# Generic

## Public popular

### 1NC

#### An increase in transportation investment will lift us out of the recession in the short term

**Smith 12** (John, CEO and President of Reconnecting America, " Federal Transportation Infrastructure Investment Critically Important," 1/25, http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/news-center/reconnecting-america-news/2012/federal-transportation-infrastructure-investment-critically-important/)

**"Today, as the nation begins to rise out of a deep recession, an investment in transportation infrastructure is critically important, including not only roads and bridges, but other modes such as trains and buses. Transportation choices for Americans are essential for reducing our dependence on foreign oil, increasing access to opportunity, and improving our quality of life. Indeed, transportation is a key component in making many of the President's other proposals work. We need transit options and intermodal links to take students to college, to transport unemployed workers to job training, and to bring employees and customers to small businesses. Quality, reliable public transportation systems are the anchors that help many communities thrive, whether they are in rural, suburban, or urban areas.**

### 2NC

#### Economy swamps all other issues

**Man, ’12** (Anthony, Sun Sentinel staff, 5/13/12, <http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2012-05-13/news/fl-economy-jobs-election-20120512_1_florida-voters-job-outlook-swing-voters/3>, JD)

Forget gay marriage. Put aside the war in Afghanistan. Ignore illegal immigration. All are dwarfed by the big gorilla of 2012 — the economy. Election 2012 is all about the economy — especially jobs — the one issue with the power to determine if President Barack Obama or Republican Mitt Romney wins Florida's critical electoral votes and, perhaps, the presidency. "That's the No. 1 priority," said Jansew Sang, of Hollywood. Laid off in 2009 from her job as Latin America sales manager for a manufacturer of networking devices, she's still relatively fortunate, being able to work as a translator and banking consultant. "I have the advantage of being able to keep myself afloat in this economy," she said. Advertisement Ads by Google Sang is an independent — the kind of voter coveted by every candidate because independents decide close elections. She voted for Obama in 2008, but hasn't decided if she'll vote for him or Romney this year. She was among 646 people seeking work last week at a career fair in Miramar along with city residents Jenni Ressler and Jim Richardson. Like Sang, they're swing voters and haven't decided which candidate will get their votes this year. Richardson, out of work since August 2011, said jobs are the issue in 2012. And Ressler, who's been looking for two months, said the economy "would play a big role, obviously." Jobs are a salient issue for many more people than the 9 percent of Floridians who were unemployed in March — when the jobless rate was again higher than the national average and the percentage of people with jobs was 43rd in the country. New state unemployment numbers, for April, are due out Friday. Dave Welch, who lives west of Boca Raton, said he feels the employment squeeze — even though he still has his job as a copier mechanic. "I know several people who have lost their jobs: good, hard-working people who have lost their jobs because the economy is in the tank," he said. "We're not selling the products that we have in the past, therefore we don't need the people that we've had. It's been a cascading effect." He blames Obama and the Democrats, and decided long ago to vote for Romney, even though the Republican candidate isn't as conservative as he'd like. Welch's concerns about jobs are far from unique. A Suffolk University/WSVN-Ch. 7 poll conducted last week found 81 percent of Florida voters said the state's job outlook is poor or fair. Just 13 percent termed it good or excellent. More than 80 percent believe the state is still mired in a recession. And 52 percent of the 600 Florida voters surveyed rated the economy as the most important issue facing the country. None of the other nine issues came anywhere close, a finding Suffolk polling director David Paleologos termed "amazing." Troy Samuels, a Miramar city commissioner, Republican Party committeeman and co-chairman of Romney's campaign in Broward County, said there isn't a single event he's attended in the past three years when at least one person hasn't asked him for job leads. He said even plenty of people with a job are concerned about what the near future might bring. "If there's a bump in the economy … will my company all of a sudden lay off 100 people, and I'm one of those 100?" he said. "Those are still serious concerns in the minds of people no matter what party they're from, and they think about it every single day." Advertisement Ads by Google And those kind of worries have a big impact on elections if "the unemployment rate gets reported and people sort of look around and say things don't look so good," said Kevin Wagner, a political scientist at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. And that's bad for incumbents. Conflicting trends mark the all-important unemployment picture, said Xu Cheng, senior economist atMoody'sAnalytics, a leading independent economic forecasting firm. From 2010 to today, the Florida unemployment rate has come down more than 2 percentage points, "In normal times, this would be great," the economist said. "In normal times, if we put this variable in the [election forecasting] model, Obama would win Florida for sure." But there's another factor in play: A state unemployment rate higher than 8 percent produces the "grumpy voter effect," Cheng said. "Despite Florida's relatively strong recovery in the last two years, given that Florida unemployment figures will still be very high — and we believe at the time of the election it will still be about 9 percent — we believe this grumpy voter effect will kick in." That means Floridians are much less likely than normal to give the president any credit for the decline in the unemployment rate, he said.

#### Public favors federal government funding for infrastructure—and thinks its underfunded in the SQ

**Houston Chronicle, 5/18/2012 (“**Americans Value Highways and Bridges as a National Treasure”

[http://www.chron.com/business/press-releases/article/Americans-Value-Highways-and-Bridges-as-a-3568488.php accessed tm 5/19](http://www.chron.com/business/press-releases/article/Americans-Value-Highways-and-Bridges-as-a-3568488.php%20accessed%20tm%205/19) )

**Clearly, Americans hold the nation's infrastructure in high regard. Nearly nine in ten (89 percent) Americans feel it’s important for the federal government to fund the maintenance and improvements of interstate highways. Yet, this infrastructure isn’t receiving the fiscal attention it deserves**. Congress recently approved the ninth extension of transportation legislation that originally expired in 2009. The [Highway Trust Fund](http://www.chron.com/?controllerName=search&action=search&channel=business%2Fpress-releases&search=1&inlineLink=1&query=%22Highway+Trust+Fund%22) – due to inflation, rising construction costs and increasingly fuel efficient vehicles – no longer collects enough money to support the U.S. surface transportation system, remaining solvent only through a series of infusions from federal general revenue funds. **More than half of Americans (57 percent) believe the nation’s infrastructure is underfunded**.

#### Transportation infrastructure is key to Obama victory - the public loves it

HNTB 12 HNTB Corporation is an employee-owned infrastructure firm serving public and private owners and contractors. With nearly a century of service, HNTB understands the life cycle of infrastructure and solves clients' most complex technical, financial and operational challenges. "Americans value highways and bridges as a national treasure," May 18, http://www.hntb.com/news-room/news-release/americans-value-highways-and-bridges-as-a-national-treasure

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (May 18, 2012) – A new survey from HNTB Corporation finds two-thirds (66 percent) of Americans who intend to vote during this year's presidential election feel that a candidate's standing on American transportation infrastructure will influence their decision; more than one in five (22 percent) say this will be extremely influential on who they vote for.

"Our highways, bridges and other transportation infrastructure are essential assets that support growth and investment in the U.S. economy," said Pete Rahn, HNTB leader national transportation practice. "People expect them to be resilient, reliable and safe."

Clearly, Americans hold the nation's infrastructure in high regard. Nearly nine in ten (89 percent) Americans feel it’s important for the federal government to fund the maintenance and improvements of interstate highways.

Yet, this infrastructure isn’t receiving the fiscal attention it deserves. Congress recently approved the ninth extension of transportation legislation that originally expired in 2009. The Highway Trust Fund – due to inflation, rising construction costs and increasingly fuel efficient vehicles – no longer collects enough money to support the U.S. surface transportation system, remaining solvent only through a series of infusions from federal general revenue funds.

More than half of Americans (57 percent) believe the nation’s infrastructure is underfunded.

The uncertainty over a long-term bill also is a challenge for state departments of transportation, which rely heavily on federal funding to support major highway and bridge programs, and creates ambiguity for planners and contractors who need the certainty of a long-term bill to commit to large, complex multiyear projects.

"The absence of a long-term bill is hurting our economic competitiveness," said Rahn. "Recent efforts by the House and Senate to move discussions into a conference committee and hammer out potential details of a bill are a step in the right direction, but what’s really needed is a stable, long-term authorization that can adequately pay for our transportation system."

Overall, 4 in 5 (80 percent) Americans would rather increase funding and improve roads and bridges than continue current funding levels and risk allowing our roads and bridges deteriorate.

#### The public loves transportation infrastructure investment

HNTB 12 HNTB Corporation is an employee-owned infrastructure firm serving public and private owners and contractors. With nearly a century of service, HNTB understands the life cycle of infrastructure and solves clients' most complex technical, financial and operational challenges. "Tolling the distance to fund U.S. transportation," May 31, http://www.hntb.com/news-room/news-release/tolling-the-distance-to-fund-us-transportation

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (May 31, 2012) – Infrastructure is on the minds of the American public. According to a survey from HNTB Corporation, nearly 9 in 10 (87 percent) agree transportation funding is a public investment worth making.

"Americans value infrastructure and are willing to invest in projects that make a difference in their communities," said Pete Rahn, HNTB leader national transportation practice. "Transportation improvements create jobs, encourage development and ease congestion."

According to the Federal Highway Administration, in 2007 every $1 billion in federal highway expenditures supported about 30,000 jobs: 10,300 in construction, 4,675 in supporting industries and another 15,094 in induced employment.

This sentiment also is borne out by the results of many local transportation-related election issues, which historically pass more than 73 percent of the time.

Yet few are willing to pay more in gas taxes, the traditional form of revenue for surface transportation projects at the state and federal levels. Perhaps this is because approximately half of Americans (51 percent) are not confident that they taxes they pay to build interstates are making a difference.

A recent report issued from the Miller Center at the University of Virginia and a bipartisan conference, including former U.S. Secretaries of Transportation Norman Mineta and Samuel Skinner, acknowledged this lack of confidence and the need to better articulate the positive stories generated by such investment in communities’ economic competitiveness and quality of life.

Many are driven toward tolls to pay for such projects. In fact, more than 3 in 5 (61 percent) Americans would prefer to get additional infrastructure funds through tolls rather than an increased federal gas tax or a vehicle miles driven user fee. And 37 percent would be willing to pay more tolls in order to improve interstate highways, while just 17 percent would pay additional gas taxes.

"We need to tap into alternative revenue sources," Rahn said. "Tolling is an important part of the mix, but we also should recognize one sized doesn’t fit all. All options should be on the table, and we should do more to educate the public on where public-private partnerships, state infrastructure banks, alternative bond programs and other sources of revenue are making a positive difference."

While there may be a need to tell transportation's story more effectively, the general public does believe in the value of a national transportation program.

#### Infrastructure spending is a political win for Obama - recaptures key voters

Cooper 12 (Donna, Senior Fellow at American Progress, 1/20/12, “Will Congress Block Infrastructure Spending?”, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2012/01/infrastructure_sotu.html>)

Given the Republican track record on passing the legislation that is needed to rebuild our infrastructure, it is premature to consider this aviation funding bill a done deal. The House is not the only problem. Sen. Reid late in 2011 put the president’s American Jobs Act, which included $60 billion to repair our schools and fund a National Infrastructure Bank, to a vote, but Senate filibuster rules that require 60 favorable votes to put a bill on the floor for consideration made moving this infrastructure funding bill impossible. After failing to reach that 60-vote threshold, Sen. Reid said, **“Republicans think that if the economy improves, it might help President Obama. So they root for the economy to fail and oppose every effort to improve it.”** Indeed, Sen. McConnell blocked passage of the Senate version of the Jobs Act while lambasting the president for pointing it out and blasting the Senate Democrats for not working with the House Republicans to reach a compromise. But that statement begs the question of why McConnell isn’t working with his own party’s leadership in the House to make sure the Senate receives a bill that has a chance of a positive vote. The answer is clear: **The Republican leadership is very concerned that responding to the American popular call for infrastructure investment will benefit President Obama politically**—never mind the pain suffered by the American people and our future economic competitiveness by their failure to act. The president should not be deterred, however, by the roadblocks he faces in Congress. In his speech in Kansas this past December, he summoned the nation to redouble its commitment to an economy that lifts all boats. Echoing President Theodore Roosevelt’s progressive sentiments, he said: We simply cannot return to this brand of "you're on your own" economics if we're serious about rebuilding the middle class in this country. We know that it doesn't result in a strong economy. It results in an economy that invests too little in its people and in its future. We know it doesn't result in a prosperity that trickles down. It results in a prosperity that's enjoyed by fewer and fewer of our citizens. Just as the creation of our middle class finds it roots, in part, in the building of our infrastructure, so too is the restoration of our infrastructure essential to the restoration of the breadth and vibrancy of America’s middle class.

#### Obama needs a job creation program to win the election

Ruggiero 7/11 Russell is a writer at the Examiner. "Its Obama’s Race to Lose: Closer than 2008," 2012, http://www.examiner.com/article/its-obama-s-race-to-lose-closer-than-2008

No surprises here, President Obama faces a tougher road to the White House than in 2008. Mitt Romney is doing a good job in raising cash, and the June 8.2% unemployment report added more momentum to his presidential bid. With some good strategic moves by the challenger we could have a real race on our hands. However, more hoping that economy improves (Democrats) or hoping the economy decelerates (Republicans) will be needed to determine an ultimate winner. The key topic is still how to create long-term well-paying jobs. Bain Capital may be a current jab by the Democratic Political Machine, but President Obama needs to show how his team can win with a positive agenda like creating a new Job Creation Program that could gain bipartisan support. It is ideas like these that will determine the outcome on November 6.

#### That's the plan

Bivens and Pollack 10 (Josh Bivens, <http://www.epi.org/people/josh-bivens/>, Ethan Pollack, <http://www.epi.org/people/ethan-pollack/>, “An analysis of Transportation for America’s Jobs Proposals”, <http://www.epi.org/publication/ib271/>, 2/4/10, Bhattacharyya)

A year ago Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), a $787 billion jobs package designed to mitigate the severity and length of the current recession. One of the key components of the Recovery Act was investments in transportation infrastructure. These investments provided high economic benefits per dollar by putting people back to work and boosting consumer demand. A year later it is clear that the Recovery Act was successful—the Congressional Budget Office recently reported that the Recovery Act boosted gross domestic product (GDP) by 2.2 percentage points in both the second and third quarter of last year, and most independent analysts conclude that the economy would have lost between 1 and 1.5 million more jobs without the legislation (Bivens 2009). But with continuing job losses, unemployment projected to rise for at least another six months, and a 10.6 million job gap, it is clear that more needs to be done. This Issue Brief considers the job impacts of infrastructure investments, specifically in terms of the repair and maintenance of highways, bridges, and public transit, the preservation of existing transit jobs and services, and the expansion of access to jobs resulting from enhanced public transportation. This analysis examines a proposal by Transportation for America, which is consistent with the basic job-creation proposals found in EPI’s American Jobs Plan. The Transportation for America jobs package would allocate $34.3 billion more to highways, mass transit, high- speed rail, buses, and bike/pedestrian routes. This analysis looks at how many and what kinds of jobs this type of investment would create, and how that mix of jobs compares to the overall economy. It also looks at where these jobs are created by region, state, and urban/suburban/rural. Overall, the $34.3 billion jobs package will create approximately 480,000 direct and indirect jobs. This does not include “re-spending” jobs, which would make the job impact considerably higher. This investment would disproportionately benefit those hardest hit by the recession, providing a higher proportion of jobs to low-wage workers and workers without a college degree relative to the overall economy. The investment would disproportionately create jobs for African Americans and Hispanics relative to their employment levels in the overall economy.

## Public unpopular

### 1NC

#### Obama is hinging the election on REDUCING spending – the plan causes independents to vote Republican

**Kirchgaessner, ’11** (Stephanie, “Obama looks to independent voters,” April 15 2011, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7dd54d5c-678c-11e0-9138-00144feab49a.html#axzz1T844vB9m

Barack **Obama is betting that his attack on the Republican deficit reduction plan, which he has derided as un-American, will resonate with** independent voters **as he prepares to hit the campaign trail next week**. The president will hold town hall meetings in California and two swing states: Nevada and Virginia. **The political winds seemed to shift in favour of Democrats this week**, with Mr Obama looking – **for the first time in months – as if he is primed to lead his party into the difficult** fiscal battles **that lie ahead.** It was, at the same time, a tumultuous week for the increasingly divided Republican majority in the House of Representatives. **Party lawmakers called for their leaders to be more aggressive in demanding spending cuts and almost unanimously endorsed a 2012 budget plan that could have** dire political consequences in the next election. The proposal by Republican Paul Ryan to cut $5,800bn in the next decade and transform Medicare, the insurance programme for the elderly, passed 235 to 193 in the House without a single Democratic vote. House passes 2012 budget Republicans in the House of Representatives united on Friday behind a 2012 budget plan slashing trillions of dollars in government spending while cutting taxes. The vote effectively serves as the Republicans’ opening gambit in what are likely to be contentious negotiations with President Barack Obama and his Democrats over debt and deficits in the coming months. The U.S. Congress must decide within weeks on raising the $14,300bn US debt ceiling. By a vote of 235-193, the House passed the plan written by House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan for the 2012 fiscal year beginning October 1. Democrats rejected the measure, which proposes slashing spending by nearly $6 trillion over a decade and reducing benefits for the elderly and poor. All but four Republicans supported it. There is almost no chance of the Senate approving the measure in its current form. The White House swiftly condemned the measure but said it was committed to working with Republicans to bring down record deficits that all sides acknowledged imperil the country’s economic future. Reuters “I think Obama has had his best week in a while,” said Democratic strategist James Carville. “His speech really has got Democrats excited again. Also, they feel they are on the right side of public opinion here.” **Mr Obama’s address on Wednesday satisfied the liberal base by reaffirming his support of tax increases for the wealthy to pay for entitlement programmes for the poor and elderly. It also spoke to independent voters who abandoned Democrats in last year’s congressional election by reassuring them that he believed** the deficit required immediate action.

### 2NC

#### Only small infrastructure don’t tick off the public

Public Interest 7-28-12 (“Trans Texas Corridor”, http://www.inthepublicinterest.org/case/trans-texas-corridor)

In 2002, one of the nation's biggest privatized toll road projects was introduced in the state of Texas: the Trans-Texas Corridor (TTC) plan. From the beginning, the proposal brought forth heavy criticism from people across party lines around issues of cost, access, transparency, and accountability. All of the contracts involved in the initial development of the TTC Plan were developed and signed without public input and contained many provisions that could be detrimental to the public. Originally envisioned as a series of newly constructed highways connecting major ports, interstate highways, and rail systems, growing public opposition and fiscal constraints have slowed down the development of the TTC. However, supporters of the TTC have recently taken a piecemeal approach in order to pass key legislation that would facilitate the continued development of the TTC and other similar privatization projects.

#### Independents are key to Romney

**Stirewalt, ’12** (Chris, 5/17/12, <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/05/17/grossed-out-independents-help-obama-in-fox-news-poll/>, JD)

Republicans, invariably a pessimistic bunch about their chances to defeat President Obama in the fall, have been experiencing some green shoots of optimism of late as polls show their nominee, Mitt Romney, already nipping at Obama’s heels. And with the president’s job approval rating hovering in the high 40s, Republicans should be optimistic. The nation is in a lousy mood, the economy is poor and a strong anti-incumbent sentiment still pervades. That is not a good climate for Obama. But, the latest FOX News poll shows the path to victory for Obama: an enthusiastic Democratic base, a handful of holdout Republicans and grossed-out independents. The poll shows Obama with his largest lead over Romney, 7 points, since last June. Last month, the poll showed the two men in a dead heat. Obama can credit his good showing the in the poll mostly to the flight of independent voters. The president’s support among Democrats ticked up 1 point to 88 percent while Romney’s support among Republicans fell by 4 points. That wouldn’t be such a big deal on its own. But factor in the 14 percent spike in independent voters who are undecided, and you have the makings of an Obama victory. In April, the poll found independents favoring Romney by a massive 13-point margin, now it’s 5 points. But the closing of the gap didn’t come from a surge in support for Obama among indies. The president dropped four points. **Romney’s problem in this poll is that independents checked out.** Come election time, Romney can expect that the Republicans, who are terrified at the thought of a second Obama term, will vote for him. Things like Rick Santorum’s post-campaign-suspension attack mailer in Iowa and grudging endorsement will have faded from memory. But there are considerably more Democrats than Republicans in the country, so the only way the GOP can win elections is by winning the independent vote. As younger voters become increasingly unwilling to form the lifelong party affiliations of their parents’ generation, the task becomes increasingly important. Romney can safely assume that the 6 percent of undecided Republicans will not only break his way, but that a substantial number of them will actually turn out to vote. He can’t say the same thing about the 36 percent of independents who declined to choose between him and Obama. Given voter attitudes, it’s unlikely for Obama to again win unaffiliated voters, certainly not by the whopping 8 points he carried them in 2008. But it would be enough for him to simply drive down turnout. Fed up independents are only trouble for incumbents if they bother to go vote. An undecided, unaffiliated American is not a very likely voter. This is why a nasty race suits Obama just fine. If the independents, especially moderate independents, get so disgusted with the process, the parties and the candidates that they conclude that all are unworthy, they may not vote. Obama has lost his 2008 brand as healer and change agent, but if he can help independent voters conclude that the two parties and the political system are beyond repair, they will have little reason to go vot**e.** If the electorate in November looks like the sample in the latest FOX News poll, Romney would lose in a rout.Here’s the pickle for Romney. He has to prosecute Obama’s handling of the economy and of federal spending, but if he is locked in a six-month, scorched-earth battle with a better-funded incumbent, voters may simply tune out. Read more: http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/05/17/grossed-out-independents-help-obama-in-fox-news-poll/#ixzz1vChexKhE

#### Obama is winning swing state independents, but new government spending causes backlash

Galston 5/10 (Walliam A., Ezra Zilkha Chair in the Brookings Institution’s Governance Studies Program, where he serves as a senior fellow. A former policy advisor to President Clinton “Six Months To Go: Where the Presidential Contest Stands as the General Election Begins” 5/10/12 http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/~/media/Research/Files/Papers/2012/5/10%20obama%20campaign%20galston/Where%20the%20Presidential%20Contest%20Stands.pdf)

According to the 2008 exit polls, Obama carried Independents by eight points—52 to 44 percent. Today, his standing with this important group is significantly weaker. The most recent Quinnipiac poll gave Romney a 46 to 39 percent edge over the president; Pew found Romney enjoying a similar 48 to 42 percent advantage. 48 It is hard to see how Obama can win a majority of the popular vote unless he rebuilds his standing among Independents. But it is not clear his current strategy is the one best calculated to bring about this result. Independents care more about economic growth and equal opportunity than they do about reducing gaps in wealth and income. While half of them believe that the U.S. economic system is unfair, 57 percent think that they themselves have been treated fairly. Perhaps that is why only 47 percent think that income and wealth gaps need to be fixed through public policy. 49 A recent report 50 found Obama statistically tied with Romney among Independents in swing states, with 36 percent of these Independents up for grabs. Among these “Swing Independents,” Obama now enjoys a lead of 44 to 38 percent. But there are some warning signs. These voters are split on Obama’s economic management, and they strongly prefer Republicans both on the budget deficit and government spending, issues of great concern to them. And according to the report, they are not much moved by the fairness argument. By 57 to 38 percent, they said it was more important to fix the budget deficit than to reduce the income gap. A plurality—42 percent—thought that reducing the budget deficit was the single most effective way of strengthening the economy. For this key group, the themes of growth and opportunity trump both the conservative focus on economic freedom and the liberal emphasis on economic inequality. They are most worried about the national debt (64 percent), congressional gridlock (55 percent), and the ability of the next generation to achieve the American dream (40 percent). And they are much angrier about the failure of Congress to address our problems than they are about Wall Street bailouts or the suggestion that the wealthy don’t pay their fair share of taxes.

#### Obama is hinging the election on REDUCING spending – the plan causes independents to vote Republican

Kirchgaessner 11 (Stephanie, “Obama looks to independent voters,” April 15 2011, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7dd54d5c-678c-11e0-9138-00144feab49a.html#axzz1T844vB9m)

Barack Obama is betting that his attack on the Republican deficit reduction plan, which he has derided as un-American, will resonate with independent voters as he prepares to hit the campaign trail next week. The president will hold town hall meetings in California and two swing states: Nevada and Virginia. The political winds seemed to shift in favour of Democrats this week, with Mr Obama looking – for the first time in months – as if he is primed to lead his party into the difficult fiscal battles that lie ahead. It was, at the same time, a tumultuous week for the increasingly divided Republican majority in the House of Representatives. Party lawmakers called for their leaders to be more aggressive in demanding spending cuts and almost unanimously endorsed a 2012 budget plan that could have dire political consequences in the next election. The proposal by Republican Paul Ryan to cut $5,800bn in the next decade and transform Medicare, the insurance programme for the elderly, passed 235 to 193 in the House without a single Democratic vote. House passes 2012 budget Republicans in the House of Representatives united on Friday behind a 2012 budget plan slashing trillions of dollars in government spending while cutting taxes. The vote effectively serves as the Republicans’ opening gambit in what are likely to be contentious negotiations with President Barack Obama and his Democrats over debt and deficits in the coming months. The U.S. Congress must decide within weeks on raising the $14,300bn US debt ceiling. By a vote of 235-193, the House passed the plan written by House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan for the 2012 fiscal year beginning October 1. Democrats rejected the measure, which proposes slashing spending by nearly $6 trillion over a decade and reducing benefits for the elderly and poor. All but four Republicans supported it. There is almost no chance of the Senate approving the measure in its current form. The White House swiftly condemned the measure but said it was committed to working with Republicans to bring down record deficits that all sides acknowledged imperil the country’s economic future. Reuters “I think Obama has had his best week in a while,” said Democratic strategist James Carville. “His speech really has got Democrats excited again. Also, they feel they are on the right side of public opinion here.” Mr Obama’s address on Wednesday satisfied the liberal base by reaffirming his support of tax increases for the wealthy to pay for entitlement programmes for the poor and elderly. It also spoke to independent voters who abandoned Democrats in last year’s congressional election by reassuring them that he believed the deficit required immediate action.

#### Empirics show deficit spending unpopular—Plan will cause Obama to lose his 2012 reelection bid

Lowry 12, Editor of the National Review and a syndicated columnist. Contributor to Real Clear Politics, 5/30/12[Richard, “Spending? What Spending?” Real Clear Politics, http://www.realclearpolitics .com/articles/2012/05/30/spendin g\_what\_ sp nding\_114318.html]ADravid

Franklin Delano Roosevelt never denied that he created Social Security. Lyndon Baines Johnson didn’t forswear any responsibility for Medicaid. Ronald Reagan never argued that his defense buildup didn’t happen. **The Obama White House, in contrast, wants to wish away the historic federal spending that is one of its signature accomplishments**. White House press secretary Jay Carney, whose job it is to dodge questions and elide facts without betraying any embarrassment, urged reporters the other day to steer clear of “the BS that you hear about spending and fiscal constraint with regard to this administration.” Not one to be outclassed by his press secretary, President Barack Obama kept up the edifying livestock theme by calling Mitt Romney’s attacks on his deficit spending “a cow pie of distortion.” The White House has a deeply conflicted relationship to its own record. It is saddled with a bad case of spender’s denial, a rare psychological disorder afflicting committed Keynesians facing reelection at a time of record debt. On the one hand, spending is the lifeblood of “Forward.” It saved us from another Great Depression. It is forging a glorious new future of green energy. It is the only thing standing between the American public and the untold devastation of the Paul Ryan budget. How do we know? Because President Obama says so. On the other hand, **the deficits and the debt that come with all this spending are alarming and unpopular**. So Obama calls himself the most fiscally conservative president in more than half a century. When the president isn’t extolling his transformative expenditures, he has a Walter Mitty life as the second coming of Dwight Eisenhower. He needs to consult an accountant and a therapist, and not necessarily in that order. If you torture the numbers just the right way — the Office of Management and Budget meets the Spanish Inquisition — you can come up with a 0.4 percent rate of spending growth during the Obama administration. To get there, you have to ignore part of **the stimulus** (on grounds that Obama didn’t have complete control of the budget in 2009) **and play games with the** **bailouts** (crediting Obama with spending cuts when they are paid back). **Even fact-checkers with mainstream-media outfits have merrily stomped all over the statistical legerdemain**. Andrew Taylor of the Associated Press writes that “Obama bears the chief responsibility for an 11 percent, $59 billion increase in non-defense spending in 2009. Then there’s a 9 percent, $109 billion increase in combined defense and non-defense appropriated outlays in 2010, a year for which Obama is wholly responsible.” **Spending growth slowed after that, under the influence of the very same congressional Republicans that President Obama excoriates for not allowing him to spend more. There’s no doubt that the president inherited a fiscal nightmare. Spending spiked as the economy tanked. His response has been to spend yet more every single year.** Spending was $2.98 trillion in 2008, and the president’s budget calls for it to hit $3.72 trillion in 2013. As a percentage of GDP, spending has been at post–World War II highs throughout his term. If fiscal probity is truly his aim, President Obama is a miserable failure of a skinflint. The laughable claim to fiscal restraint is meant to recapture some of Obama’s former ideological indistinctness. Back in 2008, he could say — with no direct evidence to contradict him — that he wanted a net cut in federal spending, in his guise as a post-partisan pragmatist. That was several $1 trillion deficits ago. Now, the president can say whatever he wants, but his budgets are a matter of public record. He should embrace those budgets in all their Keynesian majesty. They are one of his most consequential contributions to our national life, and a true expression of his philosophical core and that of his party. In his tawdry denials, the president almost acts as if $5.5 trillion in new debt were something to be ashamed of.

