensions

#### ( ) White House would have to get involved in Tiger-extensions

Freemark ‘10

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “After Two Years of Democratic Control in Washington, A Transportation Roundup” –

December 29th, 2010 -- http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2010/12/29/after-two-years-of-democratic-control-in-washington-a-transportation-roundup/)

Two years of Democratic Party power in Washington, then, meant quite a few improvements to the nation’s transportation policy-making, bringing to the fore projects that have been largely ignored by the government for decades. The Obama Administration and its allies in Congress have made clear their collective interest in funding projects that are founded on the idea that transportation can be an important element in the creation of livable cities. This represents a significant and positive change from past federal policy. But there is more work to be done. Republican control of the House of Representatives is unlikely to simplify the extension of many of the new programs undertaken over the past two years — from high-speed rail to TIGER. Though these programs have faced some controversy and should be made more transparent, they have been well-managed, largely fair in their distribution of grants, and, crucially, have spread funding to cities across the country, in both Red and Blue states. In order to assure their future, President Obama will have to articulate their positive effects nationwide and advance ways to fund them that appear bipartisan and consensus-worthy. Will he make the effort to do so when the nation has so many other pressing needs? Is there enough political support on either side of the aisle to maintain a major federal commitment to transport policies that do not revolve around the construction of highways?

**--- Internal Links ---**

### Capital Key

#### Jackson Vanik repeal will pass but capital is key.

Inside US Trade 12. [Feb 10 -- lexis]

The coalition is holding the letter open for signature until Feb. 24 in order to allow new companies and trade associations that may join the coalition to also sign the letter, sources said.Key members of the coalition, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, are seeking to recruit more companies and trade associations to join. The coalition is the organization through which business groups such as the U.S.-Russia Business Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, and the American Farm Bureau Federation are coordinating the lobbying effort for a Jackson-Vanik vote.The Chamber of Commerce is also working on a "dear colleague" letter that will be sent by a member of Congress to other members. That letter will stress the importance of graduating Russia from Jackson-Vanik, and describe Jackson-Vanik as a restriction on the ability of U.S. businesses to take advantage of Russia's accession, one source said.However, this effort is still in the early stages. For instance, the Chamber of Commerce has not yet determined which members will actually spearhead the letter, this source said.The American Chamber of Commerce in Russia is also planning a lobbying visit next week of executives from companies such as Exxon, Intel, and the Oshkosh Corporation. These executives are planning to meet with key members on the congressional trade committees to push their case for a Jackson-Vanik vote, one source said.In prepared testimony to the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Europe and Eurasia, Chamber Vice President John Murphy argues that once Russia joins the WTO, the current $10 billion worth of U.S. exports of goods and services to Russia could double or triple. In 2010, Russia ranked 37th, which was behind Panama, in terms of U.S. goods exports.The testimony for the hearing, which was postponed after originally being scheduled for Feb. 9, states that business opportunities in Russia are significant and expected to grow, especially in the area of infrastructure improvement where spending is expected to be $500 billion over the next five years.Congress must vote to remove Russia from the terms of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which links U.S. tariff benefits to a country's emigration policy, in order to grant the president the authority to extend permanent MFN status. Without permanent MFN, U.S. companies will only receive a limited benefit from Russia's WTO accession.At the same time as the business community is stepping up its efforts, the administration is reaching out to congressional committees on the Russia vote, according to a coalition source.In addition, there are signs the committees of jurisdiction are planning to move forward on the Russia vote. The House Ways and Means Committee is in the process of considering when to hold a hearing and when it could hold the actual Jackson-Vanik vote, according to a coalition source.Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) has scheduled his expected trip to Russia for mid-February around the Presidents' Day recess, which sources said is a further sign that he sees the Russia vote as a priority.Observers noted that Baucus traveled to Colombia early last year to assess the situation on the ground there before intensifying his efforts to gain passage of the U.S.-Colombia free trade agreement, which passed last fall. These observers said Baucus likely will use the same formula this time around for the Russia vote.Last month, the Democratic staff of the Finance Committee said the panel plans to hold a hearing in March on extending permanent MFN for Russia, and hopes to mark up legislation in April (Inside U.S. Trade, Jan. 27).At this point, Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp (R-MI) and Ranking Member Sander Levin (D-MI) are not planning a trip to Russia, but that does not mean that they will not visit Russia at some point, according to congressional aides.Sources close to Republicans generally are stressing that the administration and Congress still have a lot of work to do in order to pave the way for a successful Jackson-Vanik vote. Anything related to Russia is a tough vote in Congress because of foreign policy and human rights considerations that end up getting wrapped up in the debate, they say.On the other hand, some sources close to Democrats believe that Congress is coming around to a Jackson-Vanik vote. In particular, members are starting to realize that this vote on Russia differs from a similar vote on China roughly ten years ago, which was extremely controversial.They differ, some sources close to Democrats argue, partly because China has a much more powerful economy and much deeper trade ties to the United States than does Russia. For this reason, there is less at stake when it comes to economic relations, and therefore the Russia vote could be less controversial, these sources argue.

**Capital is key to the repeal – it’s key to Russia relations**

Stokes 11. [Bruce An Agenda, If You Can Keep It, 1/26, National Journal, p. http://www2.nationaljournal.com/member/daily/balance-of-payments

After years of relative quiescence, Congress actually has a trade agenda in 2011: possible votes on the Korea, Colombia, and Panama trade agreements, and on Russia’s application to join the World Trade Organization. Whether, when, how, and which elements of this agenda will be completed will largely depend on political calculations in the White House and on Capitol Hill. “The first question,” observed William Reinsch, president of the National Foreign Trade Council, “is, how many of these fights does the administration want to have?” At the top of the list will be the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, which President Obama made his own by arm-wrestling the South Koreans for fixes to benefit the American auto industry. Now, that it has the support of Ford and the United Auto Workers, most observers agree that the deal with South Korea has sufficient votes for passage. And Obama has said he wants Congress to act on it by June. But the business community also wants action on the Colombia and Panama agreements negotiated by the George W. Bush administration. “From our perspective,” said Calman Cohen, president of the Emergency Committee for American Trade, “they are like three children. We want them all to go forward.” Congressional GOP leaders agree. “I strongly believe that we should consider all three agreements in the next six months,” House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp, R-Mich., said at a trade hearing this week. Objections to the Panama accord, based on tax and labor issues, seem to pose no major obstacles. Organized labor continues to highlight the murders of union organizers in Colombia and other labor-rights abuses there, but Ways and Means ranking member Sander Levin, D-Mich., a longtime critic of Colombia’s record on these issues, suggested in testimony this week that some accommodation might be possible. “I believe there is now an opportunity for the two governments to work together mutually to achieve real progress on the ground,” he said. Republican leaders in Congress have talked of voting on all three trade deals, possibly one right after the other, to facilitate the legislative calendar and, the administration suspects, to aggravate divisions among Democrats. Parliamentarians, meanwhile, will have to decide if fast-track negotiating authority still applies to the Colombia agreement. Because Congress failed to act on it when it was first submitted, the fast-track authority for the deal expired. This is not a problem in the House, where Republicans control the Rules Committee, but it is in the Senate, where fast-track is needed to facilitate a vote. Business lobbyists think that the Korea deal could move by itself before the August recess but that doing all three together will take considerably more time, contrary to Camp’s ambitions. Members of the business community are less sanguine about legislation blessing Russia’s application to join the WTO, where membership can be held up by any current member. Georgia has yet to give its assent to Russia’s application, which might make the need for U.S. action moot. To give Moscow the green light, Congress would have to accord Russia most-favored-nation trading status, thus granting it the lowest possible U.S. tariffs. That, in turn, requires waiving the Jackson-Vanik amendment to the 1974 trade act, effectively acknowledging that emigration from Russia is no longer a U.S. concern. Although Washington has no complaints about Russian emigration policy, Jackson-Vanik has long been seen as useful leverage over Moscow that many in Congress may be loath to relinquish. Capitol Hill staffers warn that passage of Russian WTO membership will be an uphill fight. Moscow has few champions in Congress, where Senate debate late last year over the New START deal demonstrated deep-seated suspicion among conservatives. Russia’s piracy of intellectual property and its past use of health and safety standards to bar the importation of U.S. poultry have also soured business interests. Buyers’ remorse over China’s admission to the WTO fuels congressional reluctance to make the same mistake twice. And Moscow’s past history of quixotic actions—cutting off gas to Ukraine, for example—makes advocates of WTO membership wary of going out on a limb only to have Moscow cut it off. Moscow is anxious to join the WTO, however, and membership is a key element in the administration’s “reset” of U.S.-Russia relations. Moreover, a Russia that is subject to international rules and dispute settlement might be better than a Russia operating outside the law. Ever since the financial crisis began in 2008, Russia has been one of the most frequent instigators of protectionist trade practices. WTO membership could help discipline such behavior. Veterans of past trade battles on Capitol Hill advise that the administration might have to give Congress something to vote for—some new oversight or restraint—to ease the pain of voting to waive Jackson-Vanik. When China was granted admission to the WTO, for example, Congress created a commission to report on Beijing’s human-rights record. After two years of relegating divisive trade issues to the back burner, in 2011 the administration now has a legislative trade agenda. The question is how much political capital it is willing to invest to get it through Congress. The White House can anticipate hand-to-hand combat in budget negotiations with Republicans over discretionary spending. Such conflict will unavoidably preoccupy administration strategists, who may want to husband their resources for more electorally attractive issues. Congress could accomplish a fair amount on trade this year, but doing so could be an uphill slog.

**PC is key to passage**

NYT 11. [“Russia, in From the Cold” November 12 -- http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/13/opinion/sunday/russia-in-from-the-cold.html]

The agreement reached Thursday is widely expected to be approved at a meeting of the W.T.O.’s entire membership in Geneva next month. But for the United States to enjoy normal trade relations with Russia after it joins the trade organization, Congress must exempt Russia from the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment, which limits trade with countries that restrict emigration. President Obama has said that he would work with Congress to end the application of that law to Russia. Some lawmakers remain skeptical. On Thursday, some members of Congress sent a letter to Ron Kirk, the United States trade representative, expressing “significant concerns” about whether Russia would respect American intellectual property rights. In supporting the Russian deal, Mr. Obama will have to convince lawmakersthat American interests — including its intellectual property rights — will be better protected with Russia inside the W.T.O. than if it remains outside.

#### Obama working with Congress proves

VOA 6/29/12 (U.S. - Russia Expand Trade, http://www.voanews.com/policy/editorials/US---Russia-Expand-Trade-160887635.html)

At the recent G-20 summit in Los Cabos, Mexico, the United States and Russia announced an ambitious agenda to expand bilateral trade and investment relations. An important step in this direction is Russia’s membership in the World Trade Organization, or WTO. The Administration is working with the Congress to terminate the application of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment and extend Permanent Normal Trade Relations to Russia to ensure that the WTO Agreement applies to U.S.-Russia trade. This step will ensure that American manufacturers, farmers, innovators, creators, service providers and exporters are not placed at a disadvantage relative to their foreign competitors in Russia’s growing market. As soon as Russia becomes a Member of the WTO, it will be required to comply with all of the provisions of the WTO Agreement, as well as specific commitments in its accession protocol. Russia has already taken steps to implement its commitments by adopting and/or amending its domestic legal regime to reflect the WTO rules and its specific commitments. The United States looks forward to working with Russian authorities in the rules-based regime of the WTO.

**AT: Winners Win**

#### Winners win thesis is not true for Obama

GALSTON ‘10.

[William, Senior Fellow, Governance Studies, Brookings, “President Barack Obama’s First Two Years: Policy Accomplishments, Political Difficulties” Brookings Institute -- Nov 4]

Second, the administration believed that success would breed success—that the momentum from one legislative victory would spill over into the next. The reverse was closer to the truth: with each difficult vote, it became harder to persuade Democrats from swing districts and states to cast the next one. In the event, House members who feared that they would pay a heavy price if they supported cap-and-trade legislation turned out to have a better grasp of political fundamentals than did administration strategists.

**Winners don’t win on controversial issues – the hill is too polarized.**

MANN 10. [Thomas, Senior Fellow, Governance Studies, “American Politics on the Eve of the Midterm Elections” Brookings Institute -- November]

That perception of failure has been magnified by the highly contentious process by which Obama’s initiatives have been adopted in Congress. America has in recent years developed a highly polarised party system, with striking ideological differences between the parties and unusual unity within each. But these parliamentary-like parties operate in a governmental system in which majorities are unable readily to put their programmes in place. Republicans adopted a strategy of consistent, unified, and aggressive opposition to every major component of the President’s agenda, eschewing negotiation, bargaining and compromise, even on matters of great national import. The Senate filibuster has been the indispensable weapon in killing, weakening, slowing, or discrediting all major legislation proposed by the Democratic majority.

**Winners Lose For Obama – Loses The Spin Game.**

BAKER 10. [Peter, foreign policy reporter, author of Kremlin Rising: Vladimir Putin and Russian Counter-Revolution, “Education of a President” New York Times]

But it is possible to win the inside game and lose the outside game. In their darkest moments, White House aides wonder aloud whether it is even possible for a modern president to succeed, no matter how many bills he signs. Everything seems to conspire against the idea: an implacable opposition with little if any real interest in collaboration, a news media saturated with triviality and conflict, a culture that demands solutions yesterday, a societal cynicism that holds leadership in low regard. Some White House aides who were ready to carve a new spot on Mount Rushmore for their boss two years ago privately concede now that he cannot be another Abraham Lincoln after all. In this environment, they have increasingly concluded, it may be that every modern president is going to be, at best, average. “We’re all a lot more cynical now,” one aide told me. The easy answer is to blame the Republicans, and White House aides do that with exuberance. But they are also looking at their own misjudgments, the hubris that led them to think they really could defy the laws of politics. “It’s not that we believed our own press or press releases, but there was definitely a sense at the beginning that we could really change Washington,” another White House official told me. “ ‘Arrogance’ isn’t the right word, but we were overconfident.” The biggest miscalculation in the minds of most Obama advisers was the assumption that he could bridge a polarized capital and forge genuinely bipartisan coalitions. While Republican leaders resolved to stand against Obama, his early efforts to woo the opposition also struck many as halfhearted. “If anybody thought the Republicans were just going to roll over, we were just terribly mistaken,” former Senator Tom Daschle, a mentor and an outside adviser to Obama, told me. “I’m not sure anybody really thought that, but I think we kind of hoped the Republicans would go away. And obviously they didn’t do that.” Senator Dick Durbin, the No. 2 Democrat in the upper chamber and Obama’s ally from Illinois, said the Republicans were to blame for the absence of bipartisanship. “I think his fate was sealed,” Durbin said. “Once the Republicans decided they would close ranks to defeat him, that just made it extremely difficult and dragged it out for a longer period of time. The American people have a limited attention span. Once you convince them there’s a problem, they want a solution.” Gov. Ed Rendell of Pennsylvania, though, is among the Democrats who grade Obama harshly for not being more nimble in the face of opposition. “B-plus, A-minus on substantive accomplishments,” he told me, “and a D-plus or C-minus on communication.” The health care legislation is “an incredible achievement” and the stimulus program was “absolutely, unqualifiedly, enormously successful,” in Rendell’s judgment, yet Obama allowed them to be tarnished by critics. “They lost the communications battle on both major initiatives, and they lost it early,” said Rendell, an ardent Hillary Clinton backer who later became an Obama supporter. “We didn’t use the president in either stimulus or health care until we had lost the spin battle.”

**( ) Winners-Lose for Obama**

RYAN ‘9

[1-18 -- Selwyn Professor of Social Science at the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, University of West Indies. Ph.D. in Political Science from Cornell, http://www.trinidadexpress.com/index.pl/article\_opinion?id=161426968]

Like many, I expect much from Obama, who for the time being, is my political beast of burden with whom every other politician in the world is unfavourably compared. As a political scientist, I however know that given the structure of American and world politics, it would be difficult for him to deliver half of what he has promised, let alone all of it. Reality will force him to make many "u" turns and detours which may well land him in quick sand. Obama will, however, begin his stint with a vast accumulation of political capital, perhaps more than that held by any other modern leader. Seventy-eight per cent of Americans polled believe that his inauguration is one of the most historic the country will witness. Political capital is, however, a lumpy and fast diminishing asset in today's world of instant communication, which once misspent, is rarely ever renewable. The world is full of political leaders like George Bush and Tony Blair who had visions, promised a lot, and probably meant well, but who did not know how to husband the political capital with which they were provided as they assumed office. They squandered it as quickly as they emptied the contents of the public vaults. Many will be watching to see how Obama manages his assets and liabilities register. Watching with hope would be the white young lady who waved a placard in Obama's face inscribed with the plaintive words, "I Trust You." Despite the general optimism about Obama's ability to deliver, many groups have already begun to complain about being betrayed. Gays, union leaders, and women have been loud in their complaints about being by-passed or overlooked. Some radical blacks have also complained about being disrespected. Where and when is Joshua going to lead them to the promised land, they ask? When is he going to pull the troops out of Iraq? Civil rights groups also expect Obama to dis-establish Guantanamo as soon as he takes office to signal the formal break with Dick Cheney and Bush. They also want him to discontinue the policy which allows intelligence analysts to spy on American citizens without official authorisation. In fact, Obama startled supporters when he signalled that he might do an about-turn and continue this particular policy. We note that Bush is signalling Obama that keeping America safe from terrorists should be his top priority item and that he, Bush, had no regrets about violating the constitutional rights of Americans if he had to do so to keep them safe. Cheney has also said that he would do it again if he had to. The safety of the republic is after all the highest law. Other groups-sub-prime home owners, workers in the automobile sector, and the poor and unemployed generally all expect Obama to work miracles on their behalf, which of course he cannot do. Given the problems of the economy which has not yet bottomed out, some promises have to be deferred beyond the first term. Groups, however, expect that the promise made to them during the campaign must be kept. Part of the problem is that almost every significant social or ethnic group believes that it was instrumental in Obama's victory. White women felt that they took Obama over the line, as did blacks generally, Jews, Hispanics, Asians, rich white men, gays, and young college kids, to mention a few of those whose inputs were readily recognisable. Obama also has a vast constituency in almost every country in the world, all of whom expect him to save the globe and the planet. Clearly, he is the proverbial "Black Knight on a White Horse." One of the "realities" that Obama has to face is that American politics is not a winner-take-all system. It is pluralistic vertically and horizontally, and getting anything done politically, even when the President and the Congress are controlled by the same party, requires groups to negotiate, bargain and engage in serious horse trading. No one takes orders from the President who can only use moral or political suasion and promises of future support for policies or projects. The system was in fact deliberately engineered to prevent overbearing majorities from conspiring to tyrannise minorities. The system is not only institutionally diverse and plural, but socially and geographically so. As James Madison put it in Federalist No 10, one of the foundation documents of republicanism in America, basic institutions check other basic institutions, classes and interests check other classes and interests, and regions do the same. All are grounded in their own power bases which they use to fend off challengers. The coalitions change from issue to issue, and there is no such thing as party discipline which translated, means you do what I the leader say you do. Although Obama is fully aware of the political limitations of the office which he holds, he is fully aware of the vast stock of political capital which he currently has in the bank and he evidently plans to enlarge it by drawing from the stock held by other groups, dead and alive. He is clearly drawing heavily from the caparisoned cloaks of Lincoln and Roosevelt. Obama seems to believe that by playing the all-inclusive, multipartisan, non-ideological card, he can get most of his programmes through the Congress without having to spend capital by using vetoes, threats of veto, or appeals to his 15 million strong constituency in cyberspace (the latent "Obama Party").

**( ) Link outweighs the “winner’s win” link turn on timeframe**

**Silber ‘7**

(PhD Political Science & Communication – focus on the Rhetoric of Presidential Policy-Making – Prof of Poli Sci – Samford, [Marissa, WHAT MAKES A PRESIDENT QUACK?, Prepared for delivery at the 2007 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 30th-September 2nd, 2007, UNDERSTANDING LAME DUCK STATUS THROUGH THE EYES OF THE MEDIA AND POLITICIANS]

Important to the discussion of political capital is whether or not it can be replenished over a term. If a President expends political capital on his agenda, can it be replaced? Light suggests that “capital declines over time – public approval consistently falls: midterm losses occur” (31). Capital can be rebuilt, but only to a limited extent. The decline of capital makes it difficult to access information, recruit more expertise and maintain energy. If a lame duck President can be defined by a loss of political capital, this paper helps determine if such capital can be replenished or if a lame duck can accomplish little. Before determining this, a definition of a lame duck President must be developed.

### AT: PC =/= Key - Dickinson

#### Prefer our evidence – its specific to political capital and vote switching in context of Jackson-Vanik

#### Dickinson concludes neg in peer-review articles and Their ev is solely in the context of Supreme court nominations

Dickinson ‘09 (Matthew, professor of political science at Middlebury College. He taught previously at Harvard University, where he also received his Ph.D., working under the supervision of presidential scholar Richard Neustadt, We All Want a Revolution: Neustadt, New Institutionalism, and the Future of Presidency Research, Presidential Studies Quarterly 39 no4 736-70 D 2009)