New spending upsets key independents - they're okay now but on the brink

Gould and Walter ‘11

[Martin & Kathleen, Newsmax writers, 7-12, <http://www.newsmax.com/Headline/Gillespie-Obama-economy-leadership/2011/07/12/id/403350>]

Voters in the focus groups mainly still give Obama a positive job approval rating but believe he spent too much of his first two years in office concentrating on healthcare instead of jobs and the economy, Gillespie said. But Gillespie warned Republicans that efforts to repeal Obamacare also will be seen as a distraction unless the party couches it the right way. “There’s a need for Republicans to educate voters that there’s a direct connection between the enactment of the Obama healthcare bill with its punitive mandates, and the job-killing impact of that. “If we repeal Obamacare, we will help unleash job creation in the economy. But we need to make that connection more clear to independent voters,” he said. Independents are very concerned about government spending, Gillespie said. “They are not in favor of any blank check when it comes to raising the debt ceiling. They want to see reforms made and spending cuts made before any increase in the debt ceiling, they don’t want to see business as usual,” he said. “They see it as a huge disconnect between Washington, D.C., and their daily lives. When I run up against the limit on my credit card, I don’t just get to say I’ll increase the limit by $2,000, I have to cut back on my spending and change my habits. “In Washington, they don’t seem to have those kind of rules and it’s very frustrating to these voters.”

#### Deficit spending destroys Obama's public support

Bossie 11 (David N. Bossie: chairman of Citizens united & receiver of the [Ronald Reagan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan) Award from the [Conservative Political Action Conference](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservative_Political_Action_Conference) in 1999, “Join the Debate”, <http://www.politico.com/arena/archive/will-president-obama-lose-2012.html>, 8/4/2011) Kerwin

Americans were sold a false prophet in 2008, and with the Obama recession they will turn their backs on President Obama in 2012. With 9.2 percent unemployment, and a crushing $14.3 trillion debt - with more spending on the way - America is off course due to the failed liberal policies of the Obama administration. President Obama continues to think that spending will solve our nation’s problems when in fact it has only worsened them. The proof that President Obama and his faltering administration are doing irreparable harm to America can be found in the right track, wrong track number. According to Rasmussen, an astonishing 80 percent of Americans believe that our country is on the wrong track. If I were at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, I'd be looking over my shoulder for the Republican nominee to send me packing.

#### Government expenditure unpopular with public and congress

Kohut 12 (Andrew Kohut, president of Pew Research Center, “Debt and Deficit: A Public Opinion Dilemma,” Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 6/14/12, <http://www.people-press.org/2012/06/14/debt-and-deficit-a-public-opinion-dilemma/>)

The issue of the debt and the deficit – and what to do about it – has paralyzed Washington lawmakers. But when it comes to measures for reducing the deficit on which they might reach common ground, they will get little help in building support for an agreement by turning to public opinion. In my years of polling, there has never been an issue such as the deficit on which there has been such a consensus among the public about its importance – and such a lack of agreement about acceptable solutions. When the public was asked in March to volunteer the most important problem facing the nation, only unemployment and the economy were cited more often. The deficit has also risen in importance in the public mind when Americans are asked at the beginning of each year what they believe to be the top national priorities for the president and the Congress. The Pew Research Center began measuring national priorities in 1997. Jobs, education, Social Security, Medicare and the budget deficit were at the top of the list then just as they are now, in 2012. The deficit had earlier slipped as a priority during the last years of the Clinton administration when the budget was in surplus and following the 9/11 attacks when terrorism rose as a priority. Today, however, the budget deficit stands out as one of the fastest growing priorities for Americans, rising 16 percentage points since 2007 and ranking third with 69% calling it a top priority. Only the economy and jobs, ranking first and second at 86% and 82% respectively, have registered bigger increases over this period – hardly surprising, given the financial meltdown that began in 2008 and whose impact is still being felt today.

#### Government expenditure unpopular – public wants deficit reduction

Drake 11 (Bruce Drake, staff to Poll Watch Daily, “Nearly Two-Thirds of Americans Want Deficit Reduction Plan be a Combination of Budget Cuts & Tax Increases, Press, 11/18/11, <http://www.pollwatchdaily.com/2011/11/18/big-majority-of-americans-want-deficit-reduction-plan-to-be-combination-of-budget-cuts-tax-increases/>)

As Democrats and Republicans on the congressional supercommittee wrangle over to what extent if any tax increases should be part of a deficit reduction plan, a new [Pew Research Center poll](http://www.people-press.org/2011/11/17/section-3-the-deficit-and-the-super-committee/) finds more than six-in-ten Americans believe that tax increases as well as cutting major programs should be part of any proposal. Sixty-two percent said a “combination of both” should be used to tackle the nation’s debt, while 17 percent preferred a budget-cutting approach and 8 percent favored eliminating red ink with the help of tax increases.

#### Government Spending unpopular with public

Edwards 5/21 (Chris Edwards, Cato Institute, “We Can Cut Government: Canada Did,” 5/21/12, <http://www.cato.org/pubs/policy_report/v34n3/cprv34n3-1.pdf>)

In 2010, American voters demanded cuts to government spending and debt. Some members of Congress are heeding the call and introducing plans to restructure entitlements and terminate programs. However, most policymakers are still resisting the major spending cuts, privatization, and other Canadian-style reforms that we need to avert a fiscal crisis and restore strong economic growth to the United States.

#### Increased deficit spending leads to Romney victory

Edsall, 2-5-12, an American journalist and academic, best known for his 25 years covering national politics for the Washington Post [Thomas, The New York Times, “Debt Splits the Left” <http://campaignstops.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/02/05/debt-splits-the-left/>]

Instead of more stimulus spending, Taylor contends, “the best economic stimulus would be for the government to set a clear path now to reduce the deficit and to bring down the debt in the future.” A 2012 election agenda dominated by the specter of debt is ideal for conservatives seeking to shrink the welfare state. It creates an optimal environment for Grover Norquist and his anti-tax group, Americans for Tax Reform, to operate in. Norquist has famously committed himself to whittling government “down to the size where we can drown it in the bathtub.”

#### Debt hurts democrats in congress and the white house

Edsall, 2-5-12, an American journalist and academic, best known for his 25 years covering national politics for the Washington Post [Thomas, The New York Times, “Debt Splits the Left” <http://campaignstops.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/02/05/debt-splits-the-left/>]

In 2010, the debt-and-deficit issue, driven by the Tea Party, devastated the Democratic Party, turning majority power back to Republicans in the House, who picked up 63 seats. Going into the 2012 election, it is still a central issue. The Pew Research Center has found public concern over the deficit continues to grow. No matter what the merits are of the opposing positions within the Democratic coalition on the debt and deficits, a divided Democratic party is in a weakened position to counter Republican assaults on the issue of red ink. This is a vulnerability that the party and its candidates will take into the 2012 election. It poses a problem that cannot be easily resolved.

#### Infrastructure investment NOW is unpopular—Americans unwilling to pay

Alden 6/14 Bernard L. Schwartz Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, (Edward, “The First Renewing America Progress Report and Scorecard: The Road to Nowhere” 6/14/12, CFR, http://blogs.cfr.org/renewing-america/2012/06/14/the-first-renewing-america-progress-report-and-scorecard-the-road-to-nowhere/]

Americans understood this once upon a time, building the most impressive network of roads and airports in the world, as well as a solid freight rail system. But for far too long we have been living on that inheritance. Two data points from the Scorecard stand out: Since 1980, the number of highway miles traveled by American drivers has doubled, but the miles of road on which they’re driving have increased just 5 percent. It’s no mystery, as the report notes, why traffic congestion takes more than $700 out of the pocket of the average commuter each year. Two-thirds of Americans say that fully funding transportation infrastructure is either “extremely important” or “very important” to them. Yet solid majorities are opposed to any of the usual ways of funding new roads, including higher gas taxes or new tolls. It would be easy to point a finger at Congress, and we certainly do in the report. Reauthorization of the surface transportation bill, usually known as the highway bill, has always been contentious, but nevertheless it used to win approval routinely. But the last multi-year bill expired in 2009 and has been replaced by a series of short-term extensions that make rational construction planning all but impossible for state and local governments. The bill expires again June 30th, and congressional leaders again look unlikely to reach agreement and are predicting another short-term extension. It will be the 10th; as a Miami Herald editorial put it recently, this marks “a new low in congressional irresponsibility.” But congressional inaction in many ways reflects public ambivalence. Americans want uncluttered highways, efficient airports, and seamless mass transit systems, but they are either reluctant to pay for these things or doubt the ability of governments to deliver. The overdue backlash against pork barrel politics for favored projects, for instance, seems to have hardened into a deeper public cynicism about the ability of government to deliver any needed public works. Even proposals like using a federal seed money to create a National Infrastructure Bank that would funnel private investor (not taxpayer) money into new projects have been unable to get through Congress.

#### Public hates infrastructure spending - none of their link turns apply

Orski 2012, (Ken Orski, as Associate Administrator of the Urban Mass Transportation Administration. founded a transportation consultancy counseling corporate clients and agencies in federal, state and local government. served on state and federal transportation advisory bodies, “WHY PLEAS TO INCREASE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FALL ON DEAF EARS”. 5/2/12 AD. 7/14/12. http://www.newgeography.com/content/002662-why-pleas-increase-infrastructure-funding-fall-deaf-ears|Ashwin)

There are various theories why appeals to increase infrastructure spending do not resonate with the public. One widely held view is that people simply do not trust the federal government to spend their tax dollars wisely. As proof, evidence is cited that a great majority of state and local transportation ballot measures do get passed, because voters know precisely where their tax money is going. No doubt there is much truth to that. Indeed, thanks to local funding initiatives and the use of tolling, state transportation agencies are becoming increasingly more self-reliant and less dependent on federal funding¶ Another explanation, and one that I find highly plausible, has been offered by Charles Lane, editorial writer for the Washington Post. Wrote Lane in an October 31, 2011 Washington Post column, "How come my family and I traveled thousands of miles on both the east and west coast last summer without actually seeing any crumbling roads or airports? On the whole, the highways and byways were clean, safe and did not remind me of the Third World countries. ... Should I believe the pundits or my own eyes?" asked Lane ("The U.S. infrastructure argument that crumbles upon examination").¶ Along with Lane, I think the American public is skeptical about alarmist claims of "crumbling infrastructure" because they see no evidence of it around them. State DOTs and transit authorities take great pride in maintaining their systems in good condition and, by and large, they succeed in doing a good job of it. Potholes are rare, transit buses and trains seldom break down, and collapsing bridges, happily, are few and far between.¶ The oft-cited "D" that the American Society of Civil Engineers has given America’s infrastructure (along with an estimate of $2.2 trillion needed to fix it) is taken with a grain of salt, says Lane, since the engineers’ lobby has a vested interest in increasing infrastructure spending, which means more work for engineers. Suffering from the same credibility problem are the legions of road and transit builders, rail and road equipment manufacturers, construction firms, planners and consultants that try to make a case for more money.¶ This does not mean that the country does not need to invest more resources in preserving and expanding its highways and transit systems. The "infrastructure deficit" is real. It’s just that in making a case for higher spending, the transportation community must do a much better job of explaining why, how and where they propose to spend those funds. Usupported claims that the nation’s infrastructure is "falling apart" will not be taken seriously.¶ People want to know where their tax dollars are going and what exactly they’re getting for their money. Infrastructure advocates must learn from state and local ballot measures to justify and document the needs for federal dollars with more precision so that the public regains confidence that their money will be spent wisely and well.

#### The public doesn't care about infrastructure spending - seen as unnecessary

Orski 2/5 (Why Pleas to Increase Infrastructure Funding Fall on Deaf Ears by Ken Orski 02/05/2012 <http://www.newgeography.com/content/002662-why-pleas-increase-infrastructure-funding-fall-deaf-ears->)

Investment in infrastructure did not even make the top ten list of public priorities in the latest Pew Research Center survey of domestic concerns. Calls by two congressionally mandated commissions to vastly increase transportation infrastructure spending have gone ignored. So have repeated pleas by advocacy groups such as Building America’s Future, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the University of Virginia’s Miller Center. Nor has the need to increase federal spending on infrastructure come up in the numerous policy debates held by the Republican presidential candidates. Even President Obama seems to have lost his former fervor for this issue. In his last State-of-the-Union message he made only a perfunctory reference to "rebuilding roads and bridges." High-speed rail and an infrastructure bank, two of the President’s past favorites, were not even mentioned. There are various theories why appeals to increase infrastructure spending do not resonate with the public. One widely held view is that people simply do not trust the federal government to spend their tax dollars wisely. As proof, evidence is cited that a great majority of state and local transportation ballot measures do get passed, because voters know precisely where their tax money is going. No doubt there is much truth to that. Indeed, thanks to local funding initiatives and the use of tolling, state transportation agencies are becoming increasingly more self-reliant and less dependent on federal funding Another explanation, and one that I find highly plausible, has been offered by Charles Lane, editorial writer for the Washington Post. Wrote Lane in an October 31, 2011 Washington Post column, "How come my family and I traveled thousands of miles on both the east and west coast last summer without actually seeing any crumbling roads or airports? On the whole, the highways and byways were clean, safe and did not remind me of the Third World countries. ... Should I believe the pundits or my own eyes?" asked Lane ("The U.S. infrastructure argument that crumbles upon examination"). Along with Lane, I think the American public is skeptical about alarmist claims of "crumbling infrastructure" because they see no evidence of it around them. State DOTs and transit authorities take great pride in maintaining their systems in good condition and, by and large, they succeed in doing a good job of it. Potholes are rare, transit buses and trains seldom break down, and collapsing bridges, happily, are few and far between. The oft-cited "D" that the American Society of Civil Engineers has given America’s infrastructure (along with an estimate of $2.2 trillion needed to fix it) is taken with a grain of salt, says Lane, since the engineers’ lobby has a vested interest in increasing infrastructure spending, which means more work for engineers. Suffering from the same credibility problem are the legions of road and transit builders, rail and road equipment manufacturers, construction firms, planners and consultants that try to make a case for more money. This does not mean that the country does not need to invest more resources in preserving and expanding its highways and transit systems. The "infrastructure deficit" is real. It’s just that in making a case for higher spending, the transportation community must do a much better job of explaining why, how and where they propose to spend those funds. Usupported claims that the nation’s infrastructure is "falling apart" will not be taken seriously. People want to know where their tax dollars are going and what exactly they’re getting for their money. Infrastructure advocates must learn from state and local ballot measures to justify and document the needs for federal dollars with more precision so that the public regains confidence that their money will be spent wisely and well.

## Agenda Links

### 1NC

#### Transportation infrastructure compromise is very unlikely – party lines and inability to fund

Schank, 4/16/2012 (Joshua, President and CEO of the Eno Center for Transportation a neutral, non-partisan think-tank, Is Partisanship the Problem?, http://www.enotrans.org/eno-brief/is-partisanship-the-problem)

The partisan differences between the parties on the issue of transportation are likely resolvable. Admittedly, we are not immune from the larger political partisanship infecting the nation at the moment. The general lack of cooperation between both parties and lack of civility that pervades the political discourse also impacts transportation and makes the job more difficult. But there is little we can do about that. We can do something, however, about the definition of the federal role, which so far no one in Congress on either side of the aisle has really tried to address. The definition of the federal role is vital to moving forward because there is currently no agreed-upon purpose for the surface transportation program. We are so challenged by the new rules of bipartisan agreement – no new revenue, no earmarks, and no expanding the constituencies – that we seem to have no idea how to create a new bipartisan majority behind transportation in this new environment. Hence we find ourselves with the best-case scenario of passing an 18-month authorization bill using obscure offsets to maintain current investment levels. We are unlikely to ever secure funding – of any size – for a long-term transportation reauthorization unless we begin this discussion of the federal role and move beyond the discussion of funding. If we can begin the conversation about the federal role, and achieve some bipartisan consensus on that, we may just be able to also achieve consensus on funding. That is not to say this will be easy, but we should not let the appearance of rampant partisanship discourage us. Perhaps under such a compromise, funding levels will not be as high as they have been in the past. But in order to maintain past funding levels, transportation agencies have had to sacrifice any semblance of certainty or long-term planning capability. If we focused less on funding levels, and more on program purpose, we might just find ourselves in a better position.

### 2NC

#### The plan would be doomed in Congress – new rules such as no new revenue, no earmarks, and no expanding constituencies make it very difficult to pass long term transportation funding – that’s Schank

#### Two framing issues:

#### 1. The current political climate is unique – the Tea Party fundamentally changes the ability of transportation bills to move through Congress – deficit spending is impossible

Matthews 12 (Mark K. Matthews, staff writer for Washington Bureau, March 8th, 2012, “Partisan divisions, tea party leave Rep. Mica's highway bill in tatters”, http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2012-03-08/news/os-mica-highway-bill-20120305\_1\_transportation-bill-transportation-funding-highway-bill)

Transportation bills traditionally had bipartisan support from lawmakers because they send billions of dollars to states and communities to build and repair roads and bridges, as well as help fund mass transit. But this one has foundered in the unique political climate of 2012 Washington.¶ A partisan Congress is divided between Democrats and Republicans, and then subdivided between old-guard Republicans such as Mica and hard-line tea-party freshmen unwilling to tolerate anything that smacks of deficit spending. And earmarks — lawmakers' pet projects that served as the grease for the gears of public policy; there were 6,000 in the previous transportation bill — have been banned.¶ Without that grease — and with more needs than money — the bill is under attack, especially by conservative House members who accuse Mica of running up the deficit.¶ "It's a tough one. I don't want to say it isn't," Mica said. "We are just working our way through it."¶ The bill collapsed last month after lawmakers in both parties objected to changes in the funding formula for mass transit and cuts to favored programs such as rail-trails. But the most influential critics may be anti-deficit conservatives.¶ "The world has changed in that there is a critical mass of conservatives that can put a hurdle in the road," said Chris Chocola, head of the fiscally conservative Club for Growth and a former Indiana congressman.

#### 2. Even if they win the plan is popular, Republicans will use the plan as a pawn in order to ensure that Obama looks bad

Matthews 12 (Mark K. Matthews, staff writer for Washington Bureau, March 8th, 2012, “Partisan divisions, tea party leave Rep. Mica's highway bill in tatters”, http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2012-03-08/news/os-mica-highway-bill-20120305\_1\_transportation-bill-transportation-funding-highway-bill)

Also, House Speaker John Boehner opted to use the bill to press for an expansion of offshore oil drilling, generating opposition even from some Florida Republicans. That measure passed the House — but will go nowhere in the Senate.¶ "House leadership wants to provoke a fight with the Obama administration over energy. Transportation is just a pawn on the chessboard," said former Minnesota U.S. Rep. Jim Oberstar, the Democrat who chaired the transportation committee before Mica took the reins.¶ The result is gridlock.¶ "The problem is that they [Republican leaders] are dealing with opposition from opposite ends of the political spectrum," said Ross Capon, head of the National Association of Railroad Passengers.¶ "If you want a healthy transit system, and you don't want to increase the most logical tax to support it, and you want to keep the price of gas low ... all you have left is rhetoric that overstates the ability of the private sector to come in and take care of things," he said.¶ Now, the House leadership — and Mica — is trying to rewrite the bill. But it remains uncertain whether the goal of the new version is to appeal to Democrats or tea-party Republicans.¶ "I would hope everyone in Congress puts the country ahead of politics," Mica said. "The country has crumbling infrastructure, and it's not something we should be playing political games with."

#### GOP says hell no to Obama infrastructure spending policies

**Fox News, 2010** (Obama's New Jobs Program: Stimulus II or GOP Obstacle Course?, http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2010/09/07/obamas-new-jobs-program-stimulus-ii-gop-obstacle-course/)

In a Labor Day speech in Milwaukee, Obama called for $50 billion more in infrastructure spending to rebuild roads, railways and runways -- a proposal that GOP leaders immediately cast as dead-on-arrival. The president taunted Republicans for consistently opposing his economic policies and said they seem to be running on a slogan of "No, we can't," playing off his 2008 presidential campaign mantra of "Yes we can." "In 2008, they gave him the key to the kingdom, the House, the Senate and White House, and there's not much the Republicans could have done," he said. "But I'll tell you what the Republicans should do. We shouldn't be the party of 'no,' we should be the party of 'Hell No' to the Obama policies." The House minority leader, John Boehner of Ohio, added, "We don't need more government 'stimulus' spending. We need to end Washington Democrats' out-of-control spending spree, stop their tax hikes and create jobs by eliminating the job-killing uncertainty that is hampering our small businesses."

#### **Transportation infrastructure spending unpopular among conservatives-Senate bill proves**

Johnson, 2012 (Fawn, correspondent for National Journal, covering a range of issues including immigration, transportation and education, Conservatives: Senate Bill Is 'Crap Sandwich', http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2012/03/conservatives-senate-bill-is-c.php#173458)

It took a lot of whining, but the Senate finally passed its two-year, $109 billion surface transportation bill last week on a solidly bipartisan 74-22 vote. The bill won praise from the likes of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, AAA and the AFL-CIO. No one thinks that it's perfect, but it would smooth out some of the current kinks in the federal highway program and give the transportation industry certainty that they won't face federal cuts for two years. And yet...there are still some people who don't like it, and many of them are in the House. A GOP aide told me that Republican members see the Senate bill as "a crap sandwich that they're going to have eat" if they can't come up with an alternative. (That's proving to be something of a problem. House Speaker John Boehner has tried multiple options without getting his caucus to coalesce around one.) Outside the Capitol, Heritage Action for America, a right-wing grassroots group, considered a "no" vote on the Senate bill a "key vote" in determining whether a legislator is sticking to conservative principles. Conservatives are worried about a "spending boondoggle," which reflects their general anxiety about federal investment. They are also worried that the Senate bill preserves too much of the previous highway bill, which was loaded with earmarks. Sen. Mike Johanns, R-Neb., claims there is even an earmark in the Senate bill for Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. Reid hasn't commented. All this is to say that there is a wing of the conservative party that is gung ho about killing the Senate bill. For them, the legislation involves broader questions about federal spending and how Congress acted in previous years using earmarks and other special favors.

#### Transportation spending is unpopular in Congress.

**Freemark, 2012** (Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. 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.

## Link turns

#### **Transportation legislation is traditionally a template for bipartisan action – recent transportation bill proves**

Gorton and Archer 7/19 (Slade Gorton, former US Senator, Dennis Archer, Mayor of Detroit, 7/19/12, “Congress has unfinished business on the transportation front”, http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/economy-a-budget/239037-congress-has-unfinished-business-on-the-transportation-front)

Significantly, members of Congress demonstrated a capacity to compromise – a capacity in short supply lately – around a national program that has, for over fifty years, generated support across partisan, economic, and regional boundaries. Investment in transportation facilities and systems has been viewed historically as an appropriate exercise of federal interest, an interest that this Congress has now accepted and recognized. ¶ Congress has shown that transportation policy can serve as a model for bipartisan action in other important areas. ¶ Congressional leadership from both parties placed the greatest emphasis on funding and the continuation of federal highway, transit, and highway safety programs through September 30, 2014, and on the construction and related jobs that will be generated and stimulated by the enactment of this bill. The greater certainty in timing and funding for state, regional, and local transportation agencies will allow them to make plans and to carry out infrastructure investments that should contribute to economic recovery and address high unemployment in the construction sector.

# HSR

## Pub opposition

### 1NC

#### Public dislike HSR—cost, noise, aesthetics

Lewis 2010 (Katherine, Special to Passenger Transport, Passenger transport, “**High-Speed Rail Presents Challenges, Great Opportunity”, http://newsmanager.commpartners.com/aptapt/issues/2010-02-01/17.html)**

High-speed rail holds the potential to safely carry more passengers and freight across America while revitalizing urban downtowns, stimulating economic development, and protecting the environment. It could be the key ingredient in a multi-modal, national transportation system that drives mobility, economic growth, and green choices, Molitoris said.
However, the challenges to implementation of high-speed rail are also monumental, revolving around cost and public opposition, said Ben Strumwasser, principal at Circle Point, a San Francisco communications and environmental planning firm working on California’s high-speed rail project.
“You’re all familiar with the issues that people raise” around rail projects, such as noise, vibration, visual impact, and financial feasibility, Strumwasser said. “They get raised at a louder level than you could ever imagine when you’re dealing with a high-speed rail program, when you’re talking about trains going through communities at 120 miles per hour.”

### 2NC

#### Public doesn’t like HSR

Los Angeles Times June 2, 2012 (Ralph Vartabedian, staff writer, “Voters have turned against California bullet train, poll shows”, http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/02/local/la-me-0603-bullet-poll-20120604)

But the new poll numbers show that proceeding could put lawmakers on the wrong side of public opinion. Across the state, 55% of the voters want the bond issue that was approved in 2008 placed back on the ballot, and 59% say they now would vote against it.

Since voters approved that $9-billion borrowing plan, the state and national economic outlook has dimmed and some of the promises about the bullet train have been compromised. Its projected cost has roughly doubled, and it will now share track with slower commuter and freight trains in some areas. Powerful agriculture groups and freight railroads have asserted that proposed routes would damage their interests and compromise safety. Churches, schools, businesses and homeowners are fighting the project.

#### High speed rail unpopular

Cssrc 6/4/2012(Majority of Californians Oppose High-Speed Rail Spending, Won’t Ride Train, <http://www.cssrc.us/web/4/news.aspx?id=12294>)

Senator Doug LaMalfa (R-Richvale) today commented on a poll conducted by the Los Angeles Times (LAT) and University of Southern California (USC), which found that a strong majority of Californians continues to oppose the proposed high-speed rail project. The LAT-USC survey is the third major nonpartisan poll to find strong public opposition to the project, which has more than doubled in cost to over $70 billion.

#### Public hates HSR

Mathews 7-12-12 (Joe, “With High-Speed Rail's Approval, the Sales Job Begins”, http://www.nbclosangeles.com/blogs/prop-zero/High-Speed-Rail-California-Sales-161661635.html)

But the public still needs to be sold.

Polls show big majorities of Californians oppose it. And to complete the project -- estimated at $68 billion currently -- may require some reversal in those numbers, and a softening of the objections among opponents. With little financing in place, public support could be important to getting the money -- either from the feds, from new state revenue streams (pollution credit fees?), or from private investors (who will want to see some public interest before investing in a train to serve the public).

Your blogger is not a fan of the project, and the early focus on the Central Valley. And I was dead-wrong in predicting that the project wouldn't make it even this far (this is one persistent zombie it turns out). But the condemnations of it are over the top. Republicans and budget hawks are arguing that the state can't afford the train, that it will somehow bankrupt the state.

#### Train funding causes backlash and bolsters GOP support

**The Economist, ’11** (7/2/11, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/gulliver/2011/07/high-speed-rail>, JD)

AMERICA'S Republican party has succeeded in blocking many of the Obama administration's planned high-speed rail initiatives. (Some of them were bad ideas anyway.) Now Phillip Longman has taken to the Washington Monthly—a publication not exactly sympathetic to the ideals of the modern GOP—to argue that the death of Obama's high-speed dreams may be a good thing. His argument isn't what you might expect: Yes, bullet trains speeding at 180 mph [290 kph] or more from major city to major city are great for business execs in a hurry and on an expense account. But the more conventional, cheaper, "fast enough" high-speed rail lines like the West Rhine line are the real backbone of the German passenger rail system and that of most other industrialized nations. And it is from these examples that America has the most to learn, especially since it now looks as if the U.S. isn't going to build any real high-speed rail lines, except possibly in California, anytime soon. In an ironic twist, between the mounting concern over the state and federal deficits and growing Republican and NIMBY opposition to high-speed rail, the Obama administration is being forced to settle for incremental projects that will only bring passenger rail service up to the kind of standards found on the West Rhine line. And that's a good thing, provided Republicans don’t succeed in killing passenger trains in the United States altogether, as they are increasingly want to try. Mr Longman contends that America's passenger rail system is so bad that even simply upgrading to "fast-enough" trains would represent a vast improvement in service that would build ridership and political support for further upgrades. Right now, he argues, building true high-speed rail in America would be "so expensive, disruptive, contentious, and politically risky that it just might not be possible." The key tipping point, Mr Longman says, is when taking the train becomes faster than driving. And several factors are more important than speed. On-time performance is crucial, and perhaps Amtrak's biggest problem. Mr Longman thinks this can be fixed with "incremental investment in new sidings and track capacity to make sure freight trains don’t get in the way." Improving frequency of service could also help, Mr Longman argues. Blogger Matt Yglesias says he agrees with Mr Longman, but I don't think he actually does. Here's how he wraps up his post on the subject: I do find the whole conversation slightly frustrating. The United States is a really big country. You wouldn’t hear a debate in "Europe" about whether "Europe" should be building a train from Madrid to Barcelona "or" a train connecting the cities of the Rhineland. Nothing about [upgrading a slowish Portland-Seattle line to medium-speed] actually prevents you from building a brand new true HSR connection elsewhere in the country. The overall pot of infrastructure spending money in the United States is currently too low, which prompts a bunch of should-be-avoidable conversations about project priority. That last sentence is crucial. Mr Longman's article rests on the dubious idea that if we spend less on high-speed rail, politicians will for some reason feel compelled to take the money that would otherwise have been spent on high-speed rail and use it to upgrade slow-speed lines to "fast enough." But there's no evidence that is actually true. After all, the reason that the lines are so slow in the first place is that America has never spent the money to make them any faster. It's not as if building more sidings for freight trains and improving signalling are new ideas. Contra Mr Longman, there's not much for America to "learn" here: Europe invested in making its less-than-high-speed lines "fast enough." America didn't. It's a short story. One problem is that it's hard to get politicians to spend money on incremental improvements. The difference between an older service and the newer, incrementally improved service is only noticeable over long periods of time, if at all. Amtrak's Northeast corridor service has gotten incrementally faster over the past few decades. But that hasn't increased the political support for further improvements—in fact, Amtrak's continued failure to make dramatic improvements has been fodder for its critics. "Service between New York and DC is a few minutes faster" is not the kind of statement that fires up members of Congress. It's not the kind of thing you can put on a bumper sticker, either. When Rick Scott, the Republican governor of Florida, nixed a flagship Obama administration high-speed rail project there, I argued that the White House had paid the price for its lack of vision: Much of the blame for how all this turned out has to rest with the White House. The Obama administration's political team didn't seem to anticipate the danger that putting Mr Obama's name behind high-speed rail (or just about anything) would galvanise Republican opposition. If they did anticipate the GOP backlash, and embraced modest rail plans in order to soften a blow they knew would come, that's even worse. If the White House was going to take the political risk of putting its weight behind high-speed rail, it should have gone all-in. A Tampa-Orlando line and some track improvements in the upper Midwest weren't enough to inspire anyone.

#### Train funding perceived as inefficient and costly in the current climate

**Johnson, ’12** (Fawn, *National Journal* correspondent, 1/17/12, <http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2012/01/highspeed-rail-in-a-coma.php>, JD)

Policymakers' appetite for high-speed rail seems to be dwindling to almost nothing. It is old news that congressional Republicans are not fans of President Obama's high-speed rail initiative. They view it as a waste of taxpayer dollars at a time when belt-tightening is of the highest order. The national conversation has not advanced much beyond that point, perhaps because the biggest fans of high-speed rail are distracted by other problems. Democrats in Congress raised only a faint protest when the fiscal 2012 appropriations bill cut funding for the Transportation Department's high-speed rail program. Republicans who ostensibly like high-speed rail said the cuts will allow rail enthusiasts to start over from scratch. The problems continue at the state level, particularly in California. The California High Speed Rail Peer Review Group recently refused to recommend that bond money be devoted to the state's high-speed rail plan. The review group said the state's business plan lacked "credible sources of adequate funding" that posed "an immense financial risk" to California. Democratic Gov. Jerry Brown proposed folding the California High-Speed Rail Authority into a broader transportation agency to save money. That move could potentially take some steam out of the state's high-speed rail initiatives as they get lumped in with other transportation priorities. Even so, more than $3.5 billion in federal funding could be at risk if the state Legislature doesn't approve funds for a high-speed rail line, according to Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif. High-speed rail investments aren't like economic stimulus programs, which are intended to jump start shovel-ready projects that can immediately inject money into a local economy while delivering jobs and paved roads. The initial costs of developing high-speed rail lines are high, and the yield time is years or decades. Is the country ready for long-term investments like that? Or would it make sense to take a break and allow the economy to recover before proposing big new rail projects? What would make policymakers more receptive to high-speed rail? What critiques of high-speed rail are the most in need of a response?

#### Causes political backlash

**Levy, ’12** (Alon, one of the best freelance writers on transit and public affairs, 4/1/12, http://pedestrianobservations.wordpress.com/2012/04/01/amtrak-expects-10-billion-passengers/)

Amtrak had initially proposed to spend $117 billion on implementing high-speed rail on the Northeast Corridor between Boston and Washington, but backlash due to the plan’s high cost led to a scaling back behind the scenes. After the regulatory reforms of 2013, a new team of planners, many hired away from agencies in Japan, France, and Switzerland, proposed a version leveraging existing track, achieving almost the same speed for only $5 billion in upfront investment. They explained that the full cost of the system would be higher, but service could open before construction concluded, and profits could be plugged into the system. To get the plans past Congress, President Barack Obama had to agree to limit the funds to a one-time extension of Amtrak’s funding in the transportation bill S 12, which would give it $13 billion for expansion as well as ordinary operating subsidies over six years. To defeat a Senate filibuster, the extension had a clause automatically dismantling Amtrak and selling its assets in case it ran out of money, leading to the first wave of resignations by longtime officials. Despite assurances that both the cost and the ridership estimates were conservative, the program was plagued with delays and mounting costs, and to conserve money Amtrak needed to cancel some of its money-losing long-distance routes and engage in a controversial lease-back program selling its rolling stock to banks. The modifications required to let the Shinkansen bullet trains decided for the system run in the Northeast pushed back the completion of the first run from the middle of 2015 to the beginning of 2017. The president and most of the board as well as the engineers resigned in 2014, and many of their replacements resigned in the subsequent two years. When the reformed system opened in 2017, it was still incomplete because some of the high-speed segments had no funding yet, travel time from Boston to Washington was four hours and a quarter, rather than the promised three and a half. 2017 was also the last year in which Amtrak lost money. Ridership on the Northeast Corridor intercity trains topped 20 million, and in 2018 it operationally broke even, allowing it to use $1.5 billion in unspent S 12 money on completing the full system by 2020. To simplify its temporary deals with track owners in Connecticut and Massachusetts, it made a complex deal with the Northeastern commuter railroads in which it took over operations, with existing amounts of state money lasting until 2022.

#### Public hates HSR spending

Reason 11(“Poll Finds Support for Toll Roads, Public-Private Partnerships”, Reason Foundation, December 20, 2011, http://reason.org/news/printer/poll-finds-support-for-toll-roads-p)

In terms of transportation spending priorities, 62 percent want to prioritize funding for road and highway projects, while 30 percent want to prioritize funding for mass transit projects. As the debate over high-speed rail continues in California and elsewhere, a solid majority of Americans, 55 percent, say the private sector should build high-speed train systems where it thinks riders will pay to use rail. Just 35 percent of Americans believe federal and state governments should build high-speed rail systems where they think the trains are needed.

#### California proves

Huffington Post 6/3 ("California High Speed Rail Doesn’t Have the Support of Majority of Californians: Poll”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/04/california-high-speed-rail\_n\_1566807.html)

LOS ANGELES -- A new poll finds California voters are experiencing buyers' remorse over a proposed $68 billion bullet train project, as the number of lawsuits against the rail system grows. Fifty-five percent of voters want to see the high-speed rail bond issue that was approved in 2008 back on the ballot, and 59 percent say they would now vote against it, according to the USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times survey (lat.ms/N9tTcm) published Saturday. Since the $9 billion borrowing plan was passed, the projected cost of the bullet train between Los Angeles and San Francisco has roughly doubled, and it will now share track with slower commuter and freight trains in some areas, the Times said. A majority of voters have turned against the ambitious undertaking just as Gov. Jerry Brown is pushing lawmakers to approve the start of construction in the Central Valley later this year. Powerful agriculture groups and freight railroads maintain that proposed routes would damage their interests and compromise safety. Schools, churches, businesses and homeowners are also opposed to the project. On Friday, Central Valley farm groups filed a major environmental lawsuit in Sacramento County Superior Court, asking for a preliminary injunction to block rail construction. Plaintiffs include the Madera and Merced county farm bureaus and Madera County. The suit is one of several already on the books, and still more agricultural interests in the Central Valley are threatening to sue. "We think a preliminary injunction against construction will occur because there were so many violations in the authority's environmental impact report," Anja Raudabaugh, executive director of the Madera County Farm Bureau, told the Times. The plaintiffs say the rail project would affect 1,500 acres of prime farm land and 150 agribusinesses in their region. The poll found that concerns about the project extend across regions, ethnic groups, income brackets and even political affiliations, according to the Times. Among Democrats, initially the strongest supporters of the plan, only 43 percent would support the bond in a new vote, while 47 percent would oppose it. Seventy-six percent of Republicans would vote against it. Voters have reconsidered their support for high-speed rail as lawmakers slash public programs to cope with a widening budget gap, said Dan Schnur, director of the poll and head of the Unruh Institute of Politics at USC. "The growing budget deficit is making Californians hesitant about spending so much money on a project like this one when they're seeing cuts to public education and law enforcement," Unruh said. "But they also seem to be wary as to whether state government can run a big speed rail system effectively." In Southern California, 67 percent of voters said they would reject issuing high-speed rail bonds if they could vote again. If the bullet train system is built, 69 percent said they would never or hardly ever ride it. No respondents – **zero percent** – said they would use it more than once a week. Just 33 percent of respondents said they would prefer a bullet train over an airplane or car on trips between LA and San Francisco The USC Dornsife/Times survey heard from 1,002 registered voters in mid-May. It was conducted by Democratic polling firm Greenberg Quinlan Rosner and Republican polling firm American Viewpoint. The sample has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

#### Cost and skepticism make HSR massively unpopular

Koenig 6/7 (Brian, 6/7/12, “California Voters Turn on High-Speed Rail Project”, The New American, http://www.thenewamerican.com/usnews/politics/item/11646-california-voters-turn-on-high-speed-rail-project)

After enduring a series of financial and logistical hiccups, California’s landmark high-speed rail project has become increasingly unpopular among voters, as the project’s enormous price tag continues to inflate and as the state’s budgetary woes grow more severe. Without a concrete plan for funding, supporters of the state’s high-speed rail project pitched a revised proposal in April to lawmakers and the general public. Due to severe budget constraints, the updated plan narrowed the scope of the project while speeding up construction to save money. Furthermore, about $1 billion in voter-approved bonds will be available to revamp existing tracks, which will purportedly make rail service more efficient and potentially bring in more customers. In a previous article, The New American reported on the revised proposal: The newly minted plan expedites completion of the first true U.S. high-speed rail system, moving it to 2028, trimming the project timeline by five years and shaving $30 billion off the original budget drafted last year by the California High-Speed Rail Authority. In 2008, when residents first voted to authorize the bonds, they were told the overall cost of the project would be $45 billion — and four years later, the total became $98 billion. The new proposal has reduced that number to $68.4 billion, still $23.4 billion more than the original total. However, despite the purported cost savings, the rail system still relies heavily on shaky federal funding and speculative private-sector investments. "We've seen numbers in the $30 billion, $40 billion, the $90 billion range, and now we're back in the $60 billion range," Sen. Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto) said at the time. "I think there is understandably both some confusion and skepticism about what is the system going to cost, and then there's the question of where is the money going to come from?" Due to such uncertainty, voters in the state are turning on the project, as a new poll conducted by USC-Dornsife and the Los Angeles Times found that 55 percent of California voters want the $9-billion bond issue — which was approved in 2008 to fund early stages of the rail system — back on the ballot. And a startling 59 percent affirmed that they now would vote against it. While labor unions have been staunch supporters of the project, a sizable 56 percent of union households now oppose the funding plan, the poll added. Even Democrats, the project’s most prominent supporters, have become skeptical, as 47 percent now reject the bond issue. The Times explained that revenue projections and overall use of the high-speed rail are also in question: The poll found that most voters don't expect to use it. Sixty-nine percent said they would never or hardly ever ride it. **Zero percent** said they would use it more than once a week. Public opinion surveys cannot predict the revenues and ridership a rail service might generate. The poll results raise questions about whether the system would serve as a robust commuter network, allowing people to live in small towns and work in big cities or vice versa. On the other hand, 33% of respondents said they would prefer a bullet train over an airplane or car on trips between L.A. and the Bay Area. Since voters approved the $9-billion borrowing scheme, the state’s economic condition has become bleaker, and many initial promises about the rail line have been altogether abandoned. The estimated cost has nearly doubled, and it is now scheduled to share track with freight trains and slower commuter trains in certain areas, which will severely hamper the very intent — that is, speedy and efficient transportation — of the project. Moreover, agriculture groups and freight rail lines have warned that the routes would compromise their interests; schools, businesses, and homeowners have also voiced their concerns over the project. Last Friday, farm groups filed an environmental lawsuit in Sacramento County Superior Court, requesting a preliminary injunction to halt rail construction. This suit has been added to a growing list of other filings, and more agricultural interests are threatening suits as well. "We think a preliminary injunction against construction will occur because there were so many violations in the authority's environmental impact report," stated Anja Raudabaugh, executive director of the Madera County Farm Bureau. “California voters have clearly reconsidered their support for high-speed rail,” said Dan Schnur, who directed the USC Dornsife/Times Poll. “They want the chance to vote again — and they want to vote no. The growing budget deficit is making Californians hesitant about spending so much money on a project like this one when they’re seeing cuts to public education and law enforcement.” The public has become even more skeptical of the high-speed rail line as Gov. Jerry Brown has threatened severe cuts in education spending — among other public programs — due to the state’s expanding budget gap. "The growing budget deficit is making Californians hesitant about spending so much money on a project like this one when they're seeing cuts to public education and law enforcement," Schnur noted. "But they also seem to be wary as to whether state government can run a big speed rail system effectively."

#### Media coverage proves - HSR is controversial

O’Toole 4/6-- Cato Institute Senior Fellow working on urban growth, public land, and transportation issues (Randal, “The Post: Not Even Loans for High-Speed Rail” CATO, 4/6/12, http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/the-post-not-even-loans-for-high-speed-rail/]

The Washington Post is somewhat of a bellwether of public opinion on high-speed rail. Back in 2009, when President Obama first proposed to build a high-speed rail network, Post editorial writers were all for it as a way of reducing congestion. Then in 2010, the paper published an op-ed by a National Geographic travel writer who argued that the “benefits of high-speed rail have long been apparent to anyone who has ridden Japan’s Shinkansen trains or France’s TGV.” By 2011, though, the Post was having second thoughts. In January of that year, the paper argued that the nation should “hit the brakes” on the California high-speed trains, the only true high-speed rail project in Obama’s plan (since Florida dropped out). (This editorial led to a letter expressing the opposite view from Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood.) In February 2011, the Post argued that joining China, France, and Japan in a high-speed rail race would be joining “a race everyone loses.” Then in May, the Post again hammered the California project in light of new reviews questioning both the claimed costs and benefits of the project. “Somebody, please, stop this train” the paper added that November. Yesterday, the Post even opposed just loaning federal money to a private high-speed rail company. A private company wants a $4.9 billion loan to help build a rail line from southern California to Las Vegas. But the memories of Solyndra and other solar companies getting federal loans, giving huge amounts of money to executives, and then going bankrupt may be too recent. The Post even understands opportunity costs, noting that, “As for jobs, any that the Vegas train creates will come at the expense of alternative uses of the money,” a reality not always recognized by journalists. The Nevada group, which is backed by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, may get its money, although that money would come from a fund that has never been used for this kind or size of project before. But any expectation by Californians that D.C. pundits will support more federal funding for even a modified high-speed rail plan must be considered wildly optimistic.

#### The link turn's empirically disproven - public rejects arguments in favor of HSR

Matthews 7/14 Joe Matthews is an associate writer and staff writer (“With High-Speed Rail's Approval, the Sales Job Begins”,http://www.nbclosangeles.com/blogs/prop-zero/High-Speed-Rail-California-Sales-161661635.html, 7/14/2012) Kerwin

High-speed rail needs to be sold to the public. Again.¶ That's strange to say, just after a big push to get the state Senate to -- barely -- approve the spending of funds, some from state bond moneys and some from the feds, to build the first 130 miles of the project in the Central Valley. Some improvements for existing rail systems in Northern and Southern California were part of the package, too.¶ Indeed, this was the second big sales push for high-speed rail. The first was for the 2008 ballot initiative that authorized high-speed rail and billions in bond money to pay for it. But the public still needs to be sold. Polls show big majorities of Californians oppose it. And to complete the project -- estimated at $68 billion currently -- may require some reversal in those numbers, and a softening of the objections among opponents. With little financing in place, public support could be important to getting the money -- either from the feds, from new state revenue streams (pollution credit fees?), or from private investors (who will want to see some public interest before investing in a train to serve the public

#### Low satisfaction ratings prove, public against rails

**Radnedge, 2012 (Aidan, Chief reporter for Metro News, High fares for poor service, say unsatisfied rail users, Metro News, http://www.metro.co.uk/news/888570-high-fares-for-poor-service-say-unsatisfied-rail-users)**

**Commuter satisfaction with** the **most** unpopular **train operators has slumped to just 27 per cent**, a major survey shows. **Poor value for money is the top complaint** – **weeks after some fares were increased by 11 per cent. Ratings for punctuality and reliability also worsened.** Office of Rail Regulation chairwoman Anna Walker said: ‘The rail industry must work harder to give passengers the service they deserve.’ First Capital Connect, National Express and London Midland were among the companies attracting the most moans in the report by watchdog group Passenger Focus. Passenger Focus **chief executive Anthony Smith said services ranged only from ‘mediocre to good’**. He added: **‘Satisfaction with value for money has gone down, illustrating the impact tough economic times coupled with fare rises are having.’**

## Public popular

### 1NC

#### Trains boosts the economy

**Dovell ’12** (Elizabeth Dovell, Contributor at Council on Foreign Relations, “U.S. Rail Infrastructure”, http://www.cfr.org/united-states/us-rail-infrastructure/p27585, March 7, 2012, LEQ)

**Rail is an essential component of a balanced national transportation** (PDF) **system and a globally competitive economy.** The American Society of Civil Engineers, which graded U.S. rail infrastructure with a C-, notes that the rail industry requires $200 billion in investment by 2035 to meet projected future demand. In the United States, modern freight and passenger rail systems share the same corridors and infrastructure. But while privately owned U.S. freight has succeeded in remaining competitive with other transportation modes, federally run passenger rail has struggled. Experts say the continued success of freight rail will require billions in new funding to avoid congestion, particularly if plans for expanding passenger rail proceed. Funding for the upkeep and expansion of passenger rail--which receives significantly less in federal subsidies than other transportation modes--has remained a controversial issue in Washington. The Obama administration's plan to expand high-speed rail (sustained speeds of more than 125 miles per hour) faces fierce opposition. Supporters cite the unique benefits of high-speed rail, including energy savings, more efficient mobility, and greater manufacturing opportunities for U.S. companies. Moreover, many U.S. economic competitors in Asia and Europe are making significant investments in HSR (WashPost). Opponents argue the economic benefits of HSR rarely surpass the costs, and point out that most systems do not turn a profit and rely heavily on government subsidies. The Shakeup of U.S. Rail The mid-to-late nineteenth century saw thousands of miles of track laid across the United States, and by the turn of the twentieth century, rail companies--which offered both passenger and freight rail services at the time--provided one of the cheapest and most efficient modes of transport. In the 1930s, rail transportation began to struggle in competition with commercial aviation and the increasingly popular automobile. Meanwhile, freight regulations put in place by the Interstate Commerce Commission, along with labor union restrictions, stifled the industry further. By 1968, the Pullman Palace Car Company, a major manufacturer of passenger railroad cars, had gone bankrupt. In an effort to give the industry a much-needed boost, the Penn Central Transportation Company was formed that same year, only to declare shortly thereafter the largest corporate bankruptcy in history (Time). Freight railroad is maintained with little taxpayer money, unlike alternate forms of freight transport such as trucks and barges, for which the government maintains the highway infrastructure. The 1970s and 1980s were a turning point for U.S. rail. Amtrak was established by law in 1971 and ushered in a new era of publicly owned and subsidized passenger rail. The modern freight rail industry was created by the Staggers Act of 1980, which partially deregulated the industry and contributed to mass consolidation and increased investment. As part of the Staggers process, the U.S. government allowed freight carriers to exit the passenger business in exchange for donating equipment to Amtrak and pouring $200 million into the new system. Most of the approximately 22,000 miles of track over which Amtrak runs are still owned by freight railroads. Amtrak pays freight carriers for the right to operate on their tracks and for priority over other customers. The Staggers law also granted railroads the freedom to change prices and negotiate private contracts with shipping companies. Following enactment, the number of large railroad carriers shrank from twenty-six to seven, and the amount of track owned by these companies declined from nearly 165,000 miles in 1980 to about 94,000 in 2008. The Success of Freight **Rail The U.S. freight rail industry continues to thrive today. "America's freight railways are one of the unsung transport successes of the past thirty years," s**ays the Economist. "**They are universally recognized in the industry as the best in the world."** Freight railroad is maintained with little taxpayer money, unlike alternative forms of freight transport such as trucks and barges, for which the government maintains the infrastructure. Over the last several decades, U.S. freight companies have made billion-dollar investments in the national rail network. Warren Buffett highlighted this trend in 2009, increasing Berkshire Hathaway's holdings of BNSF (USA Today)--the nation's second largest railroad--by $26 billion. Remarking on the historic investment, which was the largest in the history of Berkshire, Buffett said, "Our country's prosperity depends on its having an efficient and well-maintained rail system." Compared to other modes of freight transport, **rail also has a smaller environmental impact, better fuel efficiency, and lower costs over large distances.** Steel wheel technology makes rail far more efficient than truck freight due to limited rolling resistance: railcars become more efficient as more weight is added. Trains can now move one ton of cargo approximately 484 miles on just one gallon of fuel, according to the American Association of Railroads. **Lower freight rail costs save consumers money and help keep U.S. manufacturers globally competitive**. According to Dr. Pasi Lautala, director of the Rail Transport Program at Michigan Technological University, "**If you talk to industry experts, everyone has a positive outlook on the future of the freight rail industry**, because it makes sense if you look at the world right now. You look at the economic advances, especially in fuel consumption compared to truck traffic and the limitations of marine transportation." But challenges remain. Freight rail will need substantial investment in the future, despite its current success. Congestion is on the rise, and capacity must increase by approximately 90 percent to meet estimated demands by 2035, according to the U.S. Transportation Department. Re-regulation and the potential for track sharing with high-speed and express intercity rail could also put the freight industry under strain. President Obama has proposed a 110 mile-per-hour intercity passenger speed limit, which could create congestion problems for slower-running freight trains.

### 2NC

#### HSR's popular with the American public

HNTB 10 (HNTB Corporation is an employee-owned infrastructure firm serving public and private owners and contractors, “America’s high-speed rail aspirations remain strong”, <http://www.hntb.com/news-room/news-release/america%E2%80%99s-high-speed-rail-aspirations-remain-strong>, 2/18/10, Bhattacharyya)

New America THINKS survey results from HNTB Corporation illustrate transit and passenger rail remain top of mind after the Obama administration’s $8 billion high-speed rail grant announcement last month. Nearly nine in ten (88 percent) Americans are currently open to high-speed rail travel for long-distance travel within the United States. While this is a strong majority, that support is down slightly from the 94 percent America THINKS recorded in March 2009. “The time has come for high-speed rail,” said Peter Gertler, HNTB high-speed rail services chair. “Stimulus money is seeding initial projects. It’ll be up to those of us in the industry – working in partnership with transportation agencies and elected officials – to keep up the momentum.” Gertler said such advocacy efforts are crucial at a time general excitement about high-speed rail has slowed. Americans were far more likely to choose high-speed rail over driving or flying for a trip to a city in their region in March 2009 than February 2010 (54 percent versus 38 percent). “The pain we all felt when gasoline was hovering near $4 a gallon has receded,” Gertler said. “Yet we can’t stand by for the next crisis to hit to address the underlying issues of congestion and our dependency on limited fossil fuels.” While general interest may have slowed, there’s still a great deal of support for passenger rail enhancements overall. More than four in five (83 percent) Americans agree public transit and high-speed rail infrastructure should receive a larger share of federal funding than they do now. “While our interstate highways empowered economic growth and development during the last 50 years, we can no longer simply build our way out of congestion and conservation problems,” Gertler said. “Establishing a long-term multi-modal transportation vision that includes rail is crucial.”Liz Rao, HNTB national public transit services chair, agreed. “The U.S. Department of Transportation recently shifted its criteria when evaluating transit proposals for federal funding to consider environmental and economic development benefits as well as congestion relief. Such a focus will allow us to improve our communities’ quality of life as well as make better use of limited resources.”