Small wonder, then, that initial efforts to find evidence of presidential power centered on explaining legislative outcomes in Congress. Because scholars found it difficult to directly and systematically measure presidential influence or "skill," however, they often tried to estimate it indirectly, after first establishing a baseline model that explained these outcomes on other factors, including party strength in Congress, members of Congress's ideology, the president's electoral support and/or popular approval, and various control variables related to time in office and political and economic context. With the baseline established, one could then presumably see how much of the unexplained variance might be attributed to presidents, and whether individual presidents did better or worse than the model predicted. Despite differences in modeling assumptions and measurements, however, these studies came to remarkably similar conclusions: individual presidents did not seem to matter very much in explaining legislators' voting behavior or lawmaking outcomes (but see Lockerbie and Borrelli 1989, 97-106). As Richard Fleisher, Jon Bond, and B. Dan Wood summarized, "[S]tudies that compare presidential success to some baseline fail to find evidence that perceptions of skill have systematic effects" (2008, 197; see also Bond, Fleisher, and Krutz 1996, 127; Edwards 1989, 212). To some scholars, these results indicate that Neustadt's "president-centered" perspective is incorrect (Bond and Fleisher 1990, 221-23). In fact, the aggregate results reinforce Neustadt's recurring refrain that presidents are weak and that, when dealing with Congress, a president's power is "comparably limited" (Neustadt 1990, 184). The misinterpretation of the findings as they relate to PP stems in part from scholars' difficulty in defining and operationalizing presidential influence (Cameron 2000b; Dietz 2002, 105-6; Edwards 2000, 12; Shull and Shaw 1999). But it is also that case that scholars often misconstrue Neustadt's analytic perspective; his description of what presidents must do to influence policy making does not mean that he believes presidents are the dominant influence on that process. Neustadt writes from the president's perspective, but without adopting a president-centered explanation of power. Nonetheless, if Neustadt clearly recognizes that a president's influence in Congress is exercised mostly, as George Edwards (1989) puts it, "at the margins," his case studies in PP also suggest that, within this limited bound, presidents do strive to influence legislative outcomes. But how? Scholars often argue that a president's most direct means of influence is to directly lobby certain members of Congress, often through quid pro quo exchanges, at critical junctures during the lawmaking sequence. Spatial models of legislative voting suggest that these lobbying efforts are most effective when presidents target the median, veto, and filibuster "pivots" within Congress. This logic finds empirical support in vote-switching studies that indicate that presidents do direct lobbying efforts at these pivotal voters, and with positive legislative results. Keith Krehbiel analyzes successive votes by legislators in the context of a presidential veto and finds "modest support for the sometimes doubted stylized fact of presidential power as persuasion" (1998,153-54). Similarly, David Brady and Craig Volden look at vote switching by members of Congress in successive Congresses on nearly identical legislation and also conclude that presidents do influence the votes of at least some legislators (1998, 125-36). In his study of presidential lobbying on key votes on important domestic legislation during the 83rd (1953-54) through 108th (2003-04) Congresses, Matthew Beckman shows that in addition to these pivotal voters, presidents also lobby leaders in both congressional parties in order to control what legislative alternatives make it onto the congressional agenda (more on this later). These lobbying efforts are correlated with a greater likelihood that a president's legislative preferences will come to a vote (Beckmann 2008, n.d.). In one of the most concerted efforts to model how bargaining takes place at the individual level, Terry Sullivan examines presidential archives containing administrative headcounts to identify instances in which members of Congress switched positions during legislative debate, from initially opposing the president to supporting him in the final roll call (Sullivan 1988,1990,1991). Sullivan shows that in a bargaining game with incomplete information regarding the preferences of the president and members of Congress, there are a number of possible bargaining outcomes for a given distribution of legislative and presidential policy preferences. These outcomes depend in part on legislators' success in bartering their potential support for the president's policy for additional concessions from the president. In threatening to withhold support, however, members of Congress run the risk that the president will call their bluff and turn elsewhere for the necessary votes. By capitalizing on members' uncertainty regarding whether their support is necessary to form a winning coalition, Sullivan theorizes that presidents can reduce members of Congress's penchant for strategic bluffing and increase the likelihood of a legislative outcome closer to the president's preference. "Hence, the skill to bargain successfully becomes a foundation for presidential power even within the context of electorally determined opportunities," Sullivan concludes (1991, 1188). Most of these studies infer presidential influence, rather than measuring it directly (Bond, Fleisher, and Krutz 1996,128-29; see also Edwards 1991). Interestingly, however, although the vote "buying" approach is certainly consistent with Neustadt's bargaining model, none of his case studies in PP show presidents employing this tactic. The reason may be that Neustadt concentrates his analysis on the strategic level: "Strategically the question is not how he masters Congress in a peculiar instance, but what he does to boost his mastery in any instance" (Neustadt 1990, 4). For Neustadt, whether a president's lobbying efforts bear fruit in any particular circumstance depends in large part on the broader pattern created by a president's prior actions when dealing with members of Congress (and "Washingtonians" more generally). These previous interactions determine a president's professional reputation--the "residual impressions of [a president's] tenacity and skill" that accumulate in Washingtonians' minds, helping to "heighten or diminish" a president's bargaining advantages. "Reputation, of itself, does not persuade, but it can make persuasions easier, or harder, or impossible" (Neustadt 1990, 54).

**--- Relations Impact ---**

### 2NC: Solves Relations

**Repeal of Jackson-Vanik is key to continued US-Russia relations.**

Gvosdev 12.

(Feb 10 -- World Politics Review, Nikolas K. Gvosdev is the former editor of the National Interest, and a frequent foreign policy commentator in both the print and broadcast media, http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/11441/the-realist-prism-resetting-the-u-s-russia-reset)

An upcoming decision-point could offer a good indication of what to expect. The World Trade Organization is expected to ratify Russia’s accession later this spring. However, American firms will not be able to take advantage of Russia's WTO membership as long as U.S. trade with Russia is still subject to the Cold War-era Jackson-Vanik amendment. Congress would first have to agree to "graduate" Russia from the terms of the legislation, but many members remain hesitant. An unofficial swap would see Russia given permanent normal trading relations status, but with new legislation applying "smart sanctions" against specific Russian individuals and entities accused of condoning human rights abuses, most notably in the death of Russian lawyer Sergei Magnitsky. Whether this Solomonic compromise could work, however, remains to be seen. The Russian government has already responded very negatively to sanctions unilaterally imposed by the State Department and may be quite unwilling to accept such a compromise, even if it means graduating Russia from Jackson-Vanik. At the same time, there remains resistance within Congress to "giving up" one of its last remaining tools to pressure Russia on a whole range of issues, from chicken imports to religious freedom. The fate of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, therefore, is the canary in the coal mine for U.S.-Russia relations. If a successful repeal is negotiated, it bodes well for regenerating the relationship. However, if Obama, like George W. Bush before him, is unable to secure Russia’s graduation, this could end up being a fatal blow to the whole idea of the reset.

#### Russian officials say JV is key to relations.

Russia & CIS Newswire 12. [Dec 27 -- Russia & CIS Business and Financial Newswire, “Yesterday in Brief” -- lexis]

\*\*\* JACKSON-VANIK AMENDMENT MUST BE REPEALED TO IMPROVE RUSSIA-U.S. ECONOMIC RELATIONS - LAVROV A quality change in Russia-U.S. economic relations is possible if the U.S. Congress appeals the Jackson-Vanik amendment, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in an interview with Interfax on Monday. " Russia's entry into the WTO opens broad vistas for more intensive business contacts and a quality change of the entire economic relationship, naturally, on the condition the U.S. Congress repeals the notorious Jackson-Vanik amendment, which actually makes U.S. business its hostage," the minister said.

**Reverse causal – failure to repeal post-WTO accession jacks relations.**

Miller 11. [Jacqueline, senior associate, “The WTO and the Reset” EastWest Institute -- April 8 --http://www.ewi.info/wto-and-reset]

It took Barack Obama several months and some tough lobbying to finally win congressional approval for the New START treaty last December, which was seen as the key to the administration’s reset with Russia. Another fight could already be brewing over Obama’s support for Russia’s World Trade Organization (WTO) membership, which is the next big goal of the administration’s Russia policy. Citing Russian human rights abuses and lack of democratic development, congressional critics want to keep Russia subject to the Jackson-Vanik amendment—a Cold War relic that, if left in place, would effectively nullify both Russian and U.S. gains from Russian WTO membership. But, somewhat surprisingly, the administration could develop a win-win outcome by taking a page from its dealings with China, another country whose human rights practices stir congressional unease. The Jackson-Vanik amendment to the 1974 Trade Act denies permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) to non-market economies that restrict emigration. The amendment was passed unanimously by both houses of Congress to pressure the Soviet Union to allow Soviet Jews to emigrate. In 1994, the Clinton administration found Russia to be in full compliance with the amendment’s freedom-of-emigration requirements. And in 2002, the United States officially began describing Russia as a market economy. Presidents Clinton, Bush, and now Obama all declared their intention to work with Congress to repeal the legislation as it applies to Russia, but no action has been taken. The reason: Congress still sees Jackson-Vanik as a lever to punish Russia for its human rights record even when the executive branch is prioritizing the security aspects of the bilateral relationship. Jackson-Vanik’s ongoing application has been a major symbolic irritant in the relationship, even though the United States has granted Russia a waiver every year since 1992. But once Russia joins the WTO, which could happen next year, Jackson-Vanik will go from being a symbol of mistrust toinflicting actual harm both to Russia and the U.S.-Russia relationship.

**2NC: Russia War Outweighs**

**US-Russia war first- only existential risk- causes extinction**

Bostrom 2 (Nick, PhD Philosophy – Oxford University, “Existential Risks: Analyzing Human Extinction Scenarios”, Journal of Evolution and Technology, Vol. 9, March, http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html)

The unique challenge of existential risks Risks in this sixth category are a recent phenomenon. This is part of the reason why it is useful to distinguish them from other risks. We have not evolved mechanisms, either biologically or culturally, for managing such risks. Our intuitions and coping strategies have been shaped by our long experience with risks such as dangerous animals, hostile individuals or tribes, poisonous foods, automobile accidents, Chernobyl, Bhopal, volcano eruptions, earthquakes, draughts, World War I, World War II, epidemics of influenza, smallpox, black plague, and AIDS. These types of disasters have occurred many times and our cultural attitudes towards risk have been shaped by trial-and-error in managing such hazards. But tragic as such events are to the people immediately affected, in the big picture of things – from the perspective of humankind as a whole – even the worst of these catastrophes are mere ripples on the surface of the great sea of life. They haven’t significantly affected the total amount of human suffering or happiness or determined the long-term fate of our species. With the exception of a species-destroying comet or asteroid impact (an extremely rare occurrence), there were probably no significant existential risks in human history until the mid-twentieth century, and certainly none that it was within our power to do something about. The first manmade existential risk was the inaugural detonation of an atomic bomb. At the time, there was some concern that the explosion might start a runaway chain-reaction by “igniting” the atmosphere. Although we now know that such an outcome was physically impossible, it qualifies as an existential risk that was present at the time. For there to be a risk, given the knowledge and understanding available, it suffices that there is some subjective probability of an adverse outcome, even if it later turns out that objectively there was no chance of something bad happening. If we don’t know whether something is objectively risky or not, then it is risky in the subjective sense. The subjective sense is of course what we must base our decisions on.[[2]](http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html" \l "_ftn2" \o ") At any given time we must use our best current subjective estimate of what the objective risk factors are.[[3]](http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html" \l "_ftn3" \o ") A much greater existential risk emerged with the build-up of nuclear arsenals in the US and the USSR. An all-out nuclear war was a possibility with both a substantial probability and with consequences that might have been persistent enough to qualify as **global** and **terminal**. There was a real worry among those best acquainted with the information available at the time that a nuclear Armageddon would occur and that it might annihilate our species or permanently destroy human civilization.[[4]](http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html" \l "_ftn4" \o ")  Russia and the US retain large nuclear arsenals that could be used in a future confrontation, either accidentally or deliberately. There is also a risk that other states may one day build up large nuclear arsenals. Note however that a smaller nuclear exchange, between India and Pakistan for instance, is not an existential risk, since it would not destroy or thwart humankind’s potential permanently. Such a war might however be a local terminal risk for the cities most likely to be targeted. Unfortunately, we shall see that nuclear Armageddon and comet or asteroid strikes are mere preludes to the existential risks that we will encounter in the 21st century.

**Relations Good: Heg**

**Collapse of relations jacks heg.**

Simes 7 [Dimitri, President of the Nixon Center and Publisher of The National Interest, Foreign Affairs, “Losing Russia; The Costs of Renewed Confrontation,” Nov/Dec -- lexis]

But if the current U.S.-Russian relationship deteriorates further, it will not bode well for the United States and would be even worse for Russia. The Russian general staff is lobbying to add a military dimension to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and some top officials are beginning to champion the idea of a foreign policy realignment directed against the West. There are also quite a few countries, such as Iran and Venezuela, urging Russia to work with China to play a leading role in balancing the United States economically, politically, and militarily. And post-Soviet states such as Georgia, which are adept at playing the United States and Russia off against each other, could act in ways that escalate tensions. Putin's stage management of Moscow's succession in order to maintain a dominant role for himself makes a major foreign policy shift in Russia unlikely. But new Russian leaders could have their own ideas -- and their own ambitions -- and political uncertainty or economic problems could tempt them to exploit nationalist sentiments to build legitimacy. If relations worsen, the UN Security Council may no longer be available -- due to a Russian veto -- even occasionally, to provide legitimacy for U.S. military actions or to impose meaningful sanctions on rogue states. Enemies of the United States could be emboldened by new sources of military hardware in Russia, and political and security protection from Moscow. International terrorists could find new sanctuaries in Russia or the states it protects. And the collapse of U.S.-Russian relations could give China much greater flexibility in dealing with the United States. It would not be a new Cold War, because Russia will not be a global rival and is unlikely to be the prime mover in confronting the United States. But it would provide incentives and cover for others to confront Washington, with potentially catastrophic results.