#### Americans Support the HSR Initiative

ARPU Poll 2010, (Angus Reid Public Opinion Poll, Nation-wide Poll on High Speed Rail, “Half of Americans Support Obama’s High-Speed Rail Plan”. 4/6/10 AD. 7/12/12. http://www.visioncritical.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/2010.04.06\_Trains\_USA.pdf|Ashwin)

Many Americans are supportive of a government-proposed plan to build high-speed rail corridors in certain regions of ¶ the country, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found. ¶ In the online survey of a representative national ¶ sample of 1,005 American adults, 49 per cent of respondents support President Barack Obama’s recently announced plan to create the high-speed rail corridors. A quarter of Americans (26%) do not back this proposal. ¶ As part of this survey, respondents were shown a ¶ map that displays the 10 proposed regional highspeed rail corridors. They were then asked to ¶ choose their preferred mode of transport if they ¶ had to travel between some of the cities included ¶ in the proposal. ¶ While 35 per cent of respondents say they would ¶ pick the car to travel between these cities, one third of Americans (32%) say they would prefer to ¶ travel in a high-speed train. Only 16 per cent ¶ would fly to their destination, and only three per ¶ cent would take the bus.¶

#### National HSR Popularity still over 80%-people believe Obama should give funding

Shanan 2010, (Zachary Shanan, Environmental Analyst, “83% of Americans Think More Money Should Go to High Speed Rail”. 3/28/10 AD. 7/12/12. http://cleantechnica.com/2010/02/28/88-of-americans-like-high-speed-rail/|Ashwin)

Surprisingly, after Obama’s announcement to give $8 billion to High Speed Rail (HSR) projects across the country, popular support for HSR has dropped, but it is still 88%. Not bad.¶ Of course, more money is needed to make HSR the reality people dream of.¶ A new survey shows that 83% of people think HSR and mass transit should be getting more money.¶ A survey in March of last year by HNTB called “America THINKS” found that 94% of Americans were “open to high-speed rail travel for long-distance travel within the United States” and this year’s version of it (conducted last month and just out) finds that support is down to 88%.¶ Clearly, though, this is still very high.¶ “The time has come for high-speed rail,” says Peter Gertler, HNTB high-speed rail services chair. “Stimulus money is seeding initial projects. It’ll be up to those of us in the industry – working in partnership with transportation agencies and elected officials – to keep up the momentum.”¶ The bottom line is, we have issues concerning pollution and the price of fuel that don’t seem to be going away anytime soon. And even beyond fuel, driving is very “expensive” in time costs in many places — it is not an efficient way to travel around a very populated place. The definition of a populated place is a lot of people in a relatively small area. Giving everyone a large vehicle of their own to move around in is not going to be the best solution.¶ And going from one populated place to another in the same region is better served by fast, mass transit in many instances as well.¶ Of course, we need a lot of funding to go towards high-quality HSR and mass transit if we are going to ever have a more efficient transportation system. But the public seems to be in support of this. 83% (more than 4 out of 5) people support a larger share of federal funding going towards mass transit and HSR infrastructure — they agree that this shift needs to occur. So, hopefully we will see it happen.¶

#### There's massive public demand for HSR

Independent 11 (The Independent, British national morning newspaper published in London by Independent Print Limited, “US official touts high-speed rail at tourism meet”, <http://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/us-official-touts-highspeed-rail-at-tourism-meet-2286663.html>, 5/19/12, Bhattacharyya)

US Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood on Wednesday touted high-speed rail as key to meeting future US transport needs that will also give America greater tourist appeal. "This is what Americans want - high-speed rail built by Americans for Americans," he told a gathering of travel and tourism industry leaders. The administration of President Barack Obama has budgeted $10 billion for investments in high-speed rail systems to connect major urban centers with a goal of serving 80 percent of the population in 25 years. These include corridors along the east coast linking Boston to Washington, Detroit and Chicago in the midwestern region and Los Angeles to Las Vegas. LaHood said the Transportation Department also is pushing interconnectivity of different transportation systems, so a traveler arriving at a US airport would be able to seamlessly move to rail, metro and bus to their destination. He brushed aside political resistance from some conservatives, despite the refusal of governors in three states to accept the federal funds for high speed rail projects. "There is a pent-up demand in America for high-speed rail," said LaHood, who is a Republican. "There is a lot of disappointment in those states for the fact that they didn't get the money." "High-speed rail is coming to America and it will be good for all of you in the hospitality industry," he said. But some participants to the Global Travel and Tourism Summit, which includes top tourism officials and travel chief executives, suggested that the administration has been slow to recognize the looming opportunities in international travel. "There is a general lack of understanding," one participant told LaHood in a question and answer session, complaining about the administration's focus on side issues like travelers' rights. "And I think your role is to get Congress to focus on the things that will really have a lasting impact instead of trying to enter in the margins with something that competition is going to correct anyway," he said. They have cautioned that the United States needs to prepare now to capture a growing flood of tourists from newly emergent powers like China, India and Brazil.

## Agenda Links

### 1NC

#### HSR is politically unpopular – bipartisan opposition in Congress

Borenstein 12(Daniel, columnist for contra-costa times, KEY DEMOCRATIC STATE SENATORS BALKING AT CURRENT HIGH-SPEED RAIL PLAN,¶ <http://sd07.senate.ca.gov/news/2012-01-15-key-democratic-state-senators-balking-current-high-speed-rail-plan-0>)

After years barreling down the track without regard to cost, California high-speed rail advocates now face serious obstacles blocking their path to the bond market. Ignoring wilting public support and five critical, impartial analyses of the bullet-train plan, including the recent scathing peer review that warns of "immense financial risk" to taxpayers, Gov. Jerry Brown and organized labor leaders still demand full throttle. While last week's change of engineers -- the abrupt resignation of High Speed Rail Authority CEO Roelof van Ark and Brown loyalist Dan Richard's ascendancy to board chairman -- might provide a public-relations patch, it doesn't resolve underlying problems that have drawn bipartisan objections. Republicans are uniting in opposition, and three key Democratic state senators -- Joe Simitian, of Palo Alto, chairman of the budget subcommittee overseeing transportation; Alan Lowenthal, of Long Beach, chairman of the Select Committee on High-Speed Rail; and Mark DeSaulnier, of Concord, chairman of the transportation committee -- have started applying the brakes. The three have supported high-speed rail and voted to put it before the electorate in 2008. But in separate interviews last week, they indicated that the current plan could not win their vote. They voiced concerns about plans to start in the Central Valley with a 130-mile link that will not attract enough riders and could become California's version of the Alaskan "Bridge to Nowhere." "This is an albatross potentially," Lowenthal said. Instead, they are pushing to begin in urbanized areas. "You need to spend the money where the need is and where it will attract private-sector funds," DeSaulnier said. "You need to put it where the ridership is." They criticized the High-Speed Rail Authority's poor planning, unreliable numbers, horrible community outreach and push for quick state action to meet deadlines for federal money.

### 2NC

#### HSR meets massive political opposition in Congress – poor planning, inability to attract riders, and horrible community outreach all mean that there is bipartisan political opposition to the plan – that’s Borenstein

#### **HSR drains Obama’s political capital**

Freemark, 2011 (Yonah, Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology;. 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/>)

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.

#### **GOP completely against HSR**

Freemark, 2012 (Yonah,– Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; 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.

#### GOP against high speed rail proposals

Spinelli, 6/11/2012(John M., communication professional and former credentialed Ohio statehouse journalist, writer for the Examiner, Obama, Walker, Kasich on different tracks as CA voters derail bullet train plan, <http://www.examiner.com/article/obama-walker-kasich-on-different-tracks-as-ca-voters-derail-bullet-train-plan>)

In the 2010 races, when Tea Party governors like Walker in Wisconsin and Kasich in Ohio railed against their opponent's plans to build high-speed rail projects because they wanted to cut, not increase, government spending, the HSR proposal by Mr. Obama was a bold if not controversial step forward. When the White House awarded states with slices of the HSR pie in 2009, which were sold to the public as guaranteed job creators that would produce trains that would zip riders from one major metropolitan area to another at speeds only seen in Europe, Japan or China, Wisconsin placed 3rd with $800 million and Ohio 4th with $400 million behind California and Florida, numbers one and two. Gov. **Walker**, who beat his Democratic opponent last Tuesday by about 7 points after having out spent his Milwaukee mayor rival by 8 to 1, **and** John **Kasich**, who won by only 2 percentage points in 2010, **promised to derail their respective state's plans for high-speed if elected. They were, and they did.**

# Waterways

## Public unpopular

### 1NC

#### Corps unpopular with public-fabricates economic reports and built the levees that failed during Katrina

Chris **Edwards 12,** director of tax policy studies at the Cato Institute, Edwards was a senior economist on the congressional Joint Economic Committee, a manager with PricewaterhouseCoopers, and an economist with the Tax Foundation, “Cutting the Army Corps of Engineers,” http://finance.townhall.com/columnists/chrisedwards/

2012/03/19/cutting\_the\_army\_corps\_of\_engineers/page/full/)

Some of these charges still ring true**. The nation was reacquainted with the Corps' shoddy engineering with the tragic failure of the levees in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina. In recent years, the Corps has hidden information from the public, and has been caught distorting economic analyses to justify wasteful projects. Because of its pro-construction mindset, the Corps continues to pursue projects that would damage the environment and produce limited economic benefits.** In recent decades, **for example, "the Corps has channelized dozens of rivers for barges that never arrived**."35

### 2NC

#### Corps unpopular-ignore public interests for private gain

Chris **Edwards 12**, director of tax policy studies at the Cato Institute, Edwards was a senior economist on the congressional Joint Economic Committee, a manager with PricewaterhouseCoopers, and an economist with the Tax Foundation, “Cutting the Army Corps of Engineers,” http://finance.townhall.com/columnists/chrisedwards/

2012/03/19/cutting\_the\_army\_corps\_of\_engineers/page/full/)

Economists generally support government spending on true "public goods." However**, the purpose of many Corps' projects is to generate private gains, not broad public benefits. The Corps would look favorably on a project that cost taxpayers $100 million** **and generated private benefits** to farmers, developers, or shipping companies of $110 million. But private interests should be willing to invest their own funds in such projects that have positive returns.74

#### Plan unpopular- shifts funding burden to taxpayers

**Southern 12** (Illinois newspaper, “New waterways bill draws criticism,” April 16, 2012, http://thesouthern.com/news/local/new-waterways-bill-draws-criticism/article\_5edfa54e-877c-11e1-ae16-0019bb2963f4.html)

**A recent bill dealing with maintenance of the country’s waterways**, co-sponsored by U.S. Rep Jerry Costello, D-Belleville, is drawing fire **for its revamping of funding measures that critics say shift more of the cost burden to taxpayers**. **Costello and U.S. Rep. Ed Whitfield, R-Ky., announced** March 30 their filing of the Waterways Are Vital for the Economy, Energy, Efficiency and Environment Act of 2012, or the **WAVE4 Act**. A joint news release from Costello and Whitfield about the bill said the WAVE4 Act requires, among other things, the use of objective criteria for the prioritization of essential construction and major rehabilitation projects and protects against cost overruns. Additionally, **the news release said it revises the current cost-sharing structure for inland waterways projects, reforms the Army Corps of Engineers internal project delivery process and calls for additional contributions from the waterways industry to pay for these vital infrastructure investments.**

#### Plan trades off with environmental restoration

**IWLA 10** (The Izaak Walton League of America, formed in 1922 to save outdoor America for future generations, almost every major, successful conservation program that America has in place today can be traced directly to a League activity or initiative, “Conservation and Watchdog Groups Oppose Barge Industry’s Plan to Shift Costs to Taxpayers,” press release, June 21, 2010, http://www.iwla.org/index.php?ht=display/ContentDetails/i/5035/pid/204)

The **Corps of Engineers budget functions in a competitive nature for directing funding to projects and priorities, and the** letter’s authors note that **increasing taxpayer funding for the Inland Waterway System would result in reduced funding available for projects targeting environmental restoration and flood and storm damage prevention.** **“It’s more than just the principle of corporate welfare that we oppose; the proposal would eat up limited resources that should go towards repairing some of the damage we’ve done to the river** over the past 100 years,” **said Glynnis Collins, Executive Director of Prairie Rivers Network. “The public money that has funded most of the navigation system has resulted in untold public costs** in the form of flooding, pollution and decline of fish and waterfowl populations. **Corps funds should be directed to efforts like floodplain restoration and wetland protection that will lead to a cleaner, healthier river.**”

#### Environmental groups oppose plan

**Glass 11** (Pamela, Washington, D.C., correspondent for WorkBoat, reports on the decisions and deliberations of congressional committees and federal agencies that affect the maritime industry, including the Coast Guard, U.S. Maritime Administration and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, graduate of Wesleyan University, “Green, anti-tax groups mobilize against inland waterways funding plan,” 4/28/11, http://www.workboat.com/newsdetail.aspx?id=9899)

**Environmental and taxpayer groups are mobilizing again on Capitol Hill to oppose a waterways financing plan favored by the barge industry.** Although not as well organized and funded as the barge industry, these groups are meeting with congressmen and their staffs and distributing documents that refute barge industry claims that **the plan will more effectively finance improvements to the aging inland lock and dam system. Green groups launched their opposition last spring after the plan was released. Opponents argue that the proposal shifts too much financial burden to taxpayers and would take money away from environmental protection programs.** Citing some of the same arguments, the Obama administration rejected the plan but promised to work on another solution. None has yet emerged.

#### Environmentalists key to Obama re-election

**Georgia Political Review 12** (“Will Key Groups Rally Behind Obama This Election?,” February 15, 2012, http://www.georgiapoliticalreview.com/will-key-groups-rally-behind-obama-this-election/)

**Obama will be looking to present himself as a pragmatic and reasonable choice that has only been ineffective because of a divided and polarized Congress.** His moderate policy decisions in office, however, might cause some liberal voters to stay at home on election day or not campaign as hard as they did four years ago**. Obama is going to need the grassroots momentum** he found during the last campaign cycle **if he wishes to win reelection. While these supporters may not jump ship and vote Republican, they will also not passionately campaign for him as they did four years ago.** Republicans are as determined as ever to defeat him, and their nominee will have plenty of legitimate ways to attack Obama later this year. These three groups – **environmentalists**, LGBT activists and women – **will help Obama gain a majority of the votes this November**, but some might see him as only the lesser of two evils, rather than a champion for their individual causes. **Obama is going to have to rally support from these groups if he wishes to have the same wave of success as he did in 2008 and four more years in the White House.**

## No public perception

#### Public doesn’t care about waterways

Sutton 06/08/2010 (Les, Kirby Corporation, Public Perception of Comparative Environmental Impacts and Economic Preferences for Inland and Coastal Waterways and other Modes of Transportation”, http://www.pianc.us/docs/annual2002/sutton\_edited2.pdf)

The fact is that is there is almost no public perception of the comparative environmental impacts and economic preferences for waterway transportation. And you heard at least three of the panelists allude to that already. But there is almost no public perception of the environmental impacts. And that's why it's been so difficult for us to get our message across.

#### Public support for preserving water ways

Longo 2002 (Peter j, “University of Nebraska at Kearney, Watering the Plains: Political Dynamics of River Preservation in Canada and the United States”, http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1617&context=greatplainsresearch)

Fear of federal intervention has been a consistent obstacle to greater use of and public support for national river protection policies like the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Greater cooperation between federal officials and local residents is needed to provide for the future of the great rivers of the Great Plains. Both the Canadian Heritage Rivers System and section 2(a)(ii) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act provide mechanisms for preservationist policy grounded on the principle of cooperation. Public support for preservationist values is increasing. This support must not be siphoned off through federal action perceived as "dictatorial" or "interventionist," even if those perceptions are in error. Preservation-minded policy makers should not provide rhetorical ammunition to their adversaries when cooperative means of achieving their goals are available.

## Public unpopular

### 1nC

#### Public perceives updating inland waterways as major job creation

**Niemeyer 11** (Garry, president of National Corn Growers Association, B.S. in agricultural economics from the University of Illinois, “Our View: Updating our Nation’s Inland Waterways is Critical for Farmers and Promotes Job Creation,” September 14, 2011, “http://www.ncga.com/news-stories/221-our-view-updating-our-nation-rsquo-s-inland-waterways-is-critical-for-farmers-and-promotes-job-creation/)

**When it comes to the waterways, the top priority for the N**ational **C**orn **G**rowers **A**ssociation **is** **seeing new construction move forward on the seven projects in the Upper Mississippi lock system** that were authorized in the 2007 Water Resources Development Act: Mississippi L&D 25, 24, 22, 21, 20, and LaGrange and Peoria on the Illinois River. **These lock upgrades would require a total of 48 million person hours from skilled trades throughout the Midwest.**

**As President Obama and Congress turn their attention to job creation, we hope these projects will rise to the highest level of priority. We appreciate that President Obama mentioned investment in waterways in his jobs bill andwe hope he pushes for investment in the lock system** on the Upper Mississippi. Likewise, **we hope Congress can see beyond partisan views and understand the importance of an updated waterways system to farmers** across our country **and to promote job creation.**

### 2NC

#### Ag exports key to Iowa swing vote and Obama re-election

Jan 3 12 http://internationaltradeexaminer.com/2012/01/03/whats-at-stake-for-iowa/

Today, voters in Iowa will select their preference for the Republican presidential nominee**. The economy remains a significant issue for a number of voters, including those from Iowa.** Since international trade has proven beneficial to Iowa's economy, the presidential candidates' perspectives on international trade are worth highlighting**. International trade has played a role in Iowa's economic growth. As recent reports show, Iowa's economy has grown as a result of its agricultural exports to the international market.** The increased exports are the result of higher demand for U.S. agricultural products, according to a 2011 report.

#### Navigation and shipping industries support the plan

**Greenwire 12** (“ARMY CORPS: Obama's budget touts navigation, but waterway interests aren't happy,” February 15, 2012, Top Stories Vol. 10 No. 9)

The Obama administration is portraying its fiscal 2013 budget proposal for the Army Corps of Engineers as a boon for businesses that rely on navigable inland waterways. As Jo-Ellen Darcy, the Army's assistant secretary of civil works, puts it, the spending plan reflects "the importance the administration places on navigation." **Navigation interests have long grumbled about what they see as the Army Corps' emphasis on ecosystem restoration at the expense of dredging shipping channels, maintaining locks and other projects aimed at keeping waterways open.** President **Obama's overall $4.7 billion Army Corps budget proposal**, Darcy said at a briefing Monday, **would send 37 percent of the agency's cash to navigation projects**, compared with 33 percent for environmental restoration and 30 percent for flood control. And even though Obama's budget proposal is 5.4 percent smaller than what the agency is spending this year, Darcy said, there would be $176 million more for navigation, an 11 percent increase over fiscal 2012 levels. And the corps would spend $848 million on harbor maintenance, up 12 percent from last year. **The industry's reaction? "Overall, disappointment**," said Amy Larson, president of the National Waterways Conference, **whose members include levee managers, shipping companies and engineering firms.** Despite boosting waterways projects, industry officials say, the budget proposal fails to provide enough for navigation and levees to ensure U.S. water infrastructure can adequately provide flood protection and help meet Obama's goal of doubling the nation's exports by 2015. The corps is under unprecedented pressure to do more with less. Spending caps imposed last year during the White House's debt-limit showdown with Congress have rendered the Army Corps' budget a zero-sum game for competing interests of navigation, flood control and ecosystem restoration.

#### Job creation key to Obama re-election

**AP 6/2** (“Ugly jobs numbers rattle Obama’s reelection bid ,” June 2, 2012, http://articles.nydailynews.com/2012-06-02/news/31989866\_1\_jobs-numbers-jobs-month-jobs-bill)

WASHINGTON — **Nothing upsets a president’s re-election groove like ugly economic numbers. A spring slowdown in hiring and an uptick in the unemployment rate are weighing on Barack Obama, while enhancing Republican challenger Mitt Romney**’s argument that the president is in over his head. Some questions and answers about how Friday’s economic news may play in a close presidential race: Q: **How bad is this for Obama?** A: **Pretty awful. Polls show Obama’s handling of the economy is his biggest weak spot. Americans overwhelmingly rate** the economy as their biggest worry. And **jobs are what they say matters most.**

# Dam (that damn aff)

## Agenda links

### 1NC

#### The plan is massively unpopular in Congress – too many hurdles

VanDevelder 09[Paul VanDevelder, author of Savages and Scoundrels: the Story of America’s Road to Empire Through Indian Territory.” July 06, 2009. LA Times. <http://articles.latimes.com/2009/jul/06/opinion/oe-vandevelder6>]

If ever there were a story that foreshadowed the political and legal Waterloos that loom in seeking solutions to climate change, surely that cautionary tale is the one about the Columbia and Snake rivers' salmon and their imminent extinction. And like most stories about endangered species or environmental threats, this one is not only about fish and rivers -- it's about us.¶ The policy deadlock that has resulted from the debate among stakeholders along the Columbia and the Snake -- aluminum smelters, the Bonneville Power Administration, politicians, Indian tribes, states, conservation groups, fishermen, barge operators, agribusiness and wheat farmers -- has flushed billions of taxpayer dollars out to sea over the last 15 years while doing very little to prevent 13 endangered salmon stocks from going extinct.

### 2NC

#### Debate over aluminum smelters, the Bonneville Power Administration, politicians, Indian Tribes, states, conservation groups, fisherman, barge operators, agribusiness and wheat farmers to name a few all hold up any action concerning the plan in Congress – the decades of conflict over it prove – that’s VanDevelder

#### Simpson hates the plan – he’s key

Cousins 2011[Sarel Cousins, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. “Controversy surrounding Dam Removal on the Elwha and Lower Snake Rivers.” May 7, 2011.https://scholar.vt.edu/access/content/group/5b95dc6f-a3ef-4ce5-8e1a-875819148663/MNR%20Capstone%20Projects/Final%20Paper\_Sarel%20Cousins\_051011.pdf]

Finally, the political power of various U.S. Congressmen and Senators in the region and their position on dams in the¶ 13¶ Pacific Northwest can influence outcomes. For example, Representative Mike Simpson is the chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee of the Interior and is also on the Subcommittee of Energy and Water Development. ―The two committees are in charge of funding the federal agencies that control 64 percent of Idaho’s land area‖ (Barker 2010). If Congressman Simpson is not interested in dam removal on the Snake River, then he might be able to influence the monies allocated to various federal agencies for salmon recovery. Water projects in the past and even today are known as "the pork par excellence for U.S. politicians" since they produce jobs, provide services and provide a great deal of money for local districts (McCully 2001 p. 242).

#### Steadfast opposition

VanDevelder 09[Paul VanDevelder, author of Savages and Scoundrels: the Story of America’s Road to Empire Through Indian Territory.” July 06, 2009. LA Times. <http://articles.latimes.com/2009/jul/06/opinion/oe-vandevelder6>]

Politicians and stakeholders have steadfastly resisted the painful solution of dam removal while hoping for a miracle. That hope turned out to be a one-way road on a dead-end street, and in many respects they're now blaming the court for their current predicament. With few exceptions, the region's politicians, past and current, have been challenging the recommendations of scientists (including dam removal and increasing the spills over the dams) for more than a decade. Former Sen. Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) famously vowed to chain himself to a dam rather than surrender, a prospect relished by many conservation groups.

#### The link is guaranteed – the plan must pass through Congress

McCullen 10 (“Army Corps releases plan on dam removal on Snake river”, kevin McCullen | Tri-City Herald, April 1, 2010http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2010/04/01/91473\_army-corps-releases-plan-on- dam.html)phol

The Army Corps of Engineers on Wednesday released a plan outlining the steps to evaluate the potential breaching of one or more dams on the Lower Snake River if necessary to ensure survival of endangered wild salmon and steelhead.¶ A study -- which would include a technical phase and public policy phase and possibly the development of an environmental impact statement -- is not imminent.¶ A dramatic decline in the four-year average of wild salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act or a natural catastrophe are among the "trigger" events that would have to happen to launch the study -- which would take several years to complete, Corps officials said.¶ "There's a lot of things that would have to fall into place before we could ever get to this step," said Greg Graham, chief of planning for the Corps' Walla Walla District.¶ And even if a plan of study -- which would incorporate information gathered for a 2002 study of breaching the four Snake River dams -- were initiated and dam removal recommended, the final decision would be up to Congress, the Corps said.

#### Dam removal is an extremely partisan issue

Herald and News 2012 [Ty Beaver, staff writer, “Political perspectives: Dam removal a divisive, and now partisan, issue”, 2/18/12, Herald and News, http://www.heraldandnews.com/news/article\_da39f2b8-5a08-11e1-b00f-001871e3ce6c.html]

U.S. Rep. Mike Thompson, D-Calif., said he isn't surprised by how divisive the debate has become over the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement and its associated Klamath River dam removal agreement. "I don't think there's any shortage of things people are looking to make partisan," he said. Supporters of the KBRA and dam removal said congressional partisanship is delaying efforts to move forward. "It's just so ideological," said Greg Addington, executive director of the Klamath Water Users Association. He and others who developed the KBRA and related Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement said they didn't want the documents to become partisan issues. From a practical standpoint, it would delay implementation. Addington said the documents were meant to address only issues in the Klamath River Basin, and to be acceptable to a majority of stakeholders in the Basin. "We have never thought, and worked very hard to make sure, this isn't precedent-setting," he said, adding if the Klamath Basin agreements were pertinent to issues elsewhere, there likely would be more politics involved. But lawmakers already have taken up the issue. Democrats, such as Thompson and Oregon's U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, primarily support the documents. Republican U.S. Rep. Wally Herger, whose district encompasses Siskiyou County, is opposed to dam removal, and Republican U.S. Rep. Tom McClintock, whose district includes Modoc County, is staunchly opposed to the agreements. Both sides say they represent the majority. Thompson said he's never had a comment from anyone in his district about not removing the dams. McClintock said he's not talked to one local farmer who thinks dam removal is a good idea. And, partisan or not, political support is needed for the documents to be carried out. Funding is up to Congress.

## Public unpopular

### 1NC

#### Damn removal unpopular

Leavens 07/26/2012 (Bill, The river Resource center, “Dam Removals”, http://www.musconetcong.org/damremovals.php)

The immediate problem with dam removal is that people who have grown up in a historical setting - looking at a certain vista and listening to a familiar soundscape - don't want change. We are sensitive to this because a part of the MWA mission is to preserve historic and cultural resources.  However, public perception and resistance to change are the main forces behind public opposition to dam removal. We have sufficient experience from removing the four dams along the river that we can present a burbling stream view that anyone will love. One way to envision how the 'upstream' view will appear at any site when a dam is removed is to look 'downstream' at the rills and riffles of a natural ecosystem.  It's all the same river.

### 2NC

#### Dam removal unpop recreational and property values

Muskegon River Watershed Assembly, September 2011 (“Dam Reconnaissance Study In The Muskegon Watershed”, http://www.hydroreform.org/sites/www.hydroreform.org/files/Muskegon\_watershed\_dam\_recon\_study\_201110.pdf)

Other dams, such as lake level control structures at Higgins and Houghton Lakes would likely generate public opposition if removal was discussed because of their recreational and associated property values.

#### **Dam removal unpopular – electricity**

Cousins 2011 [Sarel, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, “Controversy surrounding Dam Removal on the Elwha and Lower Snake Rivers”, 5/7/11, https://scholar.vt.edu/access/content/group/5b95dc6f-a3ef-4ce5-8e1a-875819148663/MNR%20Capstone%20Projects/Final%20Paper\_Sarel%20Cousins\_051011.pdf]

A combination of factors including hydropower, navigation and irrigation interests represent a powerful political argument against dam removal. As mentioned earlier, relevant federal action agencies include BPA, BOR, NOAA Fisheries, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. ―Cheap power produced by the turbines at the dams and water diverted from the river still fuel the economy of eastern Washington and much of Oregon and Idaho‖ (Montgomery 2003). Since hydropower is the main source of electricity for the entire region, and irrigation practices and navigation interests are entrenched in the social fabric of the area, dam removal is an unpopular option thus far. Maintaining the status quo however is not an option as the region has to address how it will manage threatened and endangered species (Independent Scientific Group 1999).