**Global Nuclear War.**

Khalilzad 95. [Zalmay, RAND, The Washington Quarterly, Spring 1995]

Under the third option, the United States would seek to retain global leadership and to preclude the rise of a global rival or a return to multipolarity for the indefinite future. On balance, this is the best long-term guiding principle and vision. Such a vision is desirable not as an end in itself, but because a world in which the United States exercises leadership would have tremendous advantages. First, the global environment would be more open and more receptive to American values -- democracy, free markets, and the rule of law. Second, such a world would have a better chance of dealing cooperatively with the world's major problems, such as nuclear proliferation, threats of regional hegemony by renegade states, and low-level conflicts. Finally, U.S. leadership would help preclude the rise of another hostile global rival, enabling the United States and the world to avoid another global cold or hot war and all the attendant dangers, including a global nuclear exchange. U.S. leadership would therefore be more conducive to global stability than a bipolar or a multipolar balance of power system.

**Relations Good: Accidents**

**Relations solve accidents.**

Martin 8. [Matthew, program officer in Policy Analysis and Dialogue at the Muscatine-based Stanley Foundation, July, Avoiding an Accidental Nuclear War, http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/articles.cfm?id=498]

Common sense might indicate that better relations between the two countries would mean that less oversight is needed. But due to the history of the Cold War and the nature of the arsenals as discussed above, precisely the opposite is true, especially if the goal is to reduce the danger of an accidental nuclear launch. Surviving the Cold War without a nuclear exchange demanded intense and sustained efforts on a range of fronts from the political to the military, and as the global community strives to move beyond a Cold War mindset, it is clear that succeeding in this new world will as well. It is good that President Bush has found in Russian president Medvedev a smart colleague who understands the issues. The question is how will these two leaders apply their smarts and understanding in order to avoid an accidental nuclear war.

**The Impact Is Extinction.**

American Prospect 1. [Feb 26]

The bitter disputes over national missile defense (NMD) have obscured a related but dramatically more urgent issue of national security: the 4,800 nuclear warheads -- weapons with a combined destructive power nearly 100,000 times greater than the atomic bomb that leveled Hiroshima -- currently on "hair-trigger" alert. Hair-trigger alert means this: The missiles carrying those warheads are armed and fueled at all times. Two thousand or so of these warheads are on the intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) targeted by Russia at the United States; 1,800 are on the ICBMs targeted by the United States at Russia; and approximately 1,000 are on the submarine-based missiles targeted by the two nations at each other. These missiles would launch on receipt of three computer-delivered messages. Launch crews -- on duty every second of every day -- are under orders to send the messages on receipt of a single computer-delivered command. In no more than two minutes, if all went according to plan, Russia or the United States could launch missiles at predetermined targets: Washington or New York; Moscow or St. Petersburg. The early-warning systems on which the launch crews rely would detect the other side's missiles within tens of seconds, causing the intended -- or accidental -- enemy to mount retaliatory strikes. "Within a half-hour, there could be a nuclear war that would extinguish all of us," explains Bruce Blair. "It would be, basically, a nuclear war by checklist, by rote."

**Relations Good: Laundry List**

**Russian relations solve every impact. (prolif, terror, Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, energy security, climate, econ)**

National Security Network 9. [7/1 -- http://www.nsnetwork.org/node/1354]

U.S. cooperation with Russia vital not just for nonproliferation, but for other key national security priorities. The U.S. – Russia relationship is too important to rest on the personality politics, as it did during the Bush administration. In order for the U.S. to solve pressing national security dilemmas, it must put its relations with Russia back on solid, strategic footing. After a meeting this week with his Russian counterpart, General Makarov, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral Michael Mullen remarked on the areas of mutual interest in the context of hard security, “There are areas of common interest that we agree we need to work on – Afghanistan – logistic support to the Afghanistan conflict, the issue of counterterrorism, the issue of Iran.” On Afghanistan, Russia hopes to prevent the growth of an insurgency that could threaten its interests. In that spirit, Russia has offered assistance to the U.S. – led international mission to stabilize the country. AFP reports that “[t]he United States and Russia may soon sign a deal boosting the transit of US supplies to Afghanistan through Russia, the Kommersant daily reported Monday, citing diplomatic sources.” The deal would reportedly involve “a dozen US planes flying over Russia each day with military cargos, rather than just rail shipments of non-lethal supplies as Moscow now allows,” according to the original article in the Kommersant Daily. Recent developments have also clarified the importance of Russian involvement in developing an international response to both Iran and North Korea. Russia’s relationship with Iran means that it will be an indispensable interlocutor for any effort to dissuade the country from further developing its nuclear program. Russia has also been cooperative in responding to North Korea’s recent belligerence. According to the New York Times, the latest round of UN sanctions would not have been possible without Russia and also China, which are “the closest thing North Korea has to friends,” both “agreed to a mixture of financial and trade restrictions designed to choke off military development.” Apart from traditional security concerns, Russia is also **at the nexus of energy and climate change**. A recent Center for Naval Analysis report cites Russia’s status as the “world’s largest exporter of natural gas and the second largest exporter of oil” making U.S. – Russia relations a key energy security consideration. In addition, the Center for American Progress points out that “If the European Union is disaggregated, Russia is the third-largest emitter of carbon dioxide behind the United States and China and still currently ahead of India. More importantly Russian per capita emissions are on the rise, and are projected at this point to approach America’s top rank as per capita emitter by 2030,” suggesting that “[m]aking Russia a partner on these issues could be critical in order to advance a sound global climate change agenda.” And, as Robert Levgold observes in the latest issue of Foreign Affairs, “attempts to reform international financial and security institutions will be optimized only if Russia is given a chance to contribute constructively.” [Admiral Michael Mullen, 6/29/09. AFP, 6/29/09. NY Times, 6/12/09. CNA, May 2009. CAP, 6/30/09. Foreign Affairs, July/August 2009]

**Relations are crucial to solving multiple scenarios for extinction, including warming**

Atlantic 8. [November 2008, Medvedev Spoils the Party, http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200811u/medvedev-obama]

Like it or not, the United States cannot solve crucial global problems without Russian participation.  Russia commands the largest landmass on earth; possesses vast reserves of oil, natural gas, and other natural resources; owns huge stockpiles of weapons and plutonium; and still wields a potent brain trust.  Given its influence in Iran and North Korea, to say nothing of its potential as a spoiler of international equilibrium elsewhere, Russia is one country with which the United States would do well to reestablish a strong working relationship—a strategic partnership, even—regardless of its feelings about the current Kremlin government.  The need to do so trumps expanding NATO or pursuing “full-spectrum dominance.” Once the world financial crisis passes, we will find ourselves returning to worries about resource depletion, environmental degradation, and global warming– the greatest challenges facing humanity.  No country can confront these problems alone.  For the United States, Russia may just prove the **“indispensable** nation” with which to face a volatile future arm in arm.

**Relations Good: Terrorism**

**Relations Key To Solve Terrorism And Prolif.**

Perry and Scowcroft 9. (William and brent, Chairs CFR, april, “US Nuclear Weapons Policy”)

Despite nearly universal opposition, North Korea has developed a small nuclear arsenal, and Iran appears to be following in its footsteps. Other states, particularly in the Middle East, are starting nuclear power programs modeled after that of Iran. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and fissile materials is thus dangerously close to a tipping point. Beyond this danger, there are still tens of thousands of nuclear weapons in the world. If just one of these thousands of weapons fell into the hands of terrorists, it could be detonated with catastrophic results. So, although the old danger of a massive nuclear exchange between great powers has declined, a new risk looms of a few nuclear detonations being set off by a terrorist group or a nuclear-capable rogue state, or of a nuclear power making a tragic mistake. The threat of nuclear terrorism is already serious, and, as more nations acquire nuclear weapons or the fissile material needed for nuclear weapons, it will increase. Of course, the detonation of a relatively primitive nuclear bomb in one American city would not be equivalent to the type of nuclear exchange that was feared during the Cold War. Nonetheless, the results would be catastrophic, with the devastation extending well beyond the staggering fatalities. The direct economic losses would amount to many hundreds of billions of dollars, but the indirect economic impact would be even greater. The social and political effects are incalculable, especially if the detonation were in Washington, DC, and disabled a significant part of the U.S. government. The terror and disruption would be beyond imagination. High priority should be accorded to policies that serve to prevent such a catastrophe, specifically programs that reduce and protect existing nuclear arsenals and that keep new arsenals from being created. All such preventive programs, by their nature, have international dimensions. Their success depends on the United States being able to work cooperatively with other countries, most notably Russia. That such international cooperation can be successful is illustrated by the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program in the 1990s. U.S.-Russian efforts on that program led to thousands of nuclear weapons and their launchers being dismantled and thus made the world safer. But unless U.S.-Russia relations improve, it is difficult to imagine those two governments cooperating on future programs that require such a high level of mutual trust.

**Extinction**

Sid-Ahmed 4. (Mohamed, Managing Editor for Al-Ahali, “Extinction!” August 26-September 1, Issue no. 705, http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/705/op5.htm)

A nuclear attack by terrorists will be much more critical than Hiroshima and Nagazaki, even if -- and this is far from certain -- the weapons used are less harmful than those used then, Japan, at the time, with no knowledge of nuclear technology, had no choice but to capitulate. Today, the technology is a secret for nobody. So far, except for the two bombs dropped on Japan, nuclear weapons have been used only to threaten. Now we are at a stage where they can be detonated. This completely changes the rules of the game. We have reached a point where anticipatory measures can determine the course of events. Allegations of a terrorist connection can be used to justify anticipatory measures, including the invasion of a sovereign state like Iraq. As it turned out, these allegations, as well as the allegation that Saddam was harbouring WMD, proved to be unfounded. What would be the consequences of a nuclear attack by terrorists? Even if it fails, it would further exacerbate the negative features of the new and frightening world in which we are now living. Societies would close in on themselves, police measures would be stepped up at the expense of human rights, tensions between civilisations and religions would rise and ethnic conflicts would proliferate. It would also speed up the arms race and develop the awareness that a different type of world order is imperative if humankind is to survive. But the still more critical scenario is if the attack succeeds. This could lead to a third world war, from which no one will emerge victorious. Unlike a conventional war which ends when one side triumphs over another, this war will be without winners and losers. When nuclear pollution infects the whole planet, we will all be losers.

**AT: Relations Resilient**

**Relations Not Resilient:**

**Spillover effects disprove resiliency.**

Kliger 10. [Sam, AJC Director of Russian Jewish Affairs, “The Jackson-Vanik Amendment and U.S.-Russian Relations” Presentation to Capitol Hill Briefing -- February 3 -- http://www.ajc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=ijITI2PHKoG&b=2818295&content\_id=%7B269A3DE4-7F1B-4244-8F57-4CA2B825903A%7D&notoc=1]

Now, for a number of years, AJC has been advocating for “graduating” Russia from the JVA and, in addition to the arguments above, looks at the issue from a broader geopolitical perspective. The U.S. needs Russian cooperation in many important areas, most urgently in managing the Iranian uranium enrichment program and the broader issue of nuclear nonproliferation and energy security. There is a need to cooperate in the global fight against terrorism, from which Russia suffers along with the U.S. The U.S. needs Russia’s assistance in its efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. The list goes on. **The JVA is seen by the Russians as a constant irritant**, and as a Cold War relic that undermines Russia’s prestige as permanent member of the UN Security Council and in the international arena. It would be in the U.S.’s best interest to “graduate” Russia now from the Jackson-Vanik Amendment.

**The impact is perception based – disproves resiliency.**

Aron 6**.** [Leon, Resident Scholar and Director of Russian Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, “The United States and Russia; Ideologies, Policies, and Relations” American Enterprise Institute -- June -- http://www.aei.org/outlook/24606]

The difficulties with the WTO have reopened the old wound of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment. The 1974 legislation denies the normal Most Favored Nation (MFN) trade status to countries with non-market economies that restrict their citizens’ right to emigrate. Post-Soviet Russia has removed all the restrictions on foreign travel and immigration and was found to be in formal compliance with the emigration provision of the amendment in 1994. Even after the effective renationalization of the two largest private oil companies, YUKOS and Sibneft, at least 65 percent of the country’s GDP today is generated in the private sector.[15] Still, unlike China, which was granted the MFN status in 2000 despite the clear noncompliance with both requirements, the **affront to the Russian national dignity** continues in violation of the letter of America’s own laws. **Corroding in and of themselves**, all these **unfulfilled** expectations eat away at the **most important American resources**: equality and respect for Russia. As a result, there have been calls in Moscow to force the United States into arms control negotiations by accelerating the construction and deployment of the Topol-M (SS-25) multi-warhead intercontinental ballistic missiles. As the current Russian cache of strategic weapons is many times over what is required for effective deterrence, the main objective seems to be making the United States reckon with Russia as an equal. “Of course, no one is planning to attack Russia,” one of the advocates of this strategy explained on Russian television last March. “But they also refuse to conduct negotiations with her.”16 Two months later, in his 2006 state-of-Russia speech to the joint session of the chambers of the Federal Assembly, President Putin endorsed this position.

**Relations not resilient – collapse possible.**

Perry and Scowcroft 9. (William and brent, Chairs CFR, april, “US Nuclear Weapons Policy”)

The dangers of nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism are real and imminent, and any serious effort to reduce them will require the leadership of the United States. The risk of a new Cold War–like hostility developing between the United States and Russia is also real, and efforts to reduce it will require opening a positive strategic dialogue with Russia, at the same time hedging against the possibility that such a dialogue may not be successful. In short, the nuclear policy of the United States should be to lead when possible and hedge when necessary.

**--- Econ Impact ---**

**Competitiveness/Econ Impact**

**Repeal key to industry competitiveness and economic recovery.**

Sacramento Bee 12. [Feb 21 -- http://www.sacbee.com/2012/02/21/4279466/sen-baucus-meets-with-us-business.html]

Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) met with American business leaders in Moscow this morning on the need for legislation to expand opportunities for US exports that would create more American jobs. Andrew Somers, chief executive of the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia (AmCham), representing more than 700 companies, warned that American companies will face a serious competitive disadvantage if Congress does not soon abrogate the 1974 Jackson-Vanik Amendment, which denies Russia Permanent Normal Trade Relations. "We hope that Congress will act quickly on this trade issue," said Somers. Senator Baucus is in Russia to meet with the Russian President and other officials to discuss economic, trade and foreign affairs issues, as well as with leaders of the American Chamber of Commerce. "Opening doors overseas in countries like Russia will propel our economic recovery forward and create jobs across the United States," Baucus said. "Holding Russia to its promises as it enters the World Trade Organization, and seeking a greater share of the Russian market, is a one-way economic benefit for the United States and an absolute no-brainer."

**Wars go nuclear – competitiveness solves escalation**

Friedberg & Schoenfeld 8 (Aaron Friedberg is a professor of politics and international relations at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School. Gabriel Schoenfeld, senior editor of Commentary, is a visiting scholar at the Witherspoon Institute in Princeton, N.J., “The Dangers of a Diminished America,” Wall Street Journal, Ocbtober 21, 2008, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122455074012352571.html]

With the global financial system in serious trouble, is America's geostrategic dominance likely to diminish? If so, what would that mean? One immediate implication of the crisis that began on Wall Street and spread across the world is that the primary instruments of U.S. foreign policy will be crimped. The next president will face an entirely new and adverse fiscal position. Estimates of this year's federal budget deficit already show that it has jumped $237 billion from last year, to $407 billion. With families and businesses hurting, there will be calls for various and expensive domestic relief programs. In the face of this onrushing river of red ink, both Barack Obama and John McCain have been reluctant to lay out what portions of their programmatic wish list they might defer or delete. Only Joe Biden has suggested a possible reduction -- foreign aid. This would be one of the few popular cuts, but in budgetary terms it is a mere grain of sand. Still, Sen. Biden's comment hints at where we may be headed: toward a major reduction in America's world role, and perhaps even a new era of financially-induced isolationism. Pressures to cut defense spending, and to dodge the cost of waging two wars, already intense before this crisis, are likely to mount. Despite the success of the surge, the war in Iraq remains deeply unpopular. Precipitous withdrawal -- attractive to a sizable swath of the electorate before the financial implosion -- might well become even more popular with annual war bills running in the hundreds of billions. Protectionist sentiments are sure to grow stronger as jobs disappear in the coming slowdown. Even before our current woes, calls to save jobs by restricting imports had begun to gather support among many Democrats and some Republicans. In a prolonged recession, gale-force winds of protectionism will blow. Then there are the dolorous consequences of a potential collapse of the world's financial architecture. For decades now, Americans have enjoyed the advantages of being at the center of that system. The worldwide use of the dollar, and the stability of our economy, among other things, made it easier for us to run huge budget deficits, as we counted on foreigners to pick up the tab by buying dollar-denominated assets as a safe haven. Will this be possible in the future? Meanwhile, traditional foreign-policy challenges are multiplying. The threat from al Qaeda and Islamic terrorist affiliates has not been extinguished. Iran and North Korea are continuing on their bellicose paths, while Pakistan and Afghanistan are progressing smartly down the road to chaos. Russia's new militancy and China's seemingly relentless rise also give cause for concern. If America now tries to pull back from the world stage, it will leave a dangerous power vacuum. The stabilizing effects of our presence in Asia, our continuing commitment to Europe, and our position as defender of last resort for Middle East energy sources and supply lines could all be placed at risk. In such a scenario there are shades of the 1930s, when global trade and finance ground nearly to a halt, the peaceful democracies failed to cooperate, and aggressive powers led by the remorseless fanatics who rose up on the crest of economic disaster exploited their divisions. Today we run the risk that rogue states may choose to become ever more reckless with their nuclear toys, just at our moment of maximum vulnerability. The aftershocks of the financial crisis will almost certainly rock our principal strategic competitors even harder than they will rock us. The dramatic free fall of the Russian stock market has demonstrated the fragility of a state whose economic performance hinges on high oil prices, now driven down by the global slowdown. China is perhaps even more fragile, its economic growth depending heavily on foreign investment and access to foreign markets. Both will now be constricted, inflicting economic pain and perhaps even sparking unrest in a country where political legitimacy rests on progress in the long march to prosperity. None of this is good news if the authoritarian leaders of these countries seek to divert attention from internal travails with external adventures. As for our democratic friends, the present crisis comes when many European nations are struggling to deal with decades of anemic growth, sclerotic governance and an impending demographic crisis. Despite its past dynamism, Japan faces similar challenges. India is still in the early stages of its emergence as a world economic and geopolitical power. What does this all mean? There is no substitute for America on the world stage. The choice we have before us is between the potentially disastrous effects of disengagement and the stiff price tag of continued American leadership. Are we up for the task? The American economy has historically demonstrated remarkable resilience. Our market-oriented ideology, entrepreneurial culture, flexible institutions and favorable demographic profile should serve us well in whatever trials lie ahead. The American people, too, have shown reserves of resolve when properly led. But experience after the Cold War era -- poorly articulated and executed policies, divisive domestic debates and rising anti-Americanism in at least some parts of the world -- appear to have left these reserves diminished. A recent survey by the Chicago Council on World Affairs found that 36% of respondents agreed that the U.S. should "stay out of world affairs," the highest number recorded since this question was first asked in 1947. The economic crisis could be the straw that breaks the camel's back.

**2NC: Solves Economy**

**JV repeal key to US economy.**

Donahue 12. [Tom, president and CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, “U.S. businesses and workers need access to Russia’s surging economy” Centre Daily Times -- May 21 -- http://www.centredaily.com/2012/05/21/3202796/us-businesses-and-workers-need.html]

In a welcome development for American workers, farmers and companies, Russia is poised to join the World Trade Organization in July. Russia is the largest economy in the world that has yet to join the WTO, and doing so will require Moscow to further open its market, safeguard intellectual property and investments, and strengthen the rule of law. The result will be more U.S. exports and American jobs. U.S. companies see huge potential in Russia, which boasts the 11th largest economy in the world and 4 percent economic growth. Of the top 15 U.S. trading partners, Russia was the market where U.S. companies enjoyed the fastest export growth last year — a robust 38 percent. However, there’s a catch. While Congress does not vote on Russia’s accession to the WTO, the United States won’t get the full benefits of these market-opening reforms unless Congress approves a short and simple bill granting permanent normal trade relations and graduating Russia from the Jackson- Vanik amendment. The 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment was crafted to press the Soviet Union to allow the emigration of Soviet Jews and prisoners of conscience. Where Russia is concerned, Jackson-Vanik has fully accomplished its objective. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia established freedom of emigration for all citizens. Since 1992, U.S. presidents of both parties have issued annual certifications of Russia’s full compliance with the Jackson-Vanik amendment. But the amendment continues to impact U.S.-Russia trade. It’s a common mistake to think Jackson-Vanik gives the United States leverage over Russia. The opposite is true — keeping Jackson- Vanik on the books gives Russia leverage over America. It allows Moscow to deny the benefits of those market-opening reforms to American workers, farmers and companies — and with the WTO’s blessing. Failure to approve permanent normal trade relations and graduate Russia from Jackson-Vanik will put the United States at a unique disadvantage. Meanwhile, European and Asian companies will build on their already significant head start in tapping the growing Russian market. Russia has more than 140 million consumers and a growing middle class. The World Bank forecasts that WTO accession will increase Russian GDP by 11 percent over the long haul as greater openness and competition in the marketplace drive growth. The President’s Export Council estimates that U.S. exports of goods and services to Russia — which, according to estimates, topped $11 billion in 2011 — could double or triple once Russia joins the WTO. Business opportunities in Russia are expected to grow substantially after Russia finalizes its accession to the WTO. For instance, the total cost of needed infrastructure spending over the next five years is conservatively estimated at $500 billion, according to the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia. Private sector participation in this building boom could offer significant opportunities for U.S. companies. Russia’s accession to the WTO has been a bipartisan American foreign policy goal for many years — spanning Democratic and Republican administrations over 18 years of negotiation. The goal of bringing Russia into the global rules-based trading system is finally within reach. The only question now is whether U.S. companies, workers and farmers will reap the benefits. The answer rests with Congress. As U.S. economic growth sputters, and with millions of Americans unemployed, we must not be ham-stringed in foreign markets. Opening up Russian trade must be the first step in an ambitious American trade agenda. We need to complete the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement to get access to Asia’s booming markets and begin talks on a new trans-Atlantic trade Pact with the EU, our largest commercial partner.

**JV repeal key to trade and econ.**

McQuillen 12. [Dec 13 -- William, reporter, “Cold-War Law Blocks Doubling U.S. Trade With Russia Under WTO” Bloomberg -- http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-12-13/-74-law-blocks-doubling-u-s-trade-with-russia.html]

The U.S. risks losing out on a potential doubling of exports to Russia unless Congress repeals a Cold War-era law passed to punish the Communist Soviet Union. The World Trade Organization’s pending approval of Russia’s membership may leave the U.S. unable to take advantage of a 22 percent reduction in tariffs that European and Asian nations will enjoy. The obstacle is the Jackson-Vanik amendment, passed by Congress in 1974 to bar favorable trade relations with the Soviet Union because it wouldn’t let Jewish citizens emigrate. Lawmakers such as Representatives Chris Smith and Ileana Ros- Lehtinen have questioned repealing the law and easing trade with Russia because of its human-rights and economic policies. “Unless Congress passes a repeal, the U.S. business community is not on equal footing with European and Asian competitors,” Randi Levinas, executive vice president of the U.S.-Russia Business Council, with members such as Boeing Co. (BA), General Motors Co. and Exxon Mobil Corp. (XOM), said in an interview. “They won’t get the same benefits when Russia joins.”