#### Voters dislike Snake River dam removal

Terry **Flores 11**, Executive Director for Northwest River Partners, August 3, 2011, “Arguments for removal of Snake River Dams are laughable, absurd,” Northwest River Partners, <http://www.thenewstribune.com/2011/08/23/1792061/arguments-for-removal-of-snake.html>

Fortunately, the public doesn’t buy this nonsense. **Polling done by DHM Research in Portland for several years now shows the public believes that removing the Snake dams is an extreme solution that would do more harm than good. In fact, the public’s opposition to removing the Snake dams has only increased over time, from 68 percent opposed in 2007 to 73 percent opposed in 2011. And citizens consistently identify hydro energy as the Northwest’s most practical, clean, reliable and renewable energy resource**.¶ And the **suggestion that the Snake River dams are “relatively small” is just laughable. They provide more than 1,000 megawatts of clean energy, enough to light a city the size of Seattle** – and then some. They generate power to back up wind resources when the wind isn’t blowing, which happens a lot. Along with the rest of the Northwest’s hydro system, **they generate billions of dollars for the Northwest’s economy, provide hundreds of thousands of local, family-wage jobs and keep our carbon footprint half that of the rest of the country.**¶ These jobs and environmental benefits certainly can’t be replaced by a few “fishing and other salmon-based jobs” as the authors purport. And, isn’t the aim of fishing to catch and kill the very salmon these folks say they want to protect? Sounds fishy to me.¶ Terry Flores is executive director of Northwest RiverPartners, an alliance of farmers, utilities, ports and business that promote the economic and environmental benefits of the Columbia and Snake rivers and salmon-recovery policies based on sound science.¶

## Public Popular

### 1NC

# Ports

## Public popular

### 1NC

#### Port funding would generate jobs – key to Obama’s reelection.

**Mueller ’12** – Sarah Mueller, reporter for the Jacksonville Business Journal [Jacksonville Business Journal, “Jaxport welcomes House approval of port funding law”, April 20, 2012, Jacksonville Business Journal, <http://www.bizjournals.com/jacksonville/news/2012/04/20/jaxport-welcomes-house-approval-of.html> AD]

**The U.S. House of Representatives approved legislation ensuring specific port revenue is spent only on harbor maintenance and dredging construction — much to the delight of the Jacksonville Port Authority** . The Realize America’s Maritime Promise (RAMP) Act would allow the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to use money from Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund for maintenance and dredging. “A trust fund should be exactly that — a matter of public trust, not a fund to be raided at will,” said Paul Anderson, CEO of JaxPort in a news release. “Allowing these funds to be used for their dedicated purposes will spur opportunities in the private sector, stimulating the growth and jobs so critical to our continued national economic recovery**." Businesses that use Jaxport, along with North Florida residents, stand to benefit from the law’s approval, the news release said. Port improvements will increase business and throughput of goods, resulting in job creation and positive economic impact for the country**. The act was included in the surface transportation measure passed by the House this week. Congress passed a three-month extension of the current authorization in March after the Senate and House failed to reach agreement on a longer-term bill. The next step for the transportation legislation is a conference committee between the House and Senate.

### 2NC

#### Port spending generates jobs and keeps economies afloat.

**Hassan ’12** – Amna Hassan is a reporter for the Oakland North news network [Oakland North, “Port still waiting on federal funds for dredging”, April 20, 2012, Oakland North, <http://oaklandnorth.net/2012/04/20/port-still-waiting-on-federal-funds-for-dredging/> AD]

**In September 2009,** after a hard battle to secure federal funds, **Port of Oakland officials and local politicians celebrated completion of a 10-year, $432 million project to deepen the port channels to 50 feet. The dredging project was meant to allow the port to host massive cargo ships and usher in an era of booming business**. Less than three years later, **those business dreams have run aground over funding delays that hamper maintenance dredging. As of a few months ago, up to four feet of silt and sediment still clogged the channel floor, forcing the port to limit the weight of entering vessels and cramping its business. The Port of Oakland is the heart of Oakland’s economy, generating $6.8 billion in revenue and $462.7 million in taxes in a year, and generating around 73,600 jobs in the area.** But ports are subject to the constant effects of time and tide, with bay waters constantly threatening to remodel channel floors with sand and silt deposits. The Port of Oakland was allocated $18 million in FY 2011 and $17.2 million in FY 2012 by the federal government for a dredging project that would clear the channels by the end of April. Currently, the US Army Corps of Engineers is evaluating the work the contractors have done to gauge whether it has been successful. But if the port is to run at full capacity throughout the year, the regular build-up along the channels’ floors needs to be addressed as soon as it occurs. The federal government has been collecting the Harbor Maintenance Tax from port customers for years with the specific purpose of port maintenance and dredging. When the government increased the tax in 1990, it did so with the explicit promise that all dredging needs would be met with funds collected from the tax, according to Port of Oakland’s spokesperson Marilyn Sandifur. Today, in the long, drawn-out battle over port funds, Port of Oakland officials claim the government has not released sufficient funds for maintenance over the years, and the proof is in the channels’ depths. The funds for dredging all federal channels or waterways come directly from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF), and releasing these funds requires convincing government officials that a port needs them. The Army Corps of Engineers makes the initial budget request through its headquarters, based on its in-house labor expenses and project costs. The Federal Office of Management and Budget then develops the president’s budget. “Their proposal is often not the full amount that we are capable of executing in a given year,” says Jessica Burton Evans, the Navigation Program Manager for the US Army Corps of Engineers in San Francisco. “But they have to consider other federal expenses.” The final allocation is made based on the president’s request to Congress. Once Congress approves the request, the money is released by the Federal Office of Management and Budget to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Corps in turn prioritizes project-level funding, such as the need for dredging in Oakland. “Just because the president has made the request doesn’t mean that is what Congress is going to fund,” says Jim Haussener, Executive Director of the California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference. “We had a continuing resolution for FY 2011 which allowed the Corps of Engineers to move the money around,” Haussener says. The continuing resolution allows the Corps to fund projects at a previous level, if a bill dictating the distribution has not been enacted that year. “The President’s budget request for 2011 was $7.5 million. Because there was a continuing resolution, the allocation that finally came out for the Corps was $18 million,”says Haussener. Because the amount of money a port receives to clear the mud and silt from its channels can change, that leaves port authorities dependent on each year’s allocation process and on yearly surveys by the Corps to gauge the depth of all federal navigation channels. These survey results are also used by the San Francisco Bar Pilots to determine the weight limit for a container ship entering ports in the Bay Area. These are the pilots who meet the container ships in little tugboats, sometimes as far as 11 miles offshore, climb aboard the foreign vessels and help navigate them into the waters of the port. The higher the humps of silt deposited in the channel, the lighter a ship has to be. So far, no accidents have occurred in the channel’s murky depths, according to John Coleman, executive Director of the Bay Planning Coalition.. But the incessant lowering of the weight limit for container ships is still bad for business, port officials say. Advances in nautical technologies have allowed ever-larger ships to traverse the oceans, and history has favored Oakland over its neighboring city to the West in terms of increasing traffic. Two hundred years ago, Oakland was a marshland lying east of the main port city of San Francisco. When the transcontinental railroad was laid out, channels were deepened in the East Bay to allow boats to take small cargo and passengers to the big city. But with the advent of container ships, Oakland eclipsed San Francisco, which had neither the capacity to dock the ships, nor the rail connections to transfer goods inland. From 1960 to today, channel depth has increased from 35 to 50 feet to accommodate larger and heftier modern cargo vessels. The expense of keeping channels clear and open presages a constant battle for funds. “Your expectation is that tax is there essentially to make sure that that depth is maintained. Now we’re looking at a channel that’s 46 feet deep,” said Mike Jacob, Vice President of the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association. The channel is supposed to be 50 feet deep. “Even though money is there to maintain it, it isn’t being spent.” “We do not specifically earmark funding – we work off of the President’s budget request,” a congressional staffer said, adding there’s concern about any underfunding of the Corps of Engineers. Coleman says part of the problem is that Congress has been late in approving budgets, which has an impact on the Corps’ operations. Despite this, he says the Port of Oakland has fared well compared to other local ports. Ports like those in Redwood City and Stockton have received far fewer resources for dredging, and have channels that are deeply clogged. “**Ships are being light-loaded, and that’s driving up the cost of moving commodities in and out of these ports**,” Coleman said. “Businesses are going to see which port is the most competitive, and competitiveness is derived from being able to fill all the containers on a ship.” In September, California State Senators Mark De Saulnier and Jean Fuller jointly authored Senate Joint Resolution 15, asking that the government release the $5.6 billion sitting in the HMTF for ports across the country. Oakland port officials and stakeholders allege the federal government has an incentive for maintaining the surplus – it allows it to decrease the deficit in its annual budget. Meanwhile U.S. Rep. Charles Boustany [the Republican representative from Louisiana] sponsored H.R. 104, also known as the RAMP Act (Realize America’s Maritime Potential), which also seeks to ensure that the funds are used for port maintenance by tying future HMTF appropriations to HMTF revenues. It would not address the current balance of already-collected tax money in the fund. The bill has 174 co-sponsors and has been referred to committee. However, neither one of these bills has been passed yet. Meanwhile ports like Oakland across the country will continue to have to limit the cargo coming in through their channels at the risk of losing business to Canadian ports. On April 17, the House Appropriations Committee released the Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, allocating around $4.8 billion to the Corps of Engineers. Of this, almost $1 billion comes from the HMTF, an increase of $102 million from $898 million last year. But groups such as the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund Fairness Coalition maintain the government still needs to pass the RAMP Act, in order to ensure that future revenues and appropriations are tied together, and funds released immediately for port maintenance. “Right now $5 billion has been collected, and is earning interest to the tune of millions of dollars a year, and is not being redirected to the Corps of Engineers,” Coleman said. “H.R. 104 and the Senate Bill would require that that money be allocated back to the Corps to do the job that they are supposed to be doing.”

#### Improving harbor infrastructure helps trade.

**AP ’11** [Associated Press, “Deal hopes for federal port funding”, June 1, 2011, Augusta Chronicle, <http://chronicle.augusta.com/news/government/2011-06-01/deal-hopes-federal-port-funding> AD]

Deal and Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed were pushing the Savannah project Wednesday in meetings with Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and with Georgia's congressional delegation. Like other East Coast ports, **Savannah is racing for federal funding and permits to deepen its harbor to accommodate supersized container ships expected to arrive via an expanded Panama Canal by the end of 2014.** President Obama allocated $600,000 for the Savannah harbor in his proposed budget earlier this year -- enough money to keep it moving through a bottleneck of competing projects, but not nearly enough to start digging. "We are hopeful that with our congressional delegation's help we can get that number up significantly higher," Deal said. "We think if we had $70 million, that's the figure we'd probably need to go forward on a timely schedule." Deal said lawmakers also might have found a way to get the money without running afoul of Congress' ban on so-called earmark spending. Those line-item projects are typically how port projects get funded. But Republicans in Congress, under pressure from tea party activists, have agreed to a two-year moratorium on earmarks. Obama has also pledged to reject them. Deal said that's proven to be a "very practical problem" in getting funds for Savannah. However, he said, lawmakers might be able to get around the earmark ban if they can redirect money to the Savannah harbor from within the budgets proposed for agencies involved in the project -- such as the Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency. "We don't know if that's possible," Deal said. "But it's something the congressional delegation said it would look at." **Ultimately it's expected to cost up to $600 million to dredge 6 feet of sand and mud along more than 30 miles of the Savannah River. The federal government would foot about two-thirds of the bill. A few of the giant ships have already begun to arrive at the Savannah port via the Suez Canal. But without deeper water they can't come fully loaded and must wait until high tide to navigate the river. Reed has become one of the most avid proponents of deepening the harbor. The Atlanta mayor calls it Georgia's most important economic development project.**

#### Trade key to the economy improving.

**Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ’12** [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, “Trade-induced economic growth boosts employment and wages”, 5/23/12, [http://www.oecd.org/document/8/0,3746,en\_21571361\_44315115\_50424378\_1\_1\_1\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/8/0%2C3746%2Cen_21571361_44315115_50424378_1_1_1_1%2C00.html) AD]

**Governments that foster open markets and resist protectionism have the best chance of stimulating inclusive economic growth and creating high-value jobs, according to a new study from 10 international organisations presented in Paris.** Policy Priorities for International Trade and Jobs, launched by OECD Secretary General Angel Gurria during the annual OECD Forum, shows that protectionist and discriminatory trade measures do not protect or preserve jobs. On the contrary, closing markets is actually more likely to stifle growth and put additional pressure on labour markets. The report, a product of the International Collaborative Initiative on Trade and Employment (ICITE)\*, analyses the complex interactions between globalisation, trade and labour markets. Drawing on numerous studies covering different parts of the globe and countries at very different levels of development, the report highlights the powerful role trade can play in driving growth and improving employment. **Of the 14 main studies undertaken since 2000 reviewed in the report, all 14 have concluded that trade plays an independent and positive role in raising incomes. Through its impact on productivity, trade also raises average wages. Over the 1970-2000 period, manufacturing workers in open economies benefitted from pay rates that were between 3 and 9 times greater than those in closed economies, depending on the region. In Chile, workers in the most open sectors earned on average 25% more in 2008 than those in low-openness sectors**. Fears of the impact of offshoring may be exaggerated. Studies for the United Kingdom, United States, Germany and Italy demonstrate that off-shoring of intermediate goods has either no impact or, if any, a positive effect on both employment and wages. The report also shows, however, that openness to trade is not enough. Complementary policies – such as sound macroeconomic policies, a positive investment climate, flexible labour markets and adequate social safety nets – are needed to realise the full benefits of trade. “**In today’s challenging policy environment of a hesitant recovery and slow job creation, market openness can be a critical element to boost growth and employment,”** Mr Gurria said. “Trade liberalisation has historically gone hand in hand with better economic performance when accompanied by sound institutions and effective employment and education policies, in both developed and developing economies alike. Opening up further will benefit workers, firms and consumers.” The ICITE report debunks the principal argument against freeing up trade – the supposed impact of imports on jobs. The report says that there is no systematic link between imports and unemployment. Instead, evidence shows that in country after country, both exports and imports push productivity growth upward while helping create better skilled and higher paying jobs. Offshoring and outsourcing by developed countries – two commonly-cited negative aspects of globalisation – often complement, rather than replace domestic jobs, while creating new, higher-wage opportunities in developing countries, according to the report.

#### Plan is popular with national security swing voters

National Security Academy 2012 [Matt Bennett, Mieke Eoyang, and Michelle Diggles of Third Way and¶ Jeremy Rosner, Kristi Lowe, and Amanda Oefelein of Greenberg Quinlan ¶ Rosner Research, “National Security Focus Group Report”, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, http://gqrr.com/articles/2722/7124\_Third\_Way\_Report\_-\_National\_Security\_Focus\_Group\_Report.pdf]

Obama’s solid standing on national security, however, has not yet rubbed off much ¶ on the image of the Democratic Party. These swing voters see Democrats in much ¶ different terms than the president—and trust them less on national security than the ¶ Republicans.¶ “...[President Obama] ¶ hasn’t wavered and ¶ he’s shown that he ¶ is not afraid to use ¶ military force, which, ¶ when he came into ¶ office, I didn’t think ¶ he was going to do.”Focus Group Report 3¶ What we hear in these groups is remarkably close to what we found in a 2008 set ¶ of focus groups on these issues: Democrats too often are weak, indecisive, afraid to ¶ use force; lack grounding in military matters; rely excessively on diplomatic solutions; ¶ respond too quickly to public pressure; and defer too ¶ readily to the party’s liberal base. As one man from ¶ Cincinnati says of Democrats: “They are too willing to ¶ come to the bargaining table and ‘50/50’ it, and what’s the advantage to our country?”¶ While the swing voters in this year’s focus groups ¶ trust Democrats more on issues like diplomacy and ¶ boosting America’s global image, they trust Republicans ¶ more on “hard security” topics like “the effective use of ¶ military force,” “preventing terrorist attacks here in the ¶ U.S.,” “capturing, interrogating, trying, and imprisoning ¶ terrorists,” “intelligence and spying,” and “dealing with dangerous nuclear regimes like ¶ North Korea, Iran, and Pakistan.”¶ Their comments show that the roots of this image problem are decades old. “There ¶ have been a couple of Democratic administrations that screwed up military-wise,” reflects ¶ an Ohio man. “Jimmy Carter tried to rescue some people and then the other guy, ¶ Clinton, he threw some bombs down somewhere and that didn’t go too well either.” While the long-standing images of the two parties appear mostly steady, relative to ¶ our earlier research, these focus groups provide an early window on potential signs that ¶ Obama’s presidency may be slowly starting to change some of the stubborn negative ¶ perceptions about Democrats. As one Tampa woman says of the bin Laden raid: “I’d ¶ never heard of any Democrats doing something that dramatic, forceful.” And as the ¶ word cloud below shows, although these swing voters continue to harbor doubts about ¶ Democrats, the dominant association with the party on national security is now “Osama.”

## Public Unpopular

### 1NC

#### Public hates ports

News Max 2006 (March 9, 2006, “Senate Democrats Demand Vote on Ports Deal”, http://archive.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2006/3/9/110851.shtml)

Deep public opposition to the ports deal has made the issue a dangerous one for congressional Republicans. Despite their own concerns, Senate GOP leaders have been trying to help the administration ease congressional worries about the proposal and are hoping to avoid an early showdown vote on the issue in their chamber.

### 2NC

#### Ports unpop despite terrorism threat

Voice of America (“political controversy over ports may be defused”, http://www.voanews.com/articleprintview/326945.html)

Political analysts say the administration misjudged the intensity of public opposition to the ports deal, especially with the focus on security in the wake of the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Karlyn Bowman monitors public opinion at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington.

## Agenda Links

### 1NC

**Tight Budget makes spending on seaports unpopular in Congress**

AP, 6/21/12 (Associated Press, Report to Congress says seaports on Southeast, Gulf coasts need deeper water for giant ships, The Washington Post, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/report-to-congress-says-seaports-on-southeast-gulf-coasts-need-deeper-water-for-giant-ships/2012/06/21/gJQAjzrJtV_story.html>)

**U.S. seaports in the Southeast likely need up to $5 billion** to deepen their shipping channels so they can trade with supersized cargo ships expected to arrive soon through an expanded Panama Canal, a federal agency said Thursday in a report to Congress. **The budget crisis has made federal funding for port projects extremely tight, especially since Congress and President Barack Obama for the past two years have sworn off so-called “earmark” spending that was used to fund such projects in the past.** The Army Corps report said current funding levels for port improvements won’t cover all the projects that should be done. If **Congress won’t increase the agency’s funding for harbor projects**, the report said, then perhaps state governments and private companies such as shipping lines should be required to pay a greater share.

### 2NC

**Seaports are Unpopular with the People and Congress**

**Shaw, 2006** (GWYNETH K, March 4, Baltimore Sun Reporter, Senators ask role for Congress in latest review of ports deal, <http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2006-03-04/news/0603040105_1_dp-world-deal-review>)

WASHINGTON -- **Five Republican and five Democratic senators sent a letter to their party leaders** yesterday, **asking for cooperation in giving**[Congress](http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2006-03-04/news/0603040105_1_dp-world-deal-review)**a role in** the Bush administration's latest review of Dubai Ports World's planned takeover of **some operations at the port of Baltimore and five other major U.S. seaports**. In a letter to Senate Republican leader Bill Frist and Democratic leader Harry Reid, the 10 senators said they were "encouraged" by DP World's offer to submit to a more in-depth, 45-day review of its plan to buy British-based Peninsular & Oriental Steam [Navigation](http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2006-03-04/news/0603040105_1_dp-world-deal-review) Co. The deal has been approved by a court in Britain, but a last-minute effort to stop the transaction is not expected to be resolved until at least Monday. The company formally filed for the 45-day review yesterday, but it was unclear when it would begin. The senators asked for assurances that other parts of legislation they introduced this week would be addressed, including a promise to keep Congress apprised of the investigation, the opportunity for lawmakers to review the probe's findings for 30 days, and the power to veto the deal if concerns about the transaction are not fully resolved. "If we need to press for a vote on our legislation or to introduce further legislation to achieve the goals outlined above, we hope you will work with us in the coming weeks," the senators said. "The administration must know that we stand united to examine and review this deal independently, and that Congress must have a role in determining whether it should go forward or be stopped as a result of national security concerns." Republicans signing the letter were Sens. Norm Coleman of Minnesota, Susan Collins and Olympia J. Snowe of Maine, Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania and Tom Coburn of Oklahoma. Democrats included Sens. Charles E. Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, New Jersey's Robert Menendez and Frank R. Lautenberg, and Jack Reed of Rhode Island. All have raised questions about the sale of P&O -- which runs some operations at ports in Baltimore; New York; Newark, N.J.; Philadelphia; Miami, and New Orleans -- to DP World, which is owned by the government of Dubai, part of the United Arab Emirates. The transaction was approved in January by a federal government panel, the Committee on Foreign [Investment](http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2006-03-04/news/0603040105_1_dp-world-deal-review) in the United States, which will also conduct the 45-day probe. **The deal is deeply unpopular with the American public and has prompted a flurry of legislation in Congress, some of which is aimed at undoing the deal.** In the [House](http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2006-03-04/news/0603040105_1_dp-world-deal-review), New York Republican Rep. Peter T. King has attracted 96 co-sponsors for a bill similar to the one proposed by the 10 senators. After DP World voluntarily agreed to a new review, many lawmakers said they were willing to delay taking action to stop the deal. But they don't want to be surprised again. "This is a time-sensitive process, and I am hopeful we can work to ensure that the legislative branch has a voice in the final outcome," Snowe said in a statement yesterday. Others are openly skeptical about the thoroughness of another probe, especially since President Bush has said he hasn't changed his mind about his support for the deal. "While I am pleased the administration is finally undertaking the investigation it should have done in the first place, there are serious questions about both its willingness and its ability to act on the results," Menendez said in a statement. "With the president prejudging the outcome of the investigation before it even began, it is clearer than ever that Congress will need to take an up or down vote on this sale."

**Congress doesn’t like funding ports – view it as useless**

**Smith, 2012** (Bruce, The Washington Post, 6/21/12, “Report to Congress says seaports on Southeast, Gulf coasts need deeper water for giant ships,” <http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/report-to-congress-says-seaports-on-southeast-gulf-coasts-need-deeper-water-for-giant-ships/2012/06/21/gJQAjzrJtV_story.html>)

**The budget crisis has made federal funding for port projects extremely tight**, especially since **Congress** and President Barack Obama **for the past two years have sworn off so-called “earmark” spending that was used to fund such projects in the past**. The Army Corps report said current funding levels for port improvements won’t cover all the projects that should be done. If **Congress won’t increase the agency’s funding for harbor projects**, the report said, then perhaps state governments and private companies such as shipping lines should be required to pay a greater share.

## Link Turns

### 1NC

#### Port security is popular

Holdeman 7/14 **[**Eric Holdeman is the Security Director at Port of Tacoma. He is responsible for port security and emergency management. His staff includes a sixty person security force of armed and unarmed security officers. He is currently [enrolled](http://www.linkedin.com/pub/eric-holdeman/4/a8a/9a7) in the Executive Leadership Program (ELP) at the Naval Post Graduate School. He worked for ICF International as a consultant. He established the King County Office of Emergency Management as a national leader in many areas emergency management and [homeland security](http://www.linkedin.com/pub/eric-holdeman/4/a8a/9a7). He worked for the Washington State Division of Emergency Management for five years. He is a Past President of the Washington State Emergency Management Association. He currently serves on the Executive Committee for the Area Maritime Security Committee, Port Representative to the WA State Homeland Security Committee; “SAFE Port Reauthorization Act”; July 14, 2012; <http://www.emergencymgmt.com/emergency-blogs/disaster-zone/port-security/SAFE-Port-Reauthorization-Act-071412.html>]

The SAFE Port legislation needs to be reauthorized. In actuality the initial legislation has expired and the new authorization would cover 2011-2016. It looks like the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee will mark up the bill soon.¶ ¶ This is the legislation that provides port security funds for maritime security projects. As I noted recently, those funds have dwindled from a high of $400M a fiscal year to $97M for 2012. One bugaboo that has haunted this portion of homeland security grant programs has been the cash match, 50% for commercial organizations and 25% for governments. Everyone would like to see that requirement go away.¶ ¶ The other major challenge is that for 2012, and it is projected to be the same for future grant years, is the term of performance is being limited to two years. Previously it was five years. Any term beyond two would be helpful for those projects that require construction. There are always design, permitting and environmental hoops to jump through and those take time. Not to mention the fact that from the time the grant awards are announced to when you have a contract from FEMA can be six to nine months. ¶ ¶ Given the "frozen" nature of congressional politics I don't imagine this will go very far in achieving the passage of a bill out of both houses of congress, but getting the bill marked up in the senate would be a good start. Senator Patty Murray, (WA) has been a huge supporter of port security since its inception and her leadership will be critical to the passage of any legislation.

### 2NC

#### Bipartisan support for port security

McCarty 7/2 (Mickey McCarter is homeland security beat reporter in Washington DC. Up until 9/11, worked as a military affairs and technology editor and reporter. But he later followed US counter-terrorism activities. Now he reports for Homeland Security Today on congressional activity.; “Aviation, Port Security Bills Enjoy Bipartisan Support from House Lawmakers”; 07/02/2012; <http://www.hstoday.us/briefings/today-s-news-analysis/single-article/aviation-port-security-bills-enjoy-bipartisan-support-from-house-lawmakers/8774d00b80793d7b125324dc9dad3510.html>)

Democrats applauded last week the passage by the House of several homeland security bills designed to strengthen aviation and port security. The bills, including the Aviation Security Stakeholder Participation Act (HR 1447), the Securing Maritime Activities through Risk–based Targeting (SMART) for Port Security Act (HR 4251) and the Gauging American Port Security (GAPS) Act (HR 4005) enjoyed bipartisan support. None of the bills has companion legislation in the Senate but all three moved there for consideration. The Senate could take up the bills or they could become included in a conference for the homeland security appropriations bill for fiscal year 2013. Rep. Bennie Thompson (D-Miss.), ranking member of the House Homeland Security Committee, pointed out that Democrats on his committee sponsored to two of the bills and had significant input on the third. Thompson himself introduced the Aviation Security Stakeholder Participation Act, which would authorize the Aviation Security Advisory Committee (ASAC) to provide feedback on policies and procedures at the Transportation [Security Administration](http://www.hstoday.us/) (TSA). The ASAC would be made up of travel industry stakeholders that are impacted by TSA regulations. Under the bill, the administrator of TSA would appoint ASAC members and set up working groups for air cargo, general aviation and perimeter security. The SMART Port Security Act, introduced by Rep. Candice Miller (R-Mich.), would improve coordination between US Customs and Border Protection and the US Coast Guard, as [previously reported by *Homeland Security Today*](http://www.hstoday.us/briefings/daily-news-briefings/single-article/house-passes-smart-port-security-act/72d3848e4364b08c68905deac8f0d51f.html). The bill also would provide relief to port workers who face the prospect of having to renew their Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) cards in October 2012. Thompson pressed for that provision, given that the Coast Guard has not yet set up readers for the TWIC cards, which essentially have been reduced to regular identification cards despite the promise of their biometric verification capabilities. The cost of a TWIC card, $132.50, for another five-year period would be unreasonably burdensome on port workers who cannot take advantage of all of its security features, Thompson argued. "Changes to the TWIC program could affect offsetting receipts and subsequent direct spending; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures [apply](http://www.hstoday.us/)," the Congressional Budget Office said of Thompson's provision in a report on June 11. Finally, the GAPS Act would require the Department of Homeland Security to examine gaps in port security and report to Congress with a plan to address those gaps. Rep. Janice Hahn (D-Calif.), who sponsored the bill, hailed its passage, 411-9, Thursday. In a statement, Hahn said, "The loopholes that [continue](http://www.hstoday.us/) to exist in port security keep me up at night. My first question as a member of the Homeland Security Committee was to Lee Hamilton, vice chair of the 9/11 Commission, on what Congress should be doing to protect our ports. Mr. Hamilton's response that Congress wasn't focused enough on our ports meant we needed to act." US ports receive roughly 50,000 calls from ships annually, with 2 billion tons of freight and 134 million passengers, Hahn reported. The contribution of this cargo to the US economy is staggeringly significant, but only 3 percent or less of cargo undergoes scanning. That low amount opens up opportunities for terrorists to smuggle people or weapons into the United States, she argued. A terrorist attack on the Port of Los Angeles/Long Beach would cost billions to the economy of California and displace thousands of port workers, Hahn warned. Geraldine Knatz, executive director of the Port of Los Angeles, praised the GAPS Act as an effort to prevent such a catastrophe. "It's a tribute to both the importance of the issue and Representative Hahn's tenacity that Congress passed her legislation a mere four months after she introduced the bill," Knatz said in a statement. "Trade gateways, like the Port of Los Angeles, are critical pieces of our nation's economic infrastructure. Keeping these gateways safe is a national priority." Thompson also welcomed passage of all three bills Thursday. "As all of us have a stake in securing our nation, my Aviation Security Advisory Committee bill will ensure that the stakeholders who are expected to comply with the policies and procedures developed by TSA have a seat at the table. Then we can be confident that TSA policies are both effective from a security standpoint and address the economic and commercial realities of our nation's airports," Thompson said in a statement. "The SMART Port Act is rooted in not only the improvements to the TWIC program but also what it seeks to do to improve coordination and cooperation between DHS' maritime components and strengthen procurement practices. This bill is the result of bipartisan efforts to strengthen the security of America's ports and waterways and ensure the Department of Homeland Security's maritime security efforts are as effective and efficient as practicable," Thompson added. "Enactment of the GAPS Act will help ensure that our limited security resources can be targeted to those threats that put our ports at greatest risk. Our nation's ports are as diverse as the people they serve and the importance of this infrastructure to the global supply chain cannot be overstated," he concluded.