**Key to solve the economy – laundry list.**

Griswold and Peterson 11. [Daniel, director of the Herbert A. Steifel Center for Trade Policy Studies at the Cato Institute, Douglas, former research assistant @ CATO, “Trading with the Bear: Why Russia's Entry into the WTO Is in America's Interest” December 6 -- http://www.cato.org/pub\_display.php?pub\_id=13909]

Russia is poised to join the World Trade Organization (WTO), solidifying its transition from a closed communist economy to a full participant in the global marketplace. The only question is whether the United States will embrace Russia as a fellow WTO member or forfeit the benefits for the sake of an outdated policy rooted in the Cold War. Russia's petition to join the WTO dates back to 1993. Since that time it has negotiated accession agreements with all major WTO members, including the United States, committing to open its economy further and to accept WTO rules on nondiscrimination, dispute settlement, intellectual property, and a range of other trade-related issues. WTO members are expected to approve Russia's admission at the organization's ministerial meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, December 15–17. To enjoy the enhanced access to Russia's market, the U.S. government will need to grant permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) to the Russian Federation. Under the 1974 Jackson-Vanik Amendment, Congress is required annually to pass a special exemption for Russia extending it conditional access to the U.S. market. The law was originally intended to withhold normal-trade-relations status from communist countries that did not allow Jewish citizens to freely emigrate. Even after the fall the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the law continued to apply to most former communist countries because of their continued status as "nonmarket economies." As a condition of membership in the WTO, all members are expected to grant unconditional most-favored nation (MFN) status to all other members. This means each WTO member must offer the same level of market access to other members without attaching special conditions to that access. Continued application of Jackson-Vanik to Russia would be a violation of unconditional MFN status, since it depends on Congress granting renewal each year. If Congress does not grant PNTR to Russia by repealing Jackson-Vanik, then the enhanced market-access commitments Russia has made in its accession protocol would not apply to exports from the United States. Producers in the other 150-plus members would enjoy those benefits but not producers in the United States. **The stakes are high**. Russia is a major yet still underdeveloped market for a range of American exports, from poultry to aircraft. If U.S. exporters are not granted the more favorable access under Russia's accession protocol, they will face discriminatory tariffs that will put them at a disadvantage against competitors in other major trading nations. That market share, once lost, would be difficult to regain. Granting PNTR to Russia thus becomes important to **promoting U.S. trade as a sustainable boost to the sputtering U.S. economy.** Expanding U.S.-Russian Commercial Relations Russia has emerged as a major commercial partner of the United States, although the relationship remains underdeveloped relative to the size of Russia's economy and the considerable economic liberalization following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Through the first three quarters of 2011, Russia ranked 31st among nations as a market for U.S. goods exports, and 16th as a source of U.S. goods imports. In two-way trade (exports plus imports), Russia ranks as America's 23rd largest trading partner, just below Thailand and Nigeria,1 even though it is the world's 11th largest economy in exchange-rate terms.2 Russia remains by far the largest economy and the only member of the G-20 group of major economies still outside the World Trade Organization. Of the 50 largest economies in exchange-rate terms, the oil-exporting Islamic Republic of Iran is the only other one that is not a member. Trade with Russia has, however, grown significantly over the past decade. From 2000 to 2010, U.S. goods exports to Russia increased by 187 percent and U.S. imports from Russia increased by 235 percent.3 During the same period, total U.S. exports and imports grew 63 percent and 57 percent respectively. The growth in import value from Russia can be attributed at least partially to an increase in the world prices of natural resources such as oil and natural gas, which account for a large share of U.S. imports from Russia. Over this same time period, world prices for crude oil have increased by 183 percent.4 U.S. trade with Russia is highly concentrated in a few select industries. In 2010 the top five import categories (according to the 2-digit Harmonized System) made up over 70 percent of total U.S. imports from Russia.5 These categories included precious stones and metals, inorganic chemicals, mineral fuels, aluminum, iron and steel, and fish and other seafood. Examining the industry concentration of imports using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) produces an even greater level of concentration: just three NAICS 3-digit categories (petroleum and coal products, oil and gas, and primary metal manufacturing) made up 86 percent of imports from Russia in 2010.6 U.S. exports to Russia are also highly concentrated: aircraft, machinery, and meat (according to the 2-digit Harmonized System) make up about 60 percent of U.S. exports to Russia. A calculation using comparable NAICS categories yields a figure closer to 54 percent.7

**\*\*\*AFF: JACKSON VANIK\*\*\***

**No JV**

**Won’t pass – GOP tricks.**

Inside U.S. Trade 6-8. [“Senate Finance Republicans demand additional hearing on Jackson Vanik” -- lexis]

All 11 Republican members of the Senate Finance Committee late last month demanded that Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) invite administration officials to testify at a new hearing on the implications of graduating Russia from the so-called Jackson-Vanik amendment, which is a key step related to Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization. "While we appreciated the opportunity to hear from U.S. businesses and other non-governmental organizations about the implications of such action on March 15, 2012, we believe that more analysis is warranted before proceeding with a mark-up in the Finance Committee," the senators wrote in a May 24 letter to Baucus, reprinted on this page. "Therefore, we respectfully request that we hold an additional hearing and invite senior members of the Administration to testify before the Finance Committee before considering legislation," they added. According to the letter, there is precedent for having such a hearing with administration officials, as at least four Cabinet secretaries testified before the Congress during the discussions surrounding the accession of China to the WTO. "Gaining a clearer understanding of the Administration's policies toward Russia will help Members of the Committee place in context legislation" to graduate Russia from Jackson-Vanik, the Republicans wrote. However, several observers said the new demand from Republicans could also represent an attempt to get the administration on the record regarding the priority it attaches to graduating Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment so that Republicans would be in a better position to extract other concessions the administration in return. Overall, the letter represents a potential **new hurdle** for the process of lifting Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment in the Senate. After the March hearing, Baucus said he wanted to mark up Jackson-Vanik legislation in committee within two months, which would have been mid-May (Inside U.S. Trade, March 16).

#### Won’t Pass – Senate GOP opposition.

RT 6/13/12 (Lifting of Russia-US trade barriers faces opposition, http://rt.com/business/news/us-opposes-lifting-restrictions-russia-trade-jackson-vanik-699/)

A US Senate plan to lift Cold War restrictions on trade with Russia faced opposition from Senate Republicans who said Congress must first address Russia's poor human rights record and existing economic and political policies. A group of US senators introduced legislation on Tuesday to lift trade restrictions on Russia. The bill is hoped to be passed before Russia joins the World Trade Organization this summer. The 1974 Jackson-Vanik Act tied trade with the then-Soviet Union to Moscow allowing Jews and other minorities to leave Russia.

**No vote until after the election.**

Mizulin et all 6-11.

[Nikolay, int’l and EU trade law lawyer, Partner @ Mayer & Brown law firm, “Russian Federation: The Russian Government finally submits WTO accession protocol to Russian Parliament” Mondaq -- http://www.mondaq.com/x/181432/International+Trade/The+Russian+Government+Finally+Submits+WTO+Accession+Protocol+To+Russian+Parliament]

Thus, for the United States to receive the benefits of many of4 the accession agreement that Russia negotiated with WTO members, the US Congress must affirmatively act to change US law prior to the time that Russia becomes a member of the WTO. However, while there is a small chance the Congress will enact a bill to repeal Jackson-Vanik this summer or fall, **it is more likely to occur after the US election in November.**

### Not Top of the Docket

#### Jackson-Vanik isn’t top of the docket – no vote in Senate scheduled

WSJ 6/26/12 (Wall Street Journal, A New Russia Rights Standard, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303640804577488971542850272.html?mod=googlenews\_wsj)

Earlier this spring, Republican John McCain, Independent Joe Lieberman and Mr. Cardin offered a quid pro quo: their crucial support for normalized trade ties, in exchange for the Magnitsky bill. The Administration countered by trying to keep the names of sanctioned officials secret. Republicans balked, and the version adopted unanimously on Tuesday by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee narrows the ability of the executive to classify names. The whole point of the law is to shame rights offenders. It's no surprise that Mr. Putin hates a rights bill that casts light on his regime's repression of domestic opponents. But the bill will be popular with the Russian people—see Garry Kasparov nearby—and may help deter Russians who would harm the next Magnitsky. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, who is no fan of trade opening, hasn't committed to a floor vote on Jackson-Vanik repeal or Magnitsky. But after Tuesday's Senate move, the Administration ought to understand that its political options are limited. If it wants normal trade relations with Russia, it will have to support the Magnitsky Act.

**2AC: Magnitsky Thumper**

**Magnitsky QPQ for JV inevitable – takes out the impact.**

Kaminski 6-7. [Matthew, journalist on WSJ’s editorial board, “Magnitsky Moves” Wall Street Journal -- http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303918204577448343949479480.html?mod=googlenews\_wsj]

Two years after its introduction, a Russian human-rights bill is now moving toward adoption. The Kremlin detests and the Obama administration opposes the so-called Magnitsky Act, but political winds are against them. The House Foreign Affairs Committee on Thursday marked it up, becoming the first congressional panel to move on the bill. The full House is expected to pass it easily. A bigger test looms in the Senate. Sen. Ben Cardin, a Maryland Democrat, has pushed this legislation to sanction Russian officials implicated in human-rights abuses. His bill freezes the assets and bans from travel to the U.S. Russian judicial officials involved in the 2009 death of Sergei Magnitsky, a lawyer for the investment house Hermitage Capital. Magnitsky uncovered evidence of police corruption and embezzlement; he was jailed and died in prison at the age of 37. From the start, the Obama administration tried to scuttle or water down the measure. At White House behest, Sen. John Kerry has kept it off the Senate Foreign Relations Committee calendar—most recently so as not to spoil the mood ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin's May visit to the U.S. (In the end, Mr. Putin cancelled the trip, in what came off like a calculated snub to the administration.) Sen. Cardin was pressed to weaken the legislation by narrowing the list of people who would be impacted by the sanctions. He has told aides this spring that he plans to stick firm to keep bipartisan support. The latest Senate draft that he circulated last night continues to give Congress authority to add any Russian rights abusers to the black list in the future. But some of his changes aren't going down well with Republican co-sponsors. The secretary of state gets a waiver to remove anyone from the list on "national security" grounds. The new version also includes a sunset clause that lets the bill expire if individuals responsible for Magnitsky's death are brought to justice. Republican supporters want the act to punish not just Magnitsky's killers but to pressure Russia to respect human rights for years to come. Congress holds the stronger political card. Earlier this spring, a bipartisan group of senators linked the passage of Magnitsky to the repeal of the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment. With Russia set to join the World Trade Organization this summer, American companies would be hurt by Jackson-Vanik, which blocks the U.S. from establishing so-called permanent normal trading relations (PNTR) with Moscow. The White House enthusiastically supports PNTR, and Montana Sen. Max Baucus, who chairs the finance committee, is said to be "antsy" to get to move legislation. Mr. Kerry hasn't put Magnistky on his committee's agenda. If he continues to block the path at the Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Baucus has indicated that he would be willing to attach Magnitsky as an amendment to PNTR and get it to the full Senate vote in a single package. The Kremlin will always complain about Magnitsky, and a Putin spokesman last week issued an unspecified threat of retaliation. But the administration is running out of options to stop the congressional momentum. As much as it fears the damage to its vaunted "reset" in Russia relations from Magnitsky, its adoption has become the sine qua non for the repeal of Jackson-Vanik.

### 1AR: Magnitskey Thumper – QPQ Inevitable

#### Magnitksy QPQ now – Senate Foreign Relations Committee Vote Proves.

WSJ 6/26/12 (Wall Street Journal, A New Russia Rights Standard, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303640804577488971542850272.html?mod=googlenews\_wsj)

Earlier this spring, Republican John McCain, Independent Joe Lieberman and Mr. Cardin offered a quid pro quo: their crucial support for normalized trade ties, in exchange for the Magnitsky bill. The Administration countered by trying to keep the names of sanctioned officials secret. Republicans balked, and the version adopted unanimously on Tuesday by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee narrows the ability of the executive to classify names. The whole point of the law is to shame rights offenders. It's no surprise that Mr. Putin hates a rights bill that casts light on his regime's repression of domestic opponents. But the bill will be popular with the Russian people—see Garry Kasparov nearby—and may help deter Russians who would harm the next Magnitsky. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, who is no fan of trade opening, hasn't committed to a floor vote on Jackson-Vanik repeal or Magnitsky. But after Tuesday's Senate move, the Administration ought to understand that its political options are limited. If it wants normal trade relations with Russia, it will have to support the Magnitsky Act.