#### Recent congressional action proves congress is willing to pass the plan

McCarter 7/2, Mickey McCarter, [Reporter], Homeland Security Today, “Aviation, Port Security Bills Enjoy Bipartisan Support From House Lawmakers”, http://www.hstoday.us/briefings/today-s-news-analysis/single-article/aviation-port-security-bills-enjoy-bipartisan-support-from-house-lawmakers/8774d00b80793d7b125324dc9dad3510.html

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#### Congress supports port security funds.

Holdeman 12, Eric Holdeman, “SAFE Port Reauthorization Act”, July 14, 2012, http://www.emergencymgmt.com/emergency-blogs/disaster-zone/port-security/SAFE-Port-Reauthorization-Act-071412.html.

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# Airport

## Public unpopular

### 1NC

#### Plan is unpopular and heated issue in some regions - plan creates extra noise near airports due to smaller travel bubbles

**HERBERT 12** (Keith, staff writer at Newsday, 3/31. LIers: More study of NextGen air traffic.) <http://www.newsday.com/long-island/nassau/liers-more-study-of-nextgen-air-traffic-1.3635945>/ cass

**The potential for more frequent noise from Kennedy Airport jets -- a result of the FAA's pathbreaking "Next Gen**eration" **air traffic control redesign -- has united residents of Long Island's North and South shores to press for a full environmental impact study of the system's cumulative effects**¶ NextGen, predicted to cost at least $20 billion by 2025, is the Federal Aviation Administration's nationwide plan for satellite navigation of commercial flights, replacing the outmoded ground-based radar system in use since the 1950s. Congress has appropriated $2.8 billion for NextGen since 2007, and the system is in the early stages of development. The satellite navigation system is supposed to increase capacity because planes could fly with 3 miles between them instead of the now-required 5-mile separation. Other NextGen positives, the FAA says, include enhanced safety, because pilots will have precise information about the location of other aircraft aloft; reduced jet noise over a wider swath of Nassau; and energy savings due to jets flying at near-idle throttle, burning less fuel. More capacity should ease flight delays in the metropolitan area, which with three major airports and three regional airports is among the nation's busiest and most congested airspaces, the agency said. Chronic delays at Kennedy and LaGuardia airports often have a domino effect on air traffic, with planes held at the gates of other airports because of the inability to land in New York. But **for Nassau residents with homes and businesses beneath Kennedy flight paths, NextGen's precision in setting aircraft departure and arrival paths brings the probability of more frequent jet noise. The more exact paths will cause "more noise for fewer people," compared with current**, less precise routes that cover a wider swath of sky and cause **"less noise for more people,"** said Maxine Lubner, chairman of the aviation department at Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology, which is adjacent to LaGuardia. **Len Schaier, head of the group Citizens for Quiet Skies over North Hempstead, said the chance for public comment to the FAA about NextGen galvanized residents and some elected officials** in the towns of Hempstead and North Hempstead. "The goal was to say, 'We're not against progress.' But **there are some people in the FAA who believe you have to do an environmental test," Schaier said** of the grassroots letter-writing and Web-posting campaign. "We believe you have to do an environmental test." **Residents** of Roslyn Heights, East Hills and other communities **say they've been hearing louder jet noise in recent months -- and they don't want even more.** The FAA instituted new flight departure paths for Kennedy in late October, a first step in NextGen's implementation. Those changes have a minimal noise impact, the agency asserted, in part because the jets are at altitudes of 5,000 to 10,000 feet. One of the new departure routes out of Kennedy was forecast to send an additional 200 planes a day over the North Shore. "I have not been able to sleep through the night," Deirdre A. Nicolle, of Port Washington, wrote in a letter to the FAA ahead of the March 7 deadline for public comments regarding NextGen. "The airplane noise is so loud that it can be heard inside my house, even though all the doors and windows in my house are closed." "There is too much noise pollution in my area due to low-flying planes," wrote Jay Dubowsky of East Hills. "My children are awakening at night due to plane noise." The FAA defended its effort as making air travel more convenient and dependable. In addition, changes to air routes were subject to "appropriate environmental review" to comply with anti-noise regulations and environmental law, the agency said. "The FAA is committed to environmental stewardship, especially in the development of NextGen-related air traffic procedures," the agency said in a statement. The agency would not make air traffic control managers available for an interview.¶ Residents said NextGen needs further study. Specifically, they said that noise-impact research the FAA did before carrying out an airspace redesign project ahead of NextGen was superficial and did not take into account the cumulative impact of jet noise. The FAA's noise research, conducted before the airspace redesign was released in August 2007, included average noise levels in decibels. **Residents said they want an environmental study that measures the noise from** single-event passes of **jets over their homes** -- not a calculation averaged over time.¶ "In that average could be some really high doses" of noise, Schaier said.¶ Federal lawmakers were unsuccessful in an attempt to insert into the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act a requirement for an environmental impact study in the New York region. President Barack Obama signed the legislation Feb. 14. Residents' heightened concern about more aircraft noise has sparked interest in community efforts focused on the issue.¶ About 100 people, far more than the usual number, turned out at a Feb. 27 meeting of the Town-Village Aircraft Safety and Noise Abatement Committee. The window for public comment to the FAA about NextGen was Dec. 12 through March 7. Dozens of people wrote letters and more than 325 people posted comments on the U.S. Department of Transportation's website as of Friday. Of those, Schaier said, 81 from Hempstead and North Hempstead towns also signed his group's petition calling for a new environmental study. Julie Liberman, who was among those posting a comment, said in an interview that she first noticed an increase in air traffic a few months ago, with more noise particularly between 7 and 9 p.m. In her 25 years as a Roslyn resident, she said, she can't remember a time when the noise was worse.¶ "It's very loud," Liberman said. "Just constant traffic, one right after the other."

### 2NC

#### Airport funding unpopular and cause political infighting to get passage – recent bill proves

**Barrett, ’12** (Ted, Senior Congressional Producer, 2/6/12, <http://articles.cnn.com/2012-02-06/travel/travel_faa-funding_1_faa-funding-measure-senate-committee?_s=PM:TRAVEL>, JD)

After passing 23 temporary extensions, the Senate voted 75 to 20 Monday to approve a long-term funding bill for the FAA and sent it to the president for his expected signature. The measure provides about $16 billion a year for FAA operations, airport construction and modernization. It includes safety measures, such as a new satellite-based system for air traffic control, as well as other aviation programs, like one that subsidizes air travel to rural areas. Negotiations over the bill repeatedly stalled over contentious labor issues that congressional leaders finally compromised on in January. Last summer, airport construction projects were halted abruptly when funding temporarily lapsed after Congress couldn't agree on a new extension. "Compromises in the current atmosphere are not easy," said Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-West Virginia, who chairs the senate committee that handled the measure. "This has been a long process," agreed Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas, the top Republican on the committee. Hutchison said she was pleased to get a four-year funding measure finalized because it will provide stability to the industry. "Now our airports are going to be able to start their building projects. They're going to be able to increase their runway space or repair whatever their priorities are that are decided by the FAA," she said. The House approved the bill Friday.

#### Causes political infighting

**Gruenberg, ’12** (Mark, editor of Press Associates Inc. (PAI), a union news service, 1/20/12, <http://peoplesworld.org/labor-maps-legislative-battle-for-201/>, JD)

In a Jan. 17 interview with Press Associates Union News Service, Samuel said the list includes fighting for a two-year transportation (highway-mass transit) funding bill, pushing for final resolution of a long-running war over airport construction and airways modernization - and union rights for airline workers - and extension of jobless benefits. It also includes legislation to curb Internet piracy of intellectual property, since the piracy robs dollars from royalty-based wages for musicians, actors, screenwriters, and other unionized creative professionals. And the agenda includes a longer extension of emergency federal jobless benefits for the long-term unemployed. **But the outlook is cloudy for all**. Even the jobless benefits bill, which both parties agree upon, is hung up by a partisan dispute over how to pay for the $150 billion measure. Congress returned to town Jan. 17 to start this year's session, after a first year characterized by Senate GOP filibusters on just about everything and by a tea party-dominated House GOP attacking spending and workers. Samuel expects those attacks to continue. He forecasts congressional Republicans will use the Congressional Review Act - a Gingrich-era GOP law - to try to overturn new federal rules streamlining union recognition election procedures. The big fights will be over job creation. Samuel expects the Obama administration to again support the infrastructure bill, jobless benefits, and other measures, though he concedes that aid to state and local governments may be iffy. Obama will outline his agenda in the Jan. 24 State of the Union address. Labor may have, finally, won one battle with the House GOP, Samuel said, over recognition elections for airline and railroad workers. "The Chamber of Commerce has finally dropped its opposition" to new rules for those elections, contained in the airport construction and modernization bill. That legislation would create 80,000-100,000 jobs. House Transportation Committee Chairman John Mica, R-Fla., has insisted that rules governing union recognition elections at airlines and railroads should force unions to win an absolute majority of all eligible voters at a worksite, with non-voters counted as "no" votes. That was the rule until last year when, after pressure from the labor movement and its allies, the government changed it. The requirement in union elections now is the same as in any other election - the winner is determined by the majority of those who actually cast ballots. Business and Mica fought the change, but with the 23rd temporary extension of the airport and airspace construction bill set to expire at the end of January, business seems to have given up. The question for congressional negotiators is if Mica will. As for extending jobless benefits, "we and the Democrats are hopeful" that Congress will OK an extension before the benefits expire Feb. 29, Samuel said. He also said the Democrats are holding fast against cutting any major programs to pay for the cost - even though in the past, Congress did not require cuts elsewhere to pay for aiding the unemployed. The House GOP is insisting on cuts, at least so far. If the GOP holds fast to its no-taxes-on-millionaires stand and the Democrats protect major programs, there could be a stalemate on jobless benefits, Samuel concedes. "But the Republicans badly miscalculated" when the last benefits extension was debated in December that their no-taxes stand was a winner. Instead, they got a political black eye for protecting the rich at the expense of unemployed workers. The two-year highway-mass transit bill, worth $106 billion plus inflation, still needs some details: Its mass transit sections are incomplete and so is its financing, outside of the federal gasoline tax. The measure would create tens of thousands of construction jobs and its passage is a major goal of building trades unions. Once Senate panels finish drafting the measure, the Democratic-run Senate is expected to approve it, Samuel said. The problem is the GOP-run House, again. Mica earlier proposed a five-year bill with much less spending per year - so much less that Laborers President Terry O'Sullivan called Mica's legislation a "job killer."

## Public popular

#### Airport investment boosts the economy – key to stop unemployment

**PRINCIPATO ‘12** - president, Airports Council International-North America; M.A. in International Relations from University of Chicago; International Trade and Transportation specialist, Hunton & Williams (Greg, “Why we should invest today in 'Airports Inc.'”. March. <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/labor/218525-faa-why-we-should-invest-today-in-airports-inc>)

**With the latest** Federal Aviation Administration (**FAA**) **forecast predicting a doubling of passengers and cargo by 2030, the current funding system is not up to the job of ensuring airports will have the infrastructure they need to handle such dramatic increases in traffic**.

**This will have far-reaching consequences. Commercial airports are powerful economic engines, generating 10.5 million jobs and $1.2 trillion for the U.S. economy, according to a new Airports Council International-North America study**. **Across the country, workers and businesses count on local airports to attract investment and move people and goods around the world**. Since 2001, the total number of jobs associated with airports has increased by more than 50 percent.

Despite unprecedented growth and clear evidence of the economic benefits of infrastructure investments, **airports expect to have $80 billion in unmet needs through 2015 because of the flawed system used to pay for infrastructure projects**.

That has not always been the case. Airports generated millions of jobs and trillions of dollars for local communities between 2001 and 2010 because President Bill Clinton and Congress made two decisions to improve airport infrastructure planning and investment in 2000.

The first decision allowed local communities to raise more money to finance airport improvements by giving them the authority to increase the passenger facility charge from $3 to $4.50. This helped meet local needs by expanding airport capacity to serve more passengers, handle more cargo, attract more air service and most important: promote business and commerce.

The second decision increased investments in the federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP) so that the money users pay into the nation’s Airport and Airway Trust Fund could be reinvested into the system, including the airports where all of this economic activity begins and ends. The money for this comes from the aviation trust fund which is funded by users.

Growth in jobs and business activity took place because we made a national decision to invest in the future – the airports that serve as the economic hubs of our national aviation system.

The result is that in 2010, airports were responsible for about 8 percent of U.S. gross domestic product and 7 percent of all U.S. jobs. By any standard, that is a significant return on investment. **Dollar for dollar, commercial airports rate as a remarkably worthwhile infrastructure investment**.

This is not news to other countries. Our international competitors recognize the benefits of modern airport infrastructure. That’s why they are building and expanding airports at a rapid pace (China alone is now building 12 to 15 new airports per year) to prepare for predicted growth in global travel and business.

Unfortunately, **we are retreating from these policy and investment decisions at just the wrong time**. **After five years, 23 extensions and a 14-day shutdown, Congress passed an FAA Reauthorization bill early this year that did not provide for any new funding for airports – the passenger facility charge ceiling was not raised and Airport Improvement Program funding was cut.**

**Yet as the FAA data show, commercial airports need to begin investing now in order to meet the long-term needs of the traveling public over the next two decades**. Commercial airports must have new runways and terminals, and aging facilities must be upgraded. This requires long lead times – as much as eight years – to move through the planning and permitting process. And don’t forget that successful implementation of the future air traffic control system known as NextGen depends on airport infrastructure investment as well.

## Agenda

### 1NC

#### **FAA regulation changes controversial in congress – last extension proves**

Wollack 11 (Leslie, staff writer at the National League of Cities, August, 1st, 2011, “Congressional Impasse on Airport Legislation Continues”, <http://www.nlc.org/news-center/nations-cities-weekly/articles/2011/august/congressional-impasse-on-airport-legislation-continues>)

As the Congressional impasse over an extension of federal airport legislation continues, funds for current and future municipal airport improvements cannot be distributed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and current revenues are going to the airlines rather than the Airport Trust Fund for the future. Construction funds for municipal airports across the country have been held up by the FAA, due to the shutdown of the government program for the first time in its history.¶ The House and Senate have been unable to reach agreement on another extension of federal aviation programs, which expired on July 22. Congress has passed 19 extensions since September 2009, when the initial legislation expired. ¶ The current disagreement between the House and Senate centers around whether or not to pass a straight extension of current programs or include several policy changes, which were contained in the House-passed extension. ¶ House Transportation Committee Chairman John Mica (R-Fla.) is insisting that the House will not adopt a clean extension of the programs. Some of these contested provisions, including labor issues, have held up agreement on the FAA bill since it expired in September 2009. New to the controversy is the House-passed phasing out of the Essential Air Services Program, which provides subsidies for small airports that would otherwise not receive commercial airline service. ¶ For local governments this means that airport taxes included in airline tickets are no longer authorized and funds collected by airlines are not going into the Airport Trust Fund and will not be available for future airport improvement projects. The FAA also cannot release funding for current projects promised to municipal airports. ¶ NLC supports a straight extension of the current program and opposes phasing out the Essential Air Services program. ¶ NLC joined with the National Association of Counties (NACo) in urging Congress to adopt a short-term extension of the FAA bill without policy amendments. ¶ “At a time when Congress is debating budget reductions, it is in no one’s interest to permit the Airport Trust Fund to lose $25-$30 million daily or to halt hundreds of capital projects at the airports our members own and operate,” said NLC Executive Director Donald J. Borut in a joint letter with NACo Executive Director Larry Naake to House and Senate leaders. ¶ “We understand that many of the issues in the House and Senate reauthorization legislation have been resolved with only four or five major issues that still need to be addressed,” the letter stated. “A clean extension that does not include any of these unresolved issues needs to be passed by both the House and Senate in order to stop the hemorrhaging of Airport Trust Fund tax receipts and restart airports projects that will put back to work thousands of American citizens. Conferees should immediately meet to work out a final agreement after a clean extension is adopted.”

### 2NC

#### The plan stalls in Congress – FAA reauthorization proves – it stalled for nearly three years in Congress and battles in the house and senate were brutal –that’s Wollack.

#### More evidence – compromise over FAA policy nearly impossible

Barrett 12 (Ted, Senior Congressional Producer @ CNN, February 6th, 2011, “After much delay, Senate clears FAA bill”, <http://articles.cnn.com/2012-02-06/travel/travel_faa-funding_1_faa-funding-measure-senate-committee?_s=PM:TRAVEL>)

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**Airport Improvement is politically unpopular**

Schank, 5/31 (Joshua, President and CEO of the Eno Center for Transportation a neutral, non-partisan think-tank, The Federal Role in Transportation: Four Ideas for Greater Federal Involvement, <http://www.enotrans.org/eno-brief/the-federal-role-in-transportation-four-ideas-for-greater-federal-involvement>)

**Airports face substantial challenges** in trying to tackle this issue on their own. The most widely recommended solution is pricing airport runways by time of day. But **this politically unpopular solution has faced substantial opposition** **from communities such as smaller cities flying into hubs, or general aviation aircraft that are concerned about being effectively priced out of the market for a given airport**. Congested airports would have a much greater chance of success if they were trying to tackle congestion in partnership with the federal government and other local transportation agencies. **The federal role could be improved by** dedicating a portion of the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) to provide grants to airports in regions that have a plan to work collaboratively to reduce congestion and **overcome some of the political barriers to more effective pricing**. Or the AIP could be retooled to set specific performance goals for airports and rewarding achievement. However it is done, there is a clear national interest at play here and the federal government needs to be more involved.

**Airport funding unpopular and cause political infighting to get passage – recent bill proves**

Barrett, 12(Ted, Senior Congressional Producer, After much delay, Senate clears FAA bill, <http://articles.cnn.com/2012-02-06/travel/travel_faa-funding_1_faa-funding-measure-senate-committee?_s=PM:TRAVEL>, JD)

**After passing 23 temporary extensions, the Senate voted 75 to 20 Monday to approve a long-term funding bill for the FAA and sent it to the president for his expected signature**. The measure provides about $16 billion a year for FAA operations, airport construction and modernization. It includes safety measures, such as a new satellite-based system for air traffic control, as well as other aviation programs, like one that subsidizes air travel to rural areas. **Negotiations over the bill repeatedly stalled over contentious labor issues that congressional leaders finally compromised on in January. Last summer, airport construction projects were halted abruptly when funding temporarily lapsed after Congress couldn't agree on a new extension. "Compromises in the current atmosphere are not easy,"** said Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-West Virginia, who chairs the senate committee that handled the measure. "**This has been a long process**," agreed Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas, the top Republican on the committee. Hutchison said she was pleased to get a four-year funding measure finalized because it will provide stability to the industry. "Now our airports are going to be able to start their building projects. They're going to be able to increase their runway space or repair whatever their priorities are that are decided by the FAA," she said. The House approved the bill Friday.

**Congress is deadlocked when it comes to airport funding – guarantees a political battle**

Wollack, 11 (Leslie, National League of Cities, 8/1/11, “Congressional Impasse on Airport Legislation Continues,” <http://www.nlc.org/news-center/nations-cities-weekly/articles/2011/august/congressional-impasse-on-airport-legislation-continues>)

**Congress will need to resolve the underlying issues around collective bargaining and subsidies to** small **airports** that would otherwise not have commercial air services when they return after the August recess. The stopgap measure will allow the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to operate through Sept. 16. **As the Congressional impasse over an extension of federal airport legislation continues, funds for current and future municipal airport improvements cannot be distributed** by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and current revenues are going to the airlines rather than the Airport Trust Fund for the future. Construction **funds** for municipal airports **across the country have been held up** by the FAA, due to the shutdown of the government program for the first time in its history. **The House and Senate have been unable to reach agreement** on another extension of federal aviation programs, which expired on July 22. Congress has passed 19 extensions since September 2009, when the initial legislation expired.

**Too many differences means that airport funding has resistance in Congress**

**Washington Post 11** (7/26/11, “FAA falls victim to Congress’s partisan politics,” <http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/faa-falls-victim-to-congresss-partisan-politics/2011/07/26/gIQAxLPYbI_story.html>)

CHALK UP **ANOTHER victim of partisan politics in Congress: the Federal Aviation Administration**. The agency’s last long-term authorization lapsed four years ago. Earlier this year, **the** Republican-majority **House and** Democratic-majority **Senate** each passed new long-term bills to replace a series of short-term funding extensions that kept the agency operating in the interim. But they **have been unable to resolve major differences** **between** the two bills, and the last extension expired on Friday. Consequently, the FAA has had to furlough thousands of employees around the country and suspend **airport modernization** projects worth $2.5 billion.

## Link turn

#### Innovative funding mechanism makes the plan popular in congress

Ronald Utt 12, Utt holds a doctorate in economics from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Penn State University, “Opportunities for Private Sector Participation in Surface Transportation Investment and Operations”, <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/01/can-public-private-partnerships-fill-the-transportation-funding-gap>, January 13th, 2012,

To date, all of these projects have been developed and initiated by states, private investors, or a combination of the two, often with federal support, such as TIFIA grants and permission to build on the interstate right-of-way. With federal transportation funding limited by macroeconomic budget concerns, many in Congress are looking to be more proactive. Both the House and Senate reauthorization draft proposals welcome and encourage greater private-sector involvement in transportation investment.

# Highways

## Public Popular

### 1NC

#### And investment in highway infrastructure creates jobs and economic competitiveness - ensures long-term resiliency

-plan is also politically popular

**Boushey ’11** (Heather Boushey is Senior Economist at American Progress, Center for American Progress, “Now Is the Time to Fix Our Broken Infrastructure”, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/09/aja_infrastructure.html>, September 22, 2011, LEQ)

**Investing in infrastructure creates jobs and yields lasting benefits for the economy, including increasing growth in the long run. Upgrading roads, bridges, and other basic infrastructure creates jobs now by putting people to work** earning good, middle-class incomes, which expands the consumer base for businesses. **These kinds of investments also pave the way for long-term economic growth by lowering the cost of doing business and making U.S. companies more competitive. There is ample empirical evidence that investment in infrastructure creates jobs. In particular, investments made over the past couple of years have saved or created millions of U.S. jobs**. Increased investments in infrastructure by the Department of Transportation and other agencies due to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act saved or created 1.1 million jobs in the construction industry and 400,000 jobs in manufacturing by March 2011, according to San Francisco Federal Reserve Bank economist Daniel Wilson.[1] Although infrastructure spending began with government dollars, these investments created jobs throughout the economy, mostly in the private sector.[2] Infrastructure projects have created jobs in communities nationwide. Recovery funds improved drinking and wastewater systems, fixed bridges and roads, and rehabilitated airports and shipyards across the nation. Some examples of high-impact infrastructure projects that have proceeded as a result of Recovery Act funding include: An expansion of a kilometer-long tunnel in Oakland, California, that connects two busy communities through a mountain.[3] An expansion and rehabilitation of the I-76/Vare Avenue Bridge in Philadelphia and 141 other bridge upgrades that supported nearly 4,000 jobs in Pennsylvania in July 2011.[4] The construction of new railway lines to serve the city of Pharr, Texas, as well as other infrastructure projects in that state that have saved or created more than 149,000 jobs through the end of 2010.[5] **Infrastructure investments are an especially cost-effective way to boost job creation with scare government funds.** Economists James Feyrer and Bruce Sacerdote found for example that at the peak of the Recovery Act’s effect, 12.3 jobs were created for every $100,000 spent by the Department of Transportation and the Department of Energy—much of which was for infrastructure.[6] These two agencies spent $24.7 billion in Recovery dollars through September 2010, 82 percent of which was transportation spending. This implies a total of more than 3 million jobs created or saved. The value of infrastructure spending **Analysis of all fiscal stimulus policies shows a higher “multiplier” from infrastructure spending than other kinds of government spending, such as tax cuts**, **meaning that infrastructure dollars flow through the economy and create more jobs than other kinds of spending.** Economist Mark Zandi found, for example, that every dollar of government spending boosts the economy by $1.44, whereas every dollar spent on a refundable lump-sum tax rebate adds $1.22 to the economy.[7] In a separate study conducted before the Great Recession, economists James Heintz and Robert Pollin of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, found that **infrastructure investment spending in general creates about 18,000 total jobs for every $1 billion in new investment spending**. This number include jobs directly created by hiring for the specific project, jobs indirectly created by supplier firms, and jobs induced when workers go out and spend their paychecks and boost their local economy.[8] **Investing in transportation infrastructure in particular boosts employment. The Federal Highway Administration periodically estimates the impact of highway spending on direct employment,** defined as jobs created by the firms working on a given project; **on supporting jobs, including those in firms supplying materials and equipment for projects**; and on indirect employment generated when those in the first two groups make consumer purchases with their paychecks. In 2007, $1 billion in federal highway expenditures supported about 30,000 jobs—10,300 in construction, 4,675 in supporting industries, and 15,094 in induced employment.[9] **Investing in infrastructure not only creates jobs; it increases the productivity of businesses small, medium, and large**. At the most basic level, **infrastructure investments make it possible for firms to rely on well-maintained roads to move their goods,** on an electricity grid that is always on to run their factories, and water mains that provide a steady stream of clean water to supply their restaurants. There is a large body of empirical work that documents this. Although the specific effect differs across studies, European Investment Bank economists Ward Romp and Jakob de Haan conclude that “there is now more consensus than in the past that public capital furthers economic growth.”[10] **Because infrastructure investments create jobs and boost productivity, these investments have historically had bipartisan support**. In early 2011, for example, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Thomas Donohue issued a joint statement in favor of greater infrastructure investment in the near-term: “**With the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the AFL-CIO standing together to support job creation, we hope that Democrats and Republicans in Congress will also join together to build America’s infrastructure.”**[11] But **investments in infrastructure are now being pared back as states and localities struggle with budget constraints**. Even so, there is a long list of infrastructure projects that municipalities, states, and the federal government can invest in. The American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that **we need to spend at least $2.2 trillion over the next five years just to repair our crumbling infrastructure.**[12] This doesn’t even include things like high-speed rail, mass transit, and renewable energy investments we need to free ourselves from foreign oil and climate change. The American Jobs Act The American Jobs Act seeks to remedy this situation by investing $105 billion in infrastructure.[13] This should raise U.S. economic output by $151.2 billion based on economist Mark Zandi’s most recent economic multiplier for the impact of infrastructure spending on GDP.[14] The American Jobs Act addresses a number of specific infrastructure investments. The $105 billion includes $25 billion to modernize and upgrade our school infrastructure and an additional $5 billion to modernize community colleges. We know there is great need for this kind of investment.[12] The accumulated backlog of deferred maintenance and repair for schools alone amounts to at least $270 billion.[15] The total investment in infrastructure also includes $50 billion in immediate investments for highway, highway safety, transit, passenger rail, and aviation activities. Of that $50 billion, $27 billion will make our nation’s highway systems more efficient and safer for passenger and commercial transportation. Another $9 billion of investments will repair our nation’s transit systems, $2 billion will improve intercity passenger rail service, and $2 billion will improve safety, add capacity, and modernize airport infrastructure across the country. In addition, $10 billion of American Jobs Act funds will be used to set up a National Infrastructure Bank that would provide loans for projects including transportation infrastructure, water infrastructure, and energy infrastructure. The remaining $15 billion would provide funding for neighborhood stabilization projects and the repurposing of vacant properties. Infrastructure is a good investment now because it will get people to work, and at this point, given the lingering high unemployment, we shouldn’t be too concerned if projects take a bit of time to get up and running. As Mark Zandi said in August 2011: **Infrastructure development has a large bang for the buck, particularly now when there are so many unemployed construction workers.** It also has the potential for helping more remote hard-pressed regional economies and has long-lasting economic benefits. It is difficult to get such projects up and running quickly—“shovel ready” is in most cases a misnomer—but given that unemployment is sure to be a problem for years to come, this does not seem in the current context as significant a drawback.[16] We can create jobs. With nearly 14 million Americans unemployed, now is the time to make long-lasting investments in infrastructure that will not only get people to work today but pave the way for long-term economic growth. Repairing potholes, upgrading an elementary school’s aging furnace, and replacing old water mains are all infrastructure investments. These are repairs that must be done and are often cheaper to do as maintenance than waiting to repair a totally failed system. Now is the right time for America to invest in maintaining and upgrading our infrastructure. We have millions of American workers who want to get off the unemployment queue and into a job and borrowing costs at decade lows, making it extraordinarily cost effective to make big investments today.

## Public unpopular

### 1NC

**Plan’s massively unpopular, sparks backlash over recent spending fights**

**Laing, ’12** (Keith, The Hill staff reporter, “Insiders pessimistic about highway bill talks”, 5/7/12, <http://thehill.com/business-a-lobbying/225927-pessimism-for-highway-talks>, JD)

The committee of lawmakers appointed to negotiate a new federal highway bill will meet for the first time Tuesday, beginning their talks amid low expectations for a deal in a charged election-year environment. Many observers, including Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, have expressed doubt that Congress will pass a multiyear bill before the November election. But leaders of the 47-member panel from both House and Senate say they have a blueprint — hewing closely to their respective chamber’s approach — for the talks to defy the seemingly long odds. “For the conference to be successful, it must include significant transportation program reforms and ensure that needed jobs will be created,” a spokesman for House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica (R-Fla.) said in a statement provided to The Hill on Monday. “Now is the time to set aside our personal wish lists and focus on the issue at hand — the reauthorization of a bill that is absolutely essential to our economy,” Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) agreed in a statement after conferees were first announced last month. “Controversy should not be part of the conference, and we should come together for the good of the country.” Boxer shepherded a two-year, $109 billion transportation bill through the Senate earlier this year. Mica tried to do the same in the House with a five-year, $260 billion version of the bill, but was ultimately unsuccessful. Members of the lawmakers’ respective committees will now begin negotiations based on the Senate transportation bill and a pair of House-passed short-term extensions of current law that kept funds flowing to road and transit projects. The talks are likely to center, at least at the outset, on a controversial cross-country pipeline that has emerged as an anti-Obama rallying cry for Republicans. The House version of the transportation and infrastructure bill approves the Keystone XL pipeline to bring Canadian oil sands to Gulf Coast refineries. The Senate’s plan omits the Keystone provision, and Democrats have decried its inclusion in the highway negotiations. White House press secretary Jay Carney has called the Keystone pipeline provision “noxious” to the highway negotiations. “What Congress is asking — in this highly politicized, highly partisan way, attaching a provision on the Keystone pipeline to a piece of legislation that has nothing to do with it ... in advance, blind, approve a pipeline, a proposal for which does not exist — but we’ll approve it anyway — a foreign pipeline built by a foreign company emanating from foreign territory to cross U.S. borders,” Carney said in a White House press briefing last month. A group of business leaders pressed lawmakers Monday to make sure the Keystone approval stays in the final highway bill, should one emerge from the conference committee. “As you commence your work on maintaining vital American transportation investments, Business Roundtable urges you to vote ‘Yes’ on the provision included in the House-passed version of the transportation bill that would expedite approval of the Keystone XL pipeline extension,” said the letter from the Business Roundtable. Even without the Keystone dramatics, transportation supporters say, the stakes for the congressional talks are high. “As House and Senate conferees begin negotiations on surface transportation legislation tomorrow, nearly 2 million current jobs, and up to 1 million new jobs, are at stake in what remains a slow economic recovery,” AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department President Ed Wytkind said in a statement released Monday. “More stonewalling will not help families pay mortgages, college tuition or healthcare bills,” Wytkind continued. “Members of Congress have a choice to make. They can make a deal based upon the bipartisan Senate bill (MAP-21), or they can force a debate on controversial provisions — such as privatization giveaways to foreign interests — in the House bill (H.R. 7) that never even made it to the floor for a vote.”

### 2NC

**Gets dragged into polarized debates and opposition from both sides**

**Hunter, ’12** (Kathleen, Bloomberg staff reporter, 2/17/12, <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-02-27/former-highway-bill-foe-boehner-scavenging-for-votes.html>, JD)

 Feb. 17 (Bloomberg) -- U.S. House Speaker John Boehner has never voted for highway-funding legislation, and he’s having trouble selling fellow Republicans on a plan written with them in mind. The bill he planned to push through the House this week is being delayed amid criticism from his Republican majority as well as Democrats. Although Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, a Democrat, this week called the House plan “a love note to the Tea Party,” Republicans who have made cutting the size of government their chief goal say they are bothered by the $260 billion price tag. “We’re dipping deep, deep into the general fund for what has traditionally been limited to the highway trust fund, and that’s a level of expenditure that’s not wise,” Representative Jeff Flake, an Arizona Republican who opposes the bill, said in an interview. The plan would reauthorize the 18.4-cent federal gasoline tax and set maximum spending levels for roads, bridges and mass transit for five years. The current highway law, which expires March 31, is the eighth temporary extension since a $244 billion, four-year plan ended in 2009. “This is a much more difficult process than we’ve seen in the past,” Boehner of Ohio told reporters yesterday. “There is clearly angst on both sides of the aisle over a number of issues.” Earmarked Funds One reason, the speaker said, is that the plan lacks earmarked funds for lawmakers’ pet projects, which he has previously said numbered more than 6,000 in the last highway measure. The Republican approach to the transportation bill is aimed at appealing to a “new breed” of lawmaker with “little understanding, little appreciation for bill history, who just wants to wipe out what was,” said Jim Oberstar, a former Minnesota representative who served as the top Democrat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for 16 years before he was defeated in the 2010 election. Oberstar noted that during his time on the panel, he and the top Republican would -- with their staffs -- write highway bills from scratch, regardless of which party was in the majority. Natural Republican constituencies, such as the investment and contracting sectors, have been alienated by the Republican bill, Oberstar said. ‘Uncomfortable, Miserable’ “Why would you make life so uncomfortable, miserable and uncertain on an issue like this just to make a political point?” Oberstar said. “I don’t understand it.” “In the past people were bought off with earmarks or some special provisions,” Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman John Mica, a Florida Republican, told reporters this week. “We don’t have that luxury. What we have to do is to discuss policy; that takes longer.” The plan would eliminate a program to fund bicycle trails and other transportation-related improvements that anti-tax Republicans view as wasteful. It would expand offshore drilling to provide royalties for highway spending, and raise funds by requiring federal workers to contribute more to their pensions. It also would end the designated use of 2.86 cents of the gasoline tax for mass transit and other projects to improve air quality and reduce highway congestion. Instead, the measure would provide $40 billion in general funds for those purposes. Flake objects to funding such projects at all, saying the bill’s scope should be limited to surface transportation projects that can be funded through gasoline tax revenue. Mass Transit Support Conversely, at least 10 Republicans from urban and suburban districts said they oppose the bill because it would end the automatic funding for mass transit. “As long as that’s in there I can’t vote for it,” Representative Peter King, a New York Republican, said in an interview. “That’s the only program where New York gets more money back” than it pays in gas taxes. Factions of Republicans with objections, combined with opposition from almost all 192 House Democrats, mean “the math is more than tricky, but it can be fixed, and I’m committed the helping the speaker try and fix it,” said Steve LaTourette, an Ohio Republican. House Republicans’ chief vote-counter, Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy of California, told members during a Feb. 1 closed-door party meeting that the 218 votes needed for the highway bill will have to come from within the party’s ranks, said two lawmakers who were in the room and spoke on condition of anonymity. ‘Misplaced Priorities’ Boehner told reporters Feb. 9 that the House measure is the first infrastructure highway bill he has ever supported. Prior measures, he said, “represented everything that was wrong with Washington: earmarks, endless layers of bureaucracy, wasted tax dollars and misplaced priorities.” Even without earmarks, lawmakers can be swayed by parochial concerns. Representative Cory Gardner, a Colorado Republican, said in an interview that he was working to strip a provision that would prohibit horses from being transported in double- decker trailers. The provision has “farmers, ranchers in Colorado -- a huge rodeo industry -- up in arms,” he said. President Barack Obama’s administration on Feb. 14 said it would veto the House bill, saying it would reduce safety, weaken environmental and labor protection and wouldn’t do enough to improve roads and bridges. The Senate is working on its plan, S. 1813, which would authorize $109.8 billion in spending for fiscal 2012 and 2013. Three Bills Republican leaders have split the House plan into three bills, and lawmakers are offering more than 300 amendments. The House passed the first measure last night and is set to consider the other two parts after next week’s Presidents’ Day recess. Allowing votes on amendments to expand states’ responsibility to fund roads, bridges and mass transit and to limit spending on highways and mass transit will help Republicans get the 218 votes they need, even though the amendments probably won’t be adopted, said a Republican lawmaker who is helping rally votes for the measure and spoke on condition of anonymity. The lawmaker said leaders are counting on some Republican critics to come on board after they go on the record in favor of changes. New Jersey Republican Scott Garrett proposed an amendment to create pilot programs allowing states to receive federal transportation funds through block grants. Oklahoma Republican James Lankford is pushing to let states opt out of federal highway programs, either by keeping the funds they contribute to the Highway Trust Fund or by allowing them to increase state gas taxes to cover the loss in revenue. ‘Right Direction’ Although Lankford said the highway bill was a “step in the right direction,” it wouldn’t go as far as he wanted to trim the federal government’s role in funding transportation. In previous years, the highway bill “has always been something that’s attracted three-hundred-and-something votes,” LaTourette said. This year, every Democrat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee voted against the bill on Feb. 6. A Democrat on the panel, Pennsylvania’s Jason Altmire, said he opposed the plan because of provisions he viewed as anti- labor and because it would eliminate automatic funding for mass transit. He predicted it will take far beyond March 31 for the House and Senate to work out a plan. “The likely outcome, everyone would agree, is we will not have a long-term highway bill by the end of the year,” Altmire said. “I just don’t see, this year, given the politics, how that’s possible.”

**Recent debates prove**

**Plungis, ’12** (Jeff, Bloomberg staff, 3/26/12, <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-03-26/road-work-halt-days-away-as-congress-argues-funding-bill>, JD)

Congress’s rhetoric ahead of the March 31 expiration of a law funding U.S. highway and transit projects resembles the dueling that led to last July’s impasse shutting down the Federal Aviation Administration for two weeks. About 4,000 government workers were furloughed. The agency lost $468 million, according to data compiled by Bloomberg, when airlines for 16 days pocketed a ticket tax that would have been used for airport construction. The consequences of a highway-program shutdown would start with construction workers being laid off after states stop getting U.S. reimbursements to pay them, said Pete Rahn, leader of HNTB Holdings Ltd.’s transportation practice in Kansas City, Missouri. As many as 1.87 million jobs may be at risk, according to a Senate fact sheet citing Transportation Department job- calculation models. The U.S. government couldn’t collect as much as $93 million a day in gasoline taxes, he said. “This is by an order of magnitude bigger than the FAA bill,” said Joshua Schank, president and chief executive officer of the Eno Center for Transportation in Washington. “If it lasts any more than a few weeks, there would be serious damage.” Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, a Nevada Democrat, last week urged the House to take up the bill his chamber passed March 14. He wouldn’t discuss what would be the ninth extension of highway legislation that expired in 2009. Representative Bill Shuster, a Pennsylvania Republican rounding up votes on the other side of the Capitol, said that stance may change by March 30. Vote Scheduled The House will vote on a 90-day extension today after 6:30 p.m. in Washington, according to the chamber’s daily schedule. The bill will be taken up under rules requiring a two-thirds majority to pass, meaning the 242 Republicans will need about 48 Democrats to advance the legislation. Representative Nick Rahall, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s senior Democrat, urged a “no” vote in an e-mailed statement. House leaders should schedule a vote on the Senate bill, he said. “Allowing Republicans another 12 weeks would do nothing but feed their dangerous addiction to serial extensions and damaging delays, which are causing uncertainty and chaos at the start of the construction season,” said Rahall, of West Virginia. Insolvency Potential Congress’s struggles to agree on a long-term bill have drawn out so long that the Highway Trust Fund, which pays for road and mass transit construction, is almost insolvent. Its highway account may be unable to meet its obligations as soon as October, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials said Jan. 31 in a report analyzing Congressional Budget Office data. The fund’s finances have declined as cars have become more efficient and Americans drive less because of higher gasoline prices, according to the U.S. Transportation Department. If a shutdown forces gas-tax collections to stop, “these funds would be gone forever,” Rahn said. “There would be no way to make it up.” The Senate’s two-year, $109 billion transportation plan passed March 14 includes about $14 billion from other accounts and general taxpayer money to shore up the trust fund. The trust fund collected $36.9 billion from all sources in 2011, according to the CBO. When House leaders tried to bring a different bill to the floor last month, majority Republicans were so divided over how to pay for projects and whether mass transit should keep getting gasoline-tax money that it didn’t progress to a vote. Jobs at Stake House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman John Mica, a Florida Republican, introduced a bill March 22 to extend current programs through June 30. As with the FAA bill, a lapse in the government’s authority to collect gasoline taxes won’t necessarily lead to lower fuel prices for consumers, Schank said. Senator Barbara Boxer, a California Democrat, held several news conferences last week calling for a vote on the approved bill she sponsored. Among the jobs at stake if highway funding lapses are 177,500 highway and transit positions in California, 120,300 in Texas and 113,300 in New York, according to fact sheet prepared by Senate Democrats. The Senate bill may create another 1 million jobs by expanding private-sector financing for projects, according to the fact sheet. House Speaker John Boehner, an Ohio Republican, backed off a pledge to act on the Senate bill if House members wouldn’t back Mica’s five-year, $260 billion plan. House Republicans want to bolster the Highway Trust Fund with revenue from opening up more federal land to oil and gas production, Boehner told reporters March 22.

**Highway bill sparks opposition**

**Holtzman, ’12** (Geoff, Deputy Washington Bureau Chief/News Director, 2/12/12, <http://www.talkradionews.com/news/2012/02/14/highway-bill-generates-bipartisan-backlash.html>)

WASHINGTON — A series of interest groups rarely mentioned in the same breath have come together to oppose a massive transportation bill making its way through Congress. Earlier this week, the pro-environment National Resources Defense Council teamed with a coalition of conservatives — including the Competitive Enterprise Institute, the National Taxpayers Union, Taxpayers for Common Sense and the Reason Foundation — to urge House Republican leaders to scrap a reauthorization of the federal highway bill. The American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act (H.R. 7), which could see action as early as Wednesday, would merge a series of GOP domestic energy pet projects into the annual surface transportation legislation. The five-year measure is estimated to cost $260 billion. Meanwhile, the Senate is preparing a smaller two-year version of the bill that would total about $110 billion. In their letter, the groups urged leading lawmakers to reject using projected revenues generated by new oil drilling in areas like Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to aid the National Highway Trust Fund. “Further increasing the reliance of the Highway Trust Fund on revenue streams not connected to use would threaten the future health of America’s highways,” they wrote. The NRDC has on numerous occasions cited environmental health concerns as reasons for lobbying against attempts to open up ANWR. The organization and well as other like-minded groups are also opposed to a Senate GOP-led effort to attach the Keystone XL pipeline to the package. Republicans who support the bill say they have no problem with using royalty fees on the oil and gas industry to fuel new transportation infrastructure projects. “This will prevent the need for more of the same taxpayer bailouts for highway programs that occurred when Democrats ran Congress,” said House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio). But the groups that are opposed want the authors of the bill to stick to the traditional pay-for-use model, whereby only gas taxes are used to cover the cost of surface transportation projects, rather than tapping into unrelated revenue streams. A new Congressional Budget Office report out this week suggests that the 18.4 percent gas tax might have to increase in order for the trust fund to stay solvent. House GOP’ers are downplaying that study, arguing that it underestimates the amount of revenue that would be created by new energy expansion. Another group, the conservative Heritage Foundation, argues that while boosting domestic energy production is “sound policy,” using the potential dollars to refill the Highway Trust Fund does, in fact, amount to a bailout. “Congress should live within its means,” the group wrote, and use the drilling revenues to instead pay down the nation’s deficit. Boehner’s office, however, pushed back on that claim, saying that the energy provisions in the bill would negate the need for the Treasury Department to direct general dollars to highway projects. Meanwhile, other conservatives say the reauthorization proposal simply includes too much spending. “Instead of opening up American land to energy production and using that energy production to pay down the national debt, we will instead jack up highway spending, bankrupt the highway trust fund as a result, and then use the energy taxes to offset the project funding,” wrote conservative commentator Erick Erickson. One area where conservatives are giving Republicans credit is removing earmarks from the bill. In the past, pork dollars have been used to create tourist attractions, fund gardening projects and even build a National Corvette Museum. GOP leaders say this year’s bill contains only “pro-growth” items, as well as language to consolidate duplicative surface transportation projects. Not surprisingly, some progressives are unhappy with the decision to to cancel or cut back funding for non-highway needs. According to the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the bill would “cripple transit systems around the country and hurt millions of people who depend on public transportation to reach jobs, doctor appointments, schools, and other necessities of everyday life.” Given such widespread opposition, it appears highly unlikely that the bill in its current form will make its way to President Obama’s desk. Yet, because Congress has not passed a full reauthorization of the highway program since 2007, lawmakers may be willing to creatively deal this time around just so they can put the issue in their rearview mirror.

## Agenda links

### 1NC

#### BRAC is unpopular - spending

Brannen and Weisgerber 12 (defense reporter, Jan 25 “Pentagon to request 2 new rounds of BRAC,” Army Times, 2012, <http://www.armytimes.com/news/2012/01/dn-pentagon-to-request-2-new-rounds-of-brac-012512/>)

To close or consolidate military bases in the United States requires legislation from Congress to create a bipartisan Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC), which then studies the problem and makes recommendations to the president and the defense secretary.¶ The last round of BRAC took place in 2005 and the changes it implemented were only completed in this past fall.¶ The new requests would seek authorization for the first BRAC in 2013, to be followed by another in 2015, one source said. The two new rounds of closures could reap savings in five to eight years, sources predict, but would cost money up front.¶ Closing bases is hugely expensive in the short-run, one former Pentagon official said. There are the costs of relocating people and equipment, plus the costs of shutdown and the associated environmental impacts. Proposed base closings often are contentious, too, as legislators fight to keep jobs and spending in their districts.¶ “It’s going to be a tough sell,” a defense source said.

### 2NC

#### BRAC is unpopular in Congress – having to reposition people and equipment is extremely expensive in the short term – lawmakers fearing for their positions mean that they would never vote for the plan, even if they thought it was a good idea – that’s Brannen and Weisgerber

#### (Insert generic links if you want more evidence)

# Climate Adaptation

## Agenda Links

### 1NC

**Republicans won’t budge on climate change legislation – massively unpopular**

**Goldenberg 12** (Suzanne Goldenberg, US environmental correspondent for The Guardian newspaper, “Climate Change Campaigners Cautioned Over Reaction to Extreme Weather” The Guardian, PD: July 13, 2012 at 5:17 PM EDT, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jul/13/climate-change-campaigners-cautioned?newsfeed=true>)

**The recent freak weather does provide powerful evidence of the dangers of climate change**, and could break through the GOP's wall of denial, he said. But scientists and **campaigners need to go easy on the doom.**¶ "The thing that would not be helpful is for anybody associated with climate change action to be wagging their finger in Colorado and Texas or wherever it's hot saying, 'See I told you so,'" Inglis said in a telephone interview.¶ "**That is the worst possible thing for anybody wanting climate action to do because then you engender the predictable response of, 'I will show you. I will not budge an inch**."

### 2NC

#### The plan meets GREAT opposition in Congress – Republicans don’t believe in climate change and thus won’t spend money on it – that’s Goldenberg

**Republicans oppose action on climate change**

**Goldenberg 12** (Suzanne Goldenberg, US environmental correspondent for The Guardian newspaper, “Climate Change Campaigners Cautioned Over Reaction to Extreme Weather” The Guardian, PD: July 13, 2012 at 5:17 PM EDT, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jul/13/climate-change-campaigners-cautioned?newsfeed=true>)

Half of **the incoming crop of Republicans in that election denied the existence of climate change or opposed action on climate change.** None of **the Republican contenders for the White House in this election has acknowledged the dangers of climate change**.¶ The House energy and commerce committee has yet to hold a hearing on the dangers of wildfires and drought due to climate change, despite 15 requests to date from Democrats on the committee.¶ But Inglis said **Republicans will not be shaken out of their denial through fear.**¶ **"Those who do speak, speak in apocalyptic visions and that drives us further into denial as a suitable coping mechanism**," Inglis said. "If you tell me we are all toast and it's just terrible, that doom is imminent, if you tell me that then eat, drink and be merry**. If I am toast, I may as well just ignore it,**" he said

#### Climate Adaptation faces political opposition

Brunner and Nordgren 12 (Ron Brunner, Professor of Political Science at University of Colorado at Boulder, and John Nordgren, Senior Program Officer of Environment for Kresge Foundation, April 6th, 2012, “Climate Adaptation as an Evolutionary Process: A White Paper” The Kresge Foundation)

Practitioners offered few specific examples of what did not work in their past experience. However, they did identify an array of challenges they had encountered. The most formidable challenge was nationally-organized political opposition to climate adaptation. In particular, it was reported that “people are turning up at meetings and disrupting them” in a number of local communities. Apparently, participants did not consider disengaging from these communities. However, several tactics for dealing with disruption or opposition were tried or recommended

## Public Unpopular

### 1NC

####  Climate change adaptation is a controversial issue

Theoharides at el. 09 [February 10, 2009 Authors: Katie Theoharides, Gerald Barnhart & Patty Glick Contributors: Noah Matson, Arpita Choudhury, Amanda Staud t<http://www.defenders.org/publications/climate_change_adaptation_across_the_landscape.pdf> “Climate change adaptation across the landscape”]

Implement “proactive” management and restoration strategies **Strategies in this category include all active facilitation of** species, habitats and **ecosystems to accommodate climate change impacts**. Examples include translocating species to new locations, beach re-nourishment, barrier island expansion, marsh creation, and planting climate-resistant species. At this time, none of the participants referenced specific strategies that fell under this category, but did note that proactive management, such as species translocation and the use of dredged material for barrier island expansion **were often controversial issues and usually expensive to implement.**

### 2NC

**Republicans oppose action on climate change**

**Goldenberg 7/13/12 at 5:17 PM EDT** (Suzanne Goldenberg, US environmental correspondent for The Guardian newspaper, “Climate Change Campaigners Cautioned Over Reaction to Extreme Weather” The Guardian, PD: July 13, 2012 at 5:17 PM EDT, http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jul/13/climate-change-campaigners-cautioned?newsfeed=true)

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**GOP will fight climate change policy**

**Goldenberg 7/13/12 at 5:17 PM EDT** (Suzanne Goldenberg, US environmental correspondent for The Guardian newspaper, “Climate Change Campaigners Cautioned Over Reaction to Extreme Weather” The Guardian, PD: July 13, 2012 at 5:17 PM EDT, http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jul/13/climate-change-campaigners-cautioned?newsfeed=true)

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# Natives

## Agenda

### 1NC

#### Although programs like the plan have been popular in the past, the current Congress opposes such measures

Cornell and Kalt 10 (Stephen, Native Nations Institute for Leadership, ¶ Management, and Policy, Joseph P. Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy,¶ The University of Arizona, “American Indian ¶ Self-Determination¶ The Political Economy of ¶ a Successful Policy”, http://nni.arizona.edu/pubs/jopna-wp1\_cornell&kalt.pdf)

Since the 1970s, federal American Indian policy in the United States has ¶ been aimed at promoting self-determination through self-governance ¶ by federally-recognized tribes. This policy has proven to be the only policy that has worked to make significant progress in reversing otherwise ¶ distressed social, cultural, and economic conditions in Native communities. The policy of self-determination reflects a political equilibrium ¶ which has held for four decades and which has withstood various shifts ¶ in the party control of Congress and the White House. While Republicans have provided relatively weak support for social spending on Indian issues when compared to Democrats, both parties’ representatives ¶ have generally been supportive of self-determination and local self-rule ¶ for tribes. Analysis of thousands of sponsorships of federal legislation ¶ over 1970-present, however, finds the equilibrium under challenge. In ¶ particular, since the late 1990s, Republican congressional support for ¶ policies of self-determination has fallen off sharply and has not returned. This calls into question the sustainability of self-determination ¶ through self-governance as a central principle of federal Indian policy.

### 2NC

#### Any kind of spending on Indian issues is massively unpopular among Republicans – all of their link arguments are specific to empirics, which don’t apply. Congress now opposes spending – meaning the plan would have to be rammed through Congress – that’s Cornell and Kalt

#### Plan is unpopular – disproportionally LOW support among republicans

Cornell and Kalt 10 (Stephen, Native Nations Institute for Leadership, ¶ Management, and Policy, Joseph P. Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy,¶ The University of Arizona, “American Indian ¶ Self-Determination¶ The Political Economy of ¶ a Successful Policy”, http://nni.arizona.edu/pubs/jopna-wp1\_cornell&kalt.pdf)

Over the entire period of 1973-2010, Democrats made up more than ¶ a majority of the U.S. House and Senate, accounting for 55.6 percent ¶ of the combined membership. Thus, we might expect the share of legislation sponsorships by Democrats to outweigh that of Republicans, ¶ even if there were no difference between Democrats and Republicans ¶ in their support for spending on American Indian social conditions. ¶ Such equality of support is not borne out in the data. Figure 8 shows ¶ the amount of legislative support coming from Democratic legislators ¶ relative to the support expected if sponsorship were proportionate to ¶ overall Democratic membership in the House and Senate. Overall, ¶ party-proportionate support by Democrats would be 55.6 percent; actual support exceeded this by 18.1 percentage points.¶ In short, there is strongly disproportionate Democratic support for ¶ spending on American Indian social conditions. By the same token, ¶ there is disproportionately low support for such spending among Republicans.

# Infrastructure Bank

## Agenda Links

### 1NC

#### A National Infrastructure Bank is severely unpopular in Congress – federal bureaucracy, current programs solve, spending, lack of job creation – Mica specifically opposes the plan

Committee on Transportation Infrastructure 11 (October 12th, 2011, “NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE BANK WOULD CREATE MORE RED TAPE & FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY”, http://transportation.house.gov/news/PRArticle.aspx?NewsID=1421)

Washington, DC – Committee leaders and transportation officials and experts at a Congressional hearing today agreed that the creation of a new National Infrastructure Bank, as proposed by the Obama Administration, would add to the amount of red tape and federal bureaucracy that already slows down and diverts funding away from transportation and infrastructure projects.¶ Members of the Committee and witnesses highlighted existing federal programs and authorities that could be strengthened to finance infrastructure projects more effectively than simply increasing the size of the government. Members and witnesses also agreed that expediting the cumbersome project approval process would facilitate infrastructure improvements.¶ Chairman Mica’s Statement¶ “We must use every responsible mechanism possible to move projects and expand our capacity to finance infrastructure maintenance and improvements, but a National Infrastructure Bank is dead on arrival in Congress,” said U.S. Rep. John L. Mica (R-FL), Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.¶ “There are several reasons for this. One is that we do not need to create more federal bureaucracy. In fact, with over 100 separate federal surface transportation programs, we need less bureaucracy.¶ “The federal government also has existing financing programs that serve the same purpose as a National Infrastructure Bank, such as TIFIA, RRIF and others, that we can improve and strengthen.¶ “Another reason a national bank is DOA is because there is already such a bank structure in place at the state level. Thirty-three state infrastructure banks already exist, and we can ensure financing and build upon this foundation without creating a new level of federal bureaucracy.¶ “If the Administration’s goal is to get people to work immediately, a National Infrastructure Bank that will require more than a year to create and $270 million to run is not the answer. That is funding that should be used for infrastructure, but would instead be used to create more red tape.¶ “Unfortunately, the Administration still hasn’t learned that ‘shovel ready’ has become a national joke. Yesterday, the President announced he would expedite 14 infrastructure projects, but this plan only pushes these projects to the front of the line with current red tape and rules, while it pushes back or stalls hundreds of other projects pending federal approval. We must expedite the review process for all projects, not just a handful.”