#### Magnitsky QPQ now – bipart support for it.

Coll 6/28/12 (The New Yorker, The Magnitskey Case, http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/comment/2012/06/the-magnitsky-case.html)

On Tuesday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously passed the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act. William Browder is among those who have been lobbying for the bill; Magnitsky’s supporters yesterday posted an eighteen-minute video presenting new evidence in the case. The Magnitsky Act would require the State Department to identify and sanction Russian individuals that it judges responsible for Magnitsky’s death, as well as other Russians “responsible for extrajudicial killings, torture, or other gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.” Those listed by State would be denied visas to the United States and could be subjected to asset freezes and banking bans in the West. The Obama Administration has lobbied against the bill, arguing that it already tracks and denies visas to the Russians it judges responsible for Magnitsky’s death. The State Department does this without publicity or transparency, however. The current approach also does not impose any financial sanctions; there is evidence that some of those accused have purchased expensive real estate and cars and opened fat bank accounts in Dubai, Cyprus, Switzerland, and Moscow. There are other, unspoken, reasons for the Administration’s reluctance: it needs Russian coöperation on pressing problems—Syria’s civil war, Iran’s nuclear program, and U.S. supply lines to Afghanistan. If Obama is reëlected, the President may also push for a new nuclear-arms treaty to enact cuts well beyond those already agreed to in the New START treaty. The Administration’s effort to hold the bill off seems likely to fail, for complicated reasons. Next week, Russia’s parliament will approve the country’s entry into the World Trade Organization, marking its arrival within the rule-bound global free-trade regime. For American businesses to benefit through greater trade in Russia, however, Congress must repeal an outdated Cold War-era sanctions law, known as Jackson-Vanik. But the congressional coalition that has come together around the Magnitsky Act (first introduced by Senator Benjamin Cardin of Maryland, a Democrat, but now supported by many Republicans) wants Obama to accept passage of that bill in exchange for Jackson-Vanik’s repeal.

**1AR: Magnitsky Thumper – Kills Relations**

**Magnitsky toasts everything.**

Washington Post 5-30. [“Moscow warns U.S. over Magnitsky bill” -- lexis]

Russia is prepared to retaliate if the U.S. Congress passes the Magnitsky bill, which would freeze assets of and deny U.S. visas to Russian officials linked to human rights abuses, President Vladimir Putin's top foreign adviser said Tuesday. "We would very much like to avoid it," Yuri Ushakov said. "But if this new anti-Russian law is adopted, then of course that demands measures in response." Ushakov's comments came in an otherwise upbeat briefing on a meeting between Putin and President Obama set for June in Mexico. The Obama administration has been resisting the legislation, introduced by Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-Md.), viewing it as too provocative, even as the State Department has acted on its own to refuse entry to Russian officials associated with the Magnitsky case. But in a recent interview, Cardin said he was sure the bill would pass, adding that he thinks the administration is preparing to accept the legislation if it is paired with another bill granting Russia normal trade-relation status. That is required under the terms of Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization, one of the central achievements of Obama's "reset" of relations with Moscow. The administration has apparently realized that it cannot stop the Magnitsky bill and will have to deal with the anger of the Russian leadership. If Ushakov's remarks were designed to encourage a presidential veto of the bill, they are unlikely to succeed, given the difficulty the White House would face in killing a human rights measure. It could come out of committee as early as next month, according to a congressional official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. Sergei Magnitsky was a lawyer who accused tax officials of orchestrating a $230 million fraud against the government. He was arrested and charged with the fraud himself and died in jail in 2009, possibly from a beating. Cardin's bill has infuriated top Russian officials, most of whom apparently keep their sizable personal fortunes in dollar bank accounts. "It hits them where it hurts," Cardin said. It is designed to replace the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment, which was aimed at forcing the Soviet Union to allow freer emigration of Jews and other religious minorities. Ushakov said Wednesday that Russia would prefer to live with the anti-Soviet Jackson-Vanik measure than to have it replaced by the anti-Russian Magnitsky bill.

**Magnitsky QPQ thumps the disad.** (and pc can’t stop it)

Washington Post 6-8. [“Hous panel approves Magnitsky rights bill” – lexis]

A bill that would impose sanctions on Russians who commit human rights violations moved ahead in the U.S. Congress on Thursday **despite resistance from the Obama administration** and angry denunciations from Kremlin officials. The Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, named in memory of a corruption-fighting Russian who worked for an American law firm and died in police custody, was approved by the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Two more committees must weigh in before a vote of the entire House, and the Senate has yet to act on its version. Magnitsky, a tax adviser for the Hermitage Capital investment company, was 37 when he died here in pretrial detention in 2009. After discovering that stolen Hermitage documents were being used to plunder $230 million from the Russian treasury through a fraudulent tax return, Magnitsky accused tax and police officials of the crime. They charged him instead, and nearly a year later he died in custody, his body marked by signs of beating. Since then the affair has become deeply entangled in ever complicated U.S.-Russian relations. Human rights advocates have lobbied hard for the bill, which requires publicly naming those Russians connected to the case, denying them visas and freezing their assets. The State Department would have to deliver yearly reports on enforcement. The Obama administration has been deeply critical of Russia's refusal to hold anyone accountable for Magnitsky's ill treatment and death, but it has argued that a secret visa blacklist it drew up last summer is more effective and avoids publicly challenging Moscow. Russian officials, who say the United States is meddling in their internal affairs, have vowed to retaliate if the bill is passed.The dispute has boiled over into Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization, which is expected to become complete this summer. (The Russian parliament on Thursday set a ratification vote for July 4.) Membership has been a hard-fought victory for the White House, aimed at making Russia a more integral part of the world community and subject to the rules of international organizations. But in order for U.S. businesses to take full advantage of Russia's new status, the United States must grant Russia permanent normal trade relations and repeal the Jackson-Vanik amendment as it applies to Moscow. The Cold War-era amendment was meant to pressure the Soviet Union to allow the emigration of Jews, and there appears to be near-universal agreement that its time has passed and that it should be lifted. But ardent supporters of the Magnitsky act, such as Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-Md.), are intent on replacing Jackson-Vanik with Magnitsky, despite pressure from American businesses. Speaking to the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia on Thursday, U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk reiterated the importance of removing Russia from Jackson-Vanik without tying it to passage of the Magnitsky bill. "Our priority is for the Congress to lift Jackson-Vanik in a clean bill which deals only with the issue relevant to our ability to maintain our competitiveness," Kirk said. Some Russian experts argue that replacing Jackson-Vanik with Magnitsky runs the risk of provoking a destructive tit-for-tat with Russia without achieving the goal of furthering human rights. "I fear we'll end up in an endless round of recriminations," said Fiona Hill, director of the Center on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution. "What happened to Sergei Magnitsky is appalling, but the problem is all of the instruments we have are difficult to apply."

**Jacks relations – takes out your impact.**

Itar-Tass 6-6. [“Magnitsky Act adoption may harm trade relations with RF-view” – lexis]

US business representatives have warned of the danger of the adoption of the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, which, in their opinion, could seriously damage trade relations with Russia. President of the National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC) Bill Reinsch told journalists on Tuesday that US companies are concerned that Moscow will take retaliatory measures, and after its accession to the WTO will switch to other trading partners. He also expressed the opinion that the adoption of the bill will have a negative impact on the overall bilateral relations and will complicate cooperation with Russia on such issues as Iran and Syria. NFTC members are such major companies as Boeing, Microsoft and Caterpillar. Reinsch believes that it is yet not too late to modify the Magnitsky Act, which has "serious flaws," in order to somehow soften Moscow's reaction. History shows that once such things are put to the vote, they are adopted by a majority vote, he added. The Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act provides that is currently considered by the US Congress, provides for sanctions against officers of Russian law enforcement agencies and judges implicated in the death of the lawyer of the Hermitage Capital Management investment fund in a Moscow detention centre in November 2009. According to the document, they and their relatives will be denied entry to the United States and their accounts in US banks will be frozen. The initiator of the bill is Democratic Senator Benjamin Cardin. Many members of the US Congress, including Senators Kerry and Cardin, consider the adoption of the Magnitsky Act as a prerequisite for the repeal of the discriminatory Jackson-Vanik amendment for Russia.

**2AC: Relations Resilient**

**Relations resilient – empirics prove we’ve overcome bigger issues.**

Pifer 12. [Steven, Senior Fellow @ Brookings, “The Future Course of the U.S.-Russia Relationship” Brookings Institute -- March 21 -- http://www.brookings.edu/testimony/2012/0321\_arms\_control\_pifer.aspx]

By any objective measure, the U.S.-Russian relationship is stronger today than it was in 2008. Then, sharp differences over the future of strategic arms limitations, missile defense in Europe, NATO enlargement and Georgia dominated the agenda. Relations between Washington and Moscow plunged to their lowest point since the end of the Soviet Union. The bilateral relationship had become so thin that there are no indications that concern about damaging it affected in any way the Kremlin’s decisions regarding military operations against Georgia. The Russian government saw little of value to lose in its relationship with Washington. That was not a good situation from the point of view of U.S. interests. It is different today. There are things in the U.S.-Russian relationship that Moscow cares about, and that translates to leverage and even a restraining influence on Russian actions. This does not mean that all is going well on the U.S.-Russia agenda. Although the rhetoric is less inflammatory than it was four years ago, missile defense poses a difficult problem on both the bilateral and NATO-Russia agendas. The countries clearly differ over Syria. Moscow’s misguided support for Mr. Assad—which stems from the fact that he is one of Russia’s few allies and from the Russian desire to pay NATO back for what they consider the misuse of March 2011 UN Security Council Resolution 1973 on Libya—have led the Kremlin to an unwise policy. It is alienating the Arab world and will position Moscow poorly with the Syrian people once Mr. Assad leaves the scene.

**1AR: Relations Resilient**

**US-Russian Relations Inevitable – Laundry List.**

BAZHANOV 10. [Yevgeny, vice chancellor of research and international relations at the Foreign Ministry’s Diplomatic Academy in Moscow “5 Barriers to a Western Partnership” Moscow Times -- Aug 20]

But despite these significant obstacles, there is still a lot of potential for strengthening Russia’s partnership with the West. The driving force behind this natural convergence is Russia’s pressing need to modernize and diversify its economy. Post-Soviet Russia is committed to build a market economy and a democratic society. As a result, for the first time in history, the Russian economic, social and political models are not antagonistic to the Western model. For its part, the West has an objective — if not self-serving — interest in seeing Russia become a well-functioning civil society with a prosperous market economy. The process of globalization and modernization necessarily means that Russia will never return to Soviet-style isolationism. The economic centers of the modern world — Europe, the United States, China, India and Southeast Asia — are becoming increasingly dependent on one another. If Russia were to reject economic ties with those power centers, the country would become so weak that it would disintegrate. In addition, common security risks and threats — mainly terrorism — will naturally bring Russia and the West together to fight the common enemies on all fronts. One other factor that will help the partnership is that Russia will gradually cure itself of its complex as a “defeated superpower” and will come to terms with its more modest geopolitical role in the global arena. For its part, the West will cease to view Moscow as a geopolitical rival.

**1AR: Tensions Inevitable**

**Tensions in US Russian relations inevitable.**

Pifer 12. [Steven, Senior Fellow @ Brookings, “The Future Course of the U.S.-Russia Relationship” Brookings Institute -- March 21 -- http://www.brookings.edu/testimony/2012/0321\_arms\_control\_pifer.aspx]

U.S. and Russian interests differ in the post-Soviet space, the region that is most likely to generate a major crisis in bilateral relations. Moscow seeks to gain influence over its neighbors, using mechanisms such as the Customs Union with Kazakhstan and Belarus. The Russians seek deference from other states in the post-Soviet space on issues that they define as affecting critical Russian interests. One example is staunch Russian opposition to the enlargement of NATO or the European Union into the post-Soviet space. Russian policies often seem to have the effect of pushing neighboring states away from Moscow, but the Russians have not changed course. The United States takes a different approach, rejecting the notion of a sphere of influence and supporting the right of each post-Soviet state to choose its own course. Some **tension between the two approaches is inevitable**. Washington should expect the kinds of tit-for-tat exchanges that have occurred in the past, such as when a U.S. Navy ship visit to Georgia was followed by a Russian warship calling on Venezuela. Given the difference in approaches, it would be wise for Washington and Moscow to consult closely and be transparent with one another on their policies in the post-Soviet space, so as to avoid surprises and minimize the chances that a clash of interests could escalate. One other difficult issue is the democracy and human rights situation within Russia. While Russian citizens today enjoy considerably more individual freedoms than they did during the time of the Soviet Union, it is equally true that they enjoy fewer freedoms, are more subject to arbitrary and capricious state action, and have less political influence than during the 1990s, however chaotic that period was.

**Relations Defense: Russia Pockets Concessions**

**Russia pockets relations – no benefit**

Rubin 1-4. [Jennifer, The Washington Post staff writer, "Evaluating Russian 'reset'," http://voices.washingtonpost.com/right-turn/2011/01/evaluating\_russian\_reset.html]

Critics of Obama's reset policy argue that Obama has given up too much and gotten too little from Russia. A case in point is the crackdown on Russian dissidents in the wake of START ratification. Eli Lake reports: Russian authorities detained one of the country's leading opposition figures less than two weeks after the U.S. Senate ratified a key arms-control treaty that the White House promised would help reset ties with Moscow. Over the weekend, members of Russia's FSB internal security service disrupted demonstrations in St. Petersburg and Moscow, arresting nearly 130 pro-democracy activists and reversing a policy of tolerating political protests once every 60 days by a coalition of democratic opposition figures in the country. Jamie Fly of the Foreign Policy Initiative explained earlier this year that on Iran, for example, we've gotten less than advertised: To get Russian support for new sanctions, the Obama administration paid a steep price - removing U.S. sanctions against five Russian entities, and resubmitting a nuclear cooperation agreement that was previously frozen after Russia's invasion of Georgia. Despite administration denials, many observers wonder whether President Obama's cancellation of missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic in September 2009 also were part of a package deal with Moscow. . . .Despite U.S. efforts to placate Russia in return for support on Iran, Russia has done little more than it did during the Bush administration to halt Tehran's march toward a nuclear weapon. And, of course, with Russian help, Iran was able to open the Bushehr nuclear reactor. On Afghanistan, Fly also contends the number of supply routes opened by Russia have been limited. Others are more generous in their assessment but nevertheless argue that we have failed to alter the underlying nature of the U.S.-Russian relationship. Leon Aron, a Russian scholar at AEI, in a telephone interview describes the administration as "fairly successful in achieving very limited objectives" such as the rescinding of the S-300 missile deal with Iran, agreement on sanctions (albeit watered down) against the Iranian regime, and some success on opening flights into Afghanistan. He, however, cautions "that on larger things Russia is going in the opposite direction" than we would like. He notes specifically the long sentence handed down against Mikhail Khodorkovsky gives us insight into what is going on. "Almost as in the Soviet system, Russia is largely a black box," he says. "But every now and then something comes out that it is a fairly good indicator." The lesson of the Khodorkovsky verdict, he contends, is that "we better start thinking about living with an increasingly authoritarian Russia." This suggests that Vladimir Putin is "determined to reassert the state in politics and the economy." He fully expects Putin to come back as president in 2012. That domestic oppression, Aron suggests, bodes ill for cooperation with Russia on external matters. He contends that not unlike Soviet times, the greater the internal oppression, the more "detrimental repercussions" there will be for Russian-U.S. relations. He says, "It is my sense that we are going in that direction."

**AT: Accidents Impact**

Communication checks prevent accidents.

Ford 8. [Chris, Senior Fellow & Director @ Center for Technology and Global Security @ Hudson Institute, “Dilemmas of Nuclear Force ‘De-Alerting’” Int’l Peace Institute Policy Forum -- October 7 -- www.hudson.org/files/documents/De-Alerting%20FINAL2%20(2).pdf]

The United States and Russia have also worked for years to improve communications, reduce misunderstandings, and develop ways to lessen the risk of inadvertent launch or other errors in their strategic relationship. Most readers will be familiar with the Direct Communications Link (the famous “hotline”) established in 1963.27 In 1971, however, Washington and Moscow also signed an agreement establishing basic procedures to increase mutual consultation and notification regarding relatively innocent but potentially alarming activities – thereby reducing the risk of accidental nuclear war.28 Since 1987, the two parties have also operated securely-linked 24-hour communications centers – the U.S. node of which is the Nuclear Risk Reduction Center (NRRC) operated by the State Department29 – which specialize in transmitting such things as the notifications required under arms control treaties. Pursuant to a 1988 memorandum, NRRC transmittals, which go directly to the Russian Ministry of Defense, include ballistic missile launch notifications. This link also proved useful to help prevent strategic tensions after the terrorist assault of September 11, 2001 – at which point U.S. officials used the NRRC to reassure their Russian counterparts that the sudden American security alert in the wake of the Manhattan and Pentagon attacks was not in any way an indication of impending U.S. belligerence vis-à-vis Russia.

### High Speed Rail-Specific Link Turns

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

Hart ‘12

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

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

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

Livable Cities ‘12

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

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

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

Business Wire ‘11

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

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

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

Freemark ‘12

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – “The Senate’s Transportation Program” – March 15th – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2012/03/15/the-senates-transportation-program/)

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

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

### Bipart Turn (General)

#### Transportation bill proves bipartisan support for the plan

LA Times 6/29/12 (Congress passes transportation bill, halts student loan rate hike, http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/29/news/la-pn-congress-passes-transportation-bill-halts-student-loan-rate-hike-20120629)

Congress, in a rare display of bipartisanship, on Friday sent to President Obama a roughly $105-billion transportation bill that lawmakers from both parties touted as perhaps the largest jobs measure of the year. The measure also would avert a doubling of interest rates for millions of college student loans that was due to take effect Sunday. "The American people finally will have a jobs bill from this Congress,’’ said Eleanor Holmes Norton, a Democrat who is the Washington, D.C., delegate to the House. The first major transportation bill since 2005, the legislation would keep highway and transit spending at current levels through the end of fiscal year 2014. It includes an expansion of a federal loan program sought by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and other mayors to fast-track bus and rail projects in traffic-choked regions. The House approved the bill by a 373-52 vote, demonstrating the power of pothole politics. The Senate approved it 74-19. The bill would provide financial incentives to states that crack down on distracted driving, require ignition interlock devices for DUI offenders and establish graduated licensing programs that restrict teenagers' driving privileges. It also would impose new safety rules on interstate passenger buses in response to a number of high-profile tour bus crashes. "Do not give up hope,’’ said Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), chairwoman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. She said the bill’s passage was evidence "that we can work together.’’ The bill was passed only after lawmakers once again faced deadlines — a possible shutdown of the highway program Saturday and a doubling of student interest loan rates Sunday. Lawmakers also did something unusual for this Congress: They compromised.

#### Congress supports transportation projects – recent bill proves.

Fram and Lowy 6/29/12 (Alan and Joan, Huffington Post, House, Senate Pass Transportation Bill, Extend Current Student Loan Rates, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/29/transportation-bill-student-loans\_n\_1638116.html)

WASHINGTON — Congress emphatically approved legislation Friday preserving jobs on transportation projects from coast to coast and avoiding interest rate increases on new loans to millions of college students, giving lawmakers campaign-season bragging rights on what may be their biggest economic achievement before the November elections. The bill sent for President Barack Obama's signature enables just over $100 billion to be spent on highway, mass transit and other transportation programs over the next two years, projects that would have expired Saturday without congressional action. It also ends a bare-knuckle political battle over student loans that raged since spring, a proxy fight over which party was best helping voters muddle through the economic downturn. Obama signed a one-week temporary measure Friday evening, permitting the highway and loan programs to continue until the full legislation reaches his desk. Under the bill, interest rates of 3.4 percent for subsidized Stafford loans for undergraduates will continue for another year, instead of doubling for new loans beginning on Sunday as scheduled by a law passed five years ago to save money. Had the measure failed, interest rates would have mushroomed to 6.8 percent for 7.4 million students expected to get the loans over the coming year, adding an extra $1,000 to the average cost of each loan and antagonizing students – and their parents – four months from Election Day. The Democratic-led Senate sent the measure to Obama by a 74-19 vote, just minutes after the Republican-run House approved it 373-52. The unusual display of harmony, in a bitterly partisan year, signaled lawmakers' eagerness to claim credit for providing transportation jobs, to avert higher costs for students and their families and to avoid being embarrassed had the effort run aground.

### A-to Neg’s Oil Lobby Link

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

Baram ‘10

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

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

**Winners Win**

#### ( ) Winners Win

Singer ‘9

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

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

#### ( ) Victories increase capital

Lee ‘5

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

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

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

Ornstein ‘1

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

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

### Political Capital =/= Key - Dickinson

#### Political capital not key to the agenda

Dickinson 9 – Professor of Political Science (Matthew, professor of political science at Middlebury College and taught previously at Harvard University where he worked under the supervision of presidential scholar Richard Neustadt, 5-26-2009, Presidential Power: A NonPartisan Analysis of Presidential Politics, “Sotomayor, Obama and Presidential Power,” http://blogs.middlebury.edu/presidentialpower/2009/05/26/sotamayor-obama-and-presidential-power/)

As for Sotomayor, from here the path toward almost certain confirmation goes as follows: the Senate Judiciary Committee is slated to hold hearings sometime this summer (this involves both written depositions and of course open hearings), which should lead to formal Senate approval before Congress adjourns 1for its summer recess in early August.  So Sotomayor will likely take her seat in time for the start of the new Court session on October 5.  (I talk briefly about the likely politics of the nomination process below). What is of more interest to me, however, is what her selection reveals about the basis of presidential power.  Political scientists, like baseball writers evaluating hitters, have devised numerous means of measuring a president’s influence in Congress. I will devote a separate post to discussing these, but in brief, they often center on the creation of legislative “box scores” designed to measure how many times a president’s preferred piece of legislation, or nominee to the executive branch or the courts, is approved by Congress.  That is, how many pieces of legislation that the president supports actually pass Congress? How often do members of Congress vote with the president’s preferences?  How often is a president’s policy position supported by roll call outcomes?  These measures, however, are a misleading gauge of presidential power – they are a better indicator of congressional power.  This is because how members of Congress vote on a nominee or legislative item is rarely influenced by anything a president does.  Although journalists (and political scientists) often focus on the legislative “endgame” to gauge presidential influence – will the President swing enough votes to get his preferred legislation enacted? – this mistakes an outcome with actual evidence of presidential influence.  Once we control for other factors – a member of Congress’ ideological and partisan leanings, the political leanings of her constituency, whether she’s up for reelection or not – we can usually predict how she will vote without needing to know much of anything about what the president wants.  (I am ignoring the importance of a president’s veto power for the moment.) Despite the much publicized and celebrated instances of presidential arm-twisting during the legislative endgame, then, most legislative outcomes don’t depend on presidential lobbying.  But this is not to say that presidents lack influence.  Instead, the primary means by which presidents influence what Congress does is through their ability to determine the alternatives from which Congress must choose.  That is, presidential power is largely an exercise in agenda-setting – not arm-twisting.   And we see this in the Sotomayer nomination.  Barring a major scandal, she will almost certainly be confirmed to the Supreme Court whether Obama spends the confirmation hearings calling every Senator or instead spends the next few weeks ignoring the Senate debate in order to play Halo III on his Xbox.