### 2NC

#### NIB is dead on arrival in Congress – current banks do the exact same thing, Republicans are extremely wary of government expansion, the creation of the bank costs a BUNCH of money – that’s the Committee on Transportation Infrastructure.

#### Mica is extremely influential in Congress – he’ll rally support against the plan

Boslet et. al 12 (Mike Boslet, Barry Glenn, and Hancel Deaton, editors at Orlando Magazine, July 2012, “50 Most Powerful People in Orlando”, <http://www.orlandomagazine.com/Orlando-Magazine/July-2012/50-Most-Powerful-People-in-Orlando/>)

The Winter Park Republican is gunning for a whopping 11th term in the House and, because of the oddball results of redistricting, will be going up against Congresswoman Sandy Adams in the primary. Mica’s influence in Washington is huge because he heads the House transportation committee, which puts him in the middle of national issues ranging from airport security to highway infrastructure to the controversial Keystone Pipeline. Closer to home, Mica is a powerful supporter of the 61-mile SunRail commuter train project. He’ll be very influential in finding ways to pay for the system’s operating costs. 2011 Rank: 12

#### Bipartison opposition – disagreements in whether the plan is the best method, concerns over executive power

Mitchell 11 Josh is a writer for the Wall Street Journal. "Plan for Highway Bank Faces Uphill Battle," Aug 15, WSJ, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424053111904823804576500692477795126.html

President Barack Obama is pressing Congress to create a new "infrastructure bank" to finance highway and rail construction, create jobs and jump-start the stalled economy, but the proposal faces hurdles on Capitol Hill.¶ White House officials have described the bank as a new government entity that would make loans to support public-works projects of regional and national significance with private funding. That includes interstate highways, rail lines linking Midwest farmers to West Coast ports, and equipment for planes to link up to a new satellite-based air-traffic-control network.¶ By luring more private capital to infrastructure projects with low-interest loans, the bank is designed to provide a long-term solution to more immediate problems.¶ The law authorizing the gasoline tax that provides the bulk of federal transportation money expires Sept. 30, and the tax, currently at 18.4 cents a gallon, isn't generating enough funds to keep pace with the nation's infrastructure needs anyway.¶ But the White House, House Republicans and some Senate Democrats differ on the best way to encourage more private investment in public infrastructure. Those disagreements are likely to be swept into a broader debate over how to shrink the federal deficit that could stretch to the November 2012 elections.¶ Some lawmakers fear that once they return from their August recess, a political fight over spending could delay reauthorization of the law for weeks or even months. The government would lose up to $100 million a day in gas-tax revenue, payments to states would be halted and construction jobs would likely be lost if the law lapses, business groups warn.¶ The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and others say they support the idea of an infrastructure bank but worry that the administration is giving short shrift to the more urgent problem.¶ "They have not focused on the need to pass a highway and transit bill," said Janet Kavinoky, the Chamber's chief lobbyist on transportation policy, noting that several years could pass before large-scale projects supported by the bank would get under construction. "We are very frustrated that they continue to hold out the bank as a substitute for doing a highway and transit bill."¶ A White House official said the administration has been in touch regularly with members of Congress to push for both a highway bill and a national infrastructure bank. The official said "no one is taking this for granted," referring to passage of the highway bill, and added that when the president talks about an infrastructure bank, he is referring to his long-term vision of how to reform transportation policies. In a time of dwindling public resources, said Jason Furman of the White House economic council, "you want to stretch the dollars you do have farther."¶ Under the White House plan, the infrastructure bank would augment current highway and transit programs. The bank would receive $30 billion over six years and would issue grants, loans and other financial tools.¶ The president's budget proposal in February suggested the bank reside in the Transportation Department and be controlled by an executive director and board of officials from various federal agencies. Projects would need to meet "rigorous" criteria to ensure they benefit the maximum number of people, preventing more "bridges to nowhere."¶ Some Republicans say that such a bank would simply add a new bureaucracy in Washington and shift decision-making from Congress to the executive branch.¶

## Public Unpopular

### 1NC

#### Infrastructure bank was dead on arrival last fall

**Laing, ’11** (Keith, The Hill staff writer, 9/8/11, <http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/180481-gop-chairman-opposes-obamas-call-for-national-infrastructure-bank>, JD)

The Republican chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee said Thursday evening that he is opposed to the call for a national infrastructure bank President Obama made in his speech to a joint session of Congress. Rep. John Mica (Fla.) said he thought Congress should encourage individual states to create their own infrastructure banks, arguing as he has in the past that it would give them more flexibility to design transportation projects that fit their own needs. “While the President reconfirmed that our highways are clogged and our skies are congested, his well delivered address provided only one specific recommendation for building our nation’s infrastructure,” Mica said in a news release. “Unfortunately, a National Infrastructure Bank run by Washington bureaucrats requiring Washington approval and Washington red tape is moving in the wrong direction. A better plan to improve infrastructure is to empower our states, 33 of which already have state infrastructure banks.” Obama called Thursday for Congress to approve a proposal for a federal infrastructure bank that has been pushed for by Sens. John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas). “We’ll set up an independent fund to attract private dollars and issue loans based on two criteria: how badly a construction project is needed and how much good it would do for the economy,” Obama said.

### 2NC

#### Election politics and GOP opposition would cause backlash

**Laing, ’11** (Keith, The Hill staff writer, 10/9/11, <http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/infrastructure/186371-obamas-infrastructure-bank-faces-hurdles-in-republican-led-house>, JD)

President Obama’s shifting sales pitch for transportation spending will be put to the test when the GOP-led House takes up his proposal for a national infrastructure bank next week. Advocates for reshaping the nation’s roads and bridges have criticized Obama for focusing his message on infrastructure. The president’s argument loses some effectiveness when it is focused on hard-to-visualize infrastructure rather than readily apparent crumbling roads and bridges, they say. Lately though, the president has talked about roads and bridges almost exclusively. In campaigning for his jobs package, he has even gone to a bridge that connects House Speaker John Boehner’s (R) home state of Ohio with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell’s (R) home state of Kentucky. The Republican leadership is lukewarm at best about Obama’s proposal to spend $10 billion to create a national infrastructure bank to lure private investment for road projects. “While I support innovative financing to meet our nation’s infrastructure needs, the multibillion-dollar, Washington bureaucracy-based infrastructure bank President Obama is advocating raises many concerns,” House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.) said in a statement this week. Mica’s committee has scheduled a hearing Wednesday to consider the president’s proposal, a key part of Obama’s $447 billion jobs bill. But Mica has already made clear he is not inclined to follow Obama down the road to a national infrastructure bank. “A more positive approach would be to build on the 33 existing state infrastructure banks which lack financial backing but are in place, can get projects selected and moving and put people to work on an expedited basis,” Mica said. While Obama’s “pass this bill” mantra has drawn comparisons to former President Harry Truman's “give 'em hell” campaign in 1948, liberal commentators have pushed the normally-reserved Obama to also channel another former President, Franklin Roosevelt, and make the case for re-building the nation as literally as possible. “President Obama should identify construction projects…roads that need fixing, bridges that are in danger of collapsing, and dare the Republicans to vote against these projects and the jobs they create in their own areas,” MSNBC host Chris Matthews said on a recent broadcast of his show “Hardball.” Obama appears to have taken the advice. In addition to visiting the bridge that connects Kentucky and Ohio, he cited specific projects this week in an hour-long news conference to promote the Jobs Act. “Some of you were with me when we visited a bridge between Ohio and Kentucky that’s been classified as ‘functionally obsolete,’” Obama said this past Thursday. “That’s a fancy way of saying it’s old and breaking down. We’ve heard about bridges in both states that are falling apart, and that’s true all across the country.” If Obama’s message has changed, it hasn’t been enough to convince Republicans so far. They are not only cool to the idea of the bank; they also haven’t warmed to Obama’s plan to spend $50 billion on transportation projects. Mica gave little reason to believe the debate would change any this week. “This hearing will focus on questions relating to the estimated $270 million yearlong process of creating another federally backed agency designed to pick project winners and losers,” Mica said in comments that seemed to dismiss Obama’s proposals. The phrase “picking winners and losers” could foreshadow references in the forthcoming hearing on the Solyndra energy loan controversy, which some observers have worried could damper even further the GOP’s receptiveness to a loan-based program like the infrastructure bank. **Even without the Solyndra controversy, Obama this week acknowledged he may not be able to move the needle with Congress.**

#### Senate proves

**Orrick, ’11** (Sarah, editor of Congressional Digest, 11/4/11, <http://congressionaldigest.com/senate-blocks-infrastructure-bank-proposal/>, JD)

The Senate dealt the Obama Administration’s job package another blow on November 3 by refusing to consider the Rebuild America Jobs Act, a$60 billion measure to build and repair infrastructure and create an infrastructure bank to leverage private and public capital for long-term projects. The 51-to-49 vote fell short of the 60 needed to proceed to a debate and vote. All Republican senators, as well as Democrats Ben Nelson (NE) and Joe Lieberman (CT) opposed the bill. The concept of an infrastructure bank has been around for some time. As described in the January 2009 Congressional Digest on “Infrastructure Financing,” a 2006 report by the Commission on Public Infrastructure called for the creation of such an entity to issue bonds and raise funds for projects based on national significance, productivity, and economic benefit. In 2009, Senators Christopher Dodd (CT-D) and Chuck Hagel (NE-R) (both no longer in Congress) and Representative Keith Ellison (MN-D) introduced legislation to create an infrastructure bank. Earlier this year, Senator John Kerry (MA-D) sponsored a similar bill, along with Senators Kay Bailey Hutchison (TX-R), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), and Mark Warner (D-VA). On the Senate floor yesterday, supporters of the measure said that it would create much needed construction jobs while repairing deteriorating roads and bridges. “It is about increasing the Federal footprint in the infrastructure arena, Senator Chris Coons (DE-D) said of ban proposal. “This is smart spending. This is investing in the best tradition of Federal, State, local, and private partnerships to make America more competitive for the future.” Opponents objected to the bill on the basis that it would be financed by a tax surcharge on the wealthy and create a new government bureaucracy. “It is about increasing the Federal footprint in the infrastructure arena. It is about increasing taxes on those with incomes above $500,000, now creatively called millionaires, including incomes of many business owners who risk their own capital to create jobs,” said Senator Orrin Hatch (UT-R). The bill’s defeat was not a surprise, as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (NV-D) continues to bring up pieces of the President’s job package in an effort to exert political pressure on the Republicans. The next stand-alone jobs bill that’s likely come to the Senate floor would provide tax incentives for the hiring of veterans.

#### Larger spending fights would hurt Obama and help the GOP

**Mitchell, ’11** (Josh, WSJ staff writer, “Plan for Highway Bank Faces Uphill Battle; White House Wants Extra Money for Transportation Projects, While GOP Questions How Funds Will Be Allocated, Spent”,

 8/15/11, Proquest)

President Barack Obama is pressing Congress to create a new "infrastructure bank" to finance highway and rail construction, create jobs and jump-start the stalled economy, but the proposal faces hurdles on Capitol Hill. White House officials have described the bank as a new government entity that would make loans to support public-works projects of regional and national significance with private funding. That includes interstate highways, rail lines linking Midwest farmers to West Coast ports, and equipment for planes to link up to a new satellite-based air-traffic-control network. By luring more private capital to infrastructure projects with low-interest loans, the bank is designed to provide a long-term solution to more immediate problems. The law authorizing the gasoline tax that provides the bulk of federal transportation money expires Sept. 30, and the tax, currently at 18.4 cents a gallon, isn't generating enough funds to keep pace with the nation's infrastructure needs anyway. But the White House, House Republicans and some Senate Democrats differ on the best way to encourage more private investment in public infrastructure. **Those disagreements are likely to be swept into a broader debate over how to shrink the federal deficit that could stretch to the November 2012 elections**. Some lawmakers fear that once they return from their August recess, a political fight over spending could delay reauthorization of the law for weeks or even months. The government would lose up to $100 million a day in gas-tax revenue, payments to states would be halted and construction jobs would likely be lost if the law lapses, business groups warn. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and others say they support the idea of an infrastructure bank but worry that the administration is giving short shrift to the more urgent problem. "They have not focused on the need to pass a highway and transit bill," said Janet Kavinoky, the Chamber's chief lobbyist on transportation policy, noting that several years could pass before large-scale projects supported by the bank would get under construction. "We are very frustrated that they continue to hold out the bank as a substitute for doing a highway and transit bill." A White House official said the administration has been in touch regularly with members of Congress to push for both a highway bill and a national infrastructure bank. The official said "no one is taking this for granted," referring to passage of the highway bill, and added that when the president talks about an infrastructure bank, he is referring to his long-term vision of how to reform transportation policies. In a time of dwindling public resources, said Jason Furman of the White House economic council, "you want to stretch the dollars you do have farther." Under the White House plan, the infrastructure bank would augment current highway and transit programs. The bank would receive $30 billion over six years and would issue grants, loans and other financial tools. The president's budget proposal in February suggested the bank reside in the Transportation Department and be controlled by an executive director and board of officials from various federal agencies. Projects would need to meet "rigorous" criteria to ensure they benefit the maximum number of people, preventing more "bridges to nowhere." Some Republicans say that such a bank would simply add a new bureaucracy in Washington and shift decision-making from Congress to the executive branch. "How this project would be funded, what it would fund and how those funds would be repaid are critical questions the Obama administration has not answered yet," said Kevin Smith, a spokesman for House Speaker John Boehner (R., Ohio). "If this is more of the same 'stimulus' spending, **we won't support it."** The White House didn't respond to a request for comment.

## Public Popular

### 1NC

**Federal infrastructure bank would boost the economy**

COEA ‘12 - Council of Economic Advisers, Department of Treasury (“A NEW ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT”, March 23, http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/economic-policy/Documents/20120323InfrastructureReport.pdf)

President Obama’s FY 2013 Budget proposes a bold plan to renew and expand America’s infrastructure. This plan includes a $50 billion up-front investment connected to a six-year $476 billion reauthorization of the surface transportation program and the creation of a National Infrastructure Bank. The President’s plan would significantly increase investment in surface transportation by approximately 80 percent when compared to previous federal investment. The plan seeks not only to fill a long overdue funding gap, but also to reform how Federal dollars are spent so that they are directed to the most effective programs. This report contributes to the ongoing policy dialogue by summarizing the evidence on the economic effects of investments in transportation infrastructure.

Public infrastructure is an essential part of the U.S. economy. This has been recognized since the founding of our nation. Albert Gallatin, who served as President Jefferson’s Treasury Secretary, wrote: “The early and efficient aid of the *Federal* Government [emphasis in article] is recommended by still more important considerations. The inconveniences, complaints, and perhaps dangers, which may result from a vast extent of territory, can no otherwise be radically removed or prevented than by opening speedy and easy communications through all its parts. Good roads and canals will shorten distances, facilitate commercial and personal intercourse, and unite, by a still more intimate community of interests, the most remote quarters of the United States. No other single operation, within the power of Government, can more effectually tend to strengthen and perpetuate that Union which secures external independence, domestic peace, and internal liberty.” 1

 Gallatin spoke in terms of infrastructure shortening distances and easing communications, even when the only means to do so were roads and canals. Every day, Americans use our nation’s transportation infrastructure to commute to work, visit their friends and family, and travel freely around the country. Businesses depend on a well-functioning infrastructure system to obtain their supplies, manage their inventories, and deliver their goods and services to market. This is true for companies whose businesses rely directly on the infrastructure system, such as shippers like UPS and BNSF, as well as others whose businesses indirectly rely on the infrastructure system, such as farmers who use publicly funded infrastructure to ship crops to buyers, and internet companies that send goods purchased online to customers across the world. A modern transportation infrastructure network is necessary for our economy to function, and is a prerequisite for future growth. President Eisenhower’s vision is even more relevant today than it was in 1955, when he said in his State of the Union Address, "A modern, efficient highway system is essential to meet the needs of our growing population, our expanding economy, and our national security." Today, that vision would include making not only our highways, but our nation’s entire infrastructure system more efficient and effective.

Our analysis indicates that further infrastructure investments would be highly beneficial for the U.S. economy in both the short and long term. First, estimates of economically justifiable investment indicate that American transportation infrastructure is not keeping pace with the needs of our economy. Second, because of high unemployment in sectors such as construction that were especially hard hit by the bursting of the housing bubble, there are underutilized resources that can be used to build infrastructure. Moreover, states and municipalities typically fund a significant portion of infrastructure spending, but are currently strapped for cash; the Federal government has a constructive role to play by stepping up to address the anticipated shortfall and providing more efficient financing mechanisms, such as Build America Bonds. The third key finding is that investing in infrastructure benefits the middle class most of all. Finally, there is considerable support for greater infrastructure investment among American consumers and businesses.

The President’s plan addresses a significant and longstanding need for greater infrastructure investment in the United States. Targeted investments in America’s transportation infrastructure would generate both short-term and long-term economic benefits. However, transforming and rehabilitating our nation’s transportation infrastructure system will require not only greater investment but also a more efficient use of resources, because simply increasing funding does not guarantee economic benefits. This idea is embodied in the President’s proposal to reform our nation’s transportation policy, as well as to establish a National Infrastructure Bank, which would leverage private and other non-Federal government resources to make wise investments in projects of regional and national significance.

In this report, we begin by reviewing factors that should influence investment in infrastructure. We review the economic literature regarding returns to infrastructure investment. Next, we consider the specific condition of our economy and labor market, including the availability of workers with the requisite skills, which suggest that now is a particularly favorable time to initiate these investments. Then we analyze the benefits derived by American families and companies from well-functioning infrastructure systems and the costs associated with poor infrastructure systems. Finally, we review public and business sentiment regarding infrastructure investment.

## Link turn

#### **A National Infrastructure Bank is politically popular – bipartisan legislation and job creation**

Laing 11 (Keith, staff writer at The Hill, September 8th, 2011, “Mica opposes Obama’s call for national infrastructure bank”, <http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/180481-gop-chairman-opposes-obamas-call-for-national-infrastructure-bank>,)

Obama called Thursday for Congress to approve a proposal for a federal infrastructure bank that has been pushed for by Sens. John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas). ¶ “We’ll set up an independent fund to attract private dollars and issue loans based on two criteria: how badly a construction project is needed and how much good it would do for the economy,” Obama said. ¶ “This idea came from a bill written by a Texas Republican and a Massachusetts Democrat. The idea for a big boost in construction is supported by America’s largest business organization and America’s largest labor organization. It’s the kind of proposal that’s been supported in the past by Democrats and Republicans alike. You should pass it right away.”¶ Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.), ranking member on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, called for Republicans on the panel to be receptive to Obama’s proposals.¶ “The Nation’s roads and bridges and water systems are needs that even Americans of vastly different political leanings agree deserve greater Federal investment — not less,” Rahall said in a news release. “After all, the jobs created by such investment are not Republican jobs or Democratic jobs — they are American jobs.”

# Equity

## Public popular

### 1NC

#### Its popular – Obama gets a boost while spending isn’t perceived

Stempel 8 – Reuters [Jonathon, Aug 1, 2008, “Roads, airports on the block as budgets tighten,” <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/08/01/us-infrastructure-idUSN0134060620080801>]

ALTERNATIVE TO TAX HIKES According to the nonprofit Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 29 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia may face a combined $48 billion of budget deficits in fiscal 2009. But politicians might be loathe to cut spending or raise taxes at a time mortgage debt, $4-a-gallon gas and rising food prices leave consumers -- of whom many vote -- dispirited. Tapping public debt markets might also be too costly. Meanwhile the American Society of Civil Engineers estimates $1.6 trillion is needed over five years to raise the often aged U.S. infrastructure to "good" condition. Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell in July called for the United States to establish a capital budget to pay for such repairs. It was a year ago August 1 that the Interstate 35W bridge in Minneapolis plunged into the Mississippi River, killing 13. Critics say some infrastructure transactions are short-term budget fixes that deprive governments of steady cash streams from taxpayer-funded assets. There is also the risk that private operators won't do their jobs well. Advocates of privatization say entities might do better managing assets than a government answering to voters. Politicians could also get a boost if they can take credit for reinvesting sale or lease proceeds in needed projects. "The argument for a public-private partnership is the private sector is a lot smarter about paying attention to costs, and because it has skin in the game will be more attentive to maintaining an asset over its life," said Joseph Giglio, a privatization expert and professor at Northeastern University's College of Business Administration in Boston. "Elected officials often shortchange funding of maintenance because they don't want to increase user fees or taxes to pay for it," Giglio added. "Their election cycle is four years. They can pass it on to someone else's watch." Collins, who also advised Pennsylvania on the turnpike, said infrastructure can also go beyond roads and airports. He said Morgan Stanley is advising Akron, Ohio, on exploring the leasing of its wastewater system, and Indiana on the possibility of private management for its state lottery. "Lotteries have infrastructure characteristics in that they have stable cash flows and high barriers to entry," he said. "They could even attract private equity investment because they are self-financeable and require minimal capital expenses."

### 2NC

#### It’s a politically salient solution

CCGA 10 – The Chicago Council on Global Affairs is a leading independent, nonpartisan organization committed to influencing the discourse on global issues through contributions to opinion and policy formation, leadership dialogue, and public learning [September 2010, “No Free Money: Is the Privatization of Infrastructure in the Public Interest?” <http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/UserFiles/File/Emerging%20Leaders%20Program/ELReport2010_Privatization.pdf>, Page 26]

6. Privatization can be a politically expedient solution to public problems. Another advantage of the private sector, unrelated to efficiency or expertise, is that its executives do not have to run for re-election, although they do have to respond to shareholders. Private operators can do things that politicians are unwilling or unable to do, such as raise tolls or parking fees. This actually can work to the public’s advantage, because the price of a privatization deal reflects these additional revenues that will be recovered by the private operators. John Schmidt made this point with regard to the Chicago parking meter deal. He explained to the Chicago Reader, “I don’t think there’s any city that has consistently been able to price its street parking at a market level, which is a point that environmentalists have made for years, advocating not only higher parking rates but higher parking taxes. I think it’s the phenomenon where the incremental benefit of raising parking meter rates in any single year is going to be relatively slight but the political reaction to it is going to be significant. It’s not necessarily that everyone’s going to complain, but enough will that a politician is going to resist it.” 19

# Magnitsky Updates

## Neg

### Uniqueness

#### Obama is pushing against Magnitsky now – passage isn’t certain

RT News 7/27 (“‘Obama administration opposes amendments to Magnitsky bill’ – ambassador”, 7/27/12, http://rt.com/politics/administration-magnitsky-bill-ambassador-233/)

The US ambassador to Moscow says that Barack Obama’s administration sees the Sergey Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act as a redundant measure, but added that he could not predict whether or not Congress would eventually approve the bill.¶ Ambassador Michael McFaul told the Russian online daily Gazeta.ru that the White House considered the new Magnitsky bill to be redundant as there was already an official list of Russian officials banned from entering the United States because of alleged human rights abuses.¶ The diplomat added that the US administration had a policy of not connecting the economic issues, such as Russia's recent WTO entry and the questions of democracy and Human Rights.¶ McFaul also said that President Obama’s administration had faced criticism over this approach, but it still believed that this was the right strategy. He added that he personally approved of a visit by a delegation from Russia’s Upper House that tried to lay out counter-arguments in the Magnitsky Bill discussion.¶ The US Ambassador also said that it was not clear whether Congress would eventually pass the Magnitsky bill.

### Internal Links

#### Magnitsky threatens to wreck relations

RT News 7/24 (“Ambassador warns US Congress on Magnitsky bill”, 7/24/12, http://rt.com/politics/ambassador-us-magnitsky-bill-938/)

While highlighting progress in Russia-US relations, Russia’s ambassador to the United States warned that passage of the so-called Magnitsky bill could wreck everything.¶ US lawmakers are sending Russia some seriously mixed messages. On the one hand, they seem prepared finally to repeal the Cold War-era Jackson-Vanik amendment. At the same time, however, they look increasingly likely to slap the Magnitsky bill in its place.¶ As Russian Ambassador to the US Sergey Kislyak warned in an op-ed piece, such a move would represent a major blow to bilateral relations.¶ Kislyak criticized the Magnitsky bill as being based “on the distorted story of the death of a person in pretrial detention,” he wrote in The Hill, a daily congressional paper.¶ The bill is named after Sergey Magnitsky, a 37-year-old lawyer for Hermitage Capital in Moscow and a prime suspect in a 2008 tax-evasion investigation. Officials say Magnitsky failed to receive proper medical treatment while in pre-trail detention and died as a result of complications from untreated pancreatitis and a heart condition.¶ Members of Congress, at the risk of appearing to interfere in Russia’s internal affairs, want to punish Russian citizens who are “suspected of involvement” in the lawyer’s death.¶ Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov said adoption of the bill could aggravate ties between Moscow and Washington, part of the so-called "reset" put forward by President Barack Obama.¶ "It appears American lawmakers want to break the positive trend in our relationship with such serious irritants," Ryabkov told Vesti-24 television.¶ The ambassador noted that Russian lawmakers shared information about the case with US lawmakers, yet “few were interested, especially among the main proponents of the bill.” This lack of interest in hearing Russia’s official version of the story, according to Kislyak, is a “disappointing sign of the quality of relations between our two countries 20 years after the end of the Cold War.”¶ “The Magnitsky bill, if approved, will certainly create new irritants,” the Russian ambassador warned. “The authors of the legislation are trying to take upon themselves the burden of ‘punishing’ Russian citizens for things they have no right to judge.”¶ Kislyak, the Russian ambassador to the US since 2008, said that if US lawmakers push through the Magnitsky bill, it will be met with “a strong reaction in Russia.”¶ “No interference in our internal affairs is going to be allowed (imagine someone trying to do the same to the American legal system),” he added.

## AFF

### Uniqueness

#### Magnitsky will pass now – it has unanimous support in the House and Senate

The Hill 7/25 (“OVERNIGHT MONEY: Russia bill teed up for House panel's approval”, 7/25/12, http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1007-other/240169-overnight-money-russia-bill-teed-up-for-approval)

The House Ways and Means Committee will mark up and, most likely, approve bipartisan legislation on Thursday to grant permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) to Russia. ¶ Panel Democrats and Republicans agreed to push through a trade bill that mirrors the one approved last week by the Senate Finance Committee minus the human rights legislation. ¶ That Senate bill got unexpectedly unanimous support for its measure that included the Magnitsky human-rights bill, which would punish Russian officials involved in the death of whistleblower Sergei Magnitsky, a lawyer who died in prison after reporting government corruption. ¶ The House is expected to tack on the human-rights legislation in the Rules Committee before the measure heads to the floor.¶ If the panel can move the bill, which appears to have broad support, the House could take it up next week and send it back to the Senate for clearance and, finally, President Obama's signature.

### No Impact

#### **Alt causes to low relations – bad government communication**

RT News 7/24 (“Ambassador warns US Congress on Magnitsky bill”, 7/24/12, http://rt.com/politics/ambassador-us-magnitsky-bill-938/)

Yet it is not just the threat of the Magnitsky bill that hampers Russia-US relations, noted the Russian diplomat.¶ “The backdrop to these developments is the absence of systemic dialogue between our two legislative branches, which probably would have been a proper means of discussion of all issues of concern,” he noted. Contacts between the representative bodies have been lost, he says, and the upper houses have also begun to lose touch.¶ Kislyak closed his article on an optimistic note, saying “the United States and Russia are two great nations capable of achieving a lot together.” But in order for the bilateral relationship to achieve its full potential “requires a willingness to work with mutual respect and to build partnerships, not irritants.”¶ A willingness to work together, he concluded, will restore a sense of “normality” in relations between Moscow and Washington, something that Ambassador Kislyak lamented “is still in short supply.”

# Elections Updates

### **Obama Losing Now – Jewish Vote**

#### **Obama losing now – Jewish Vote**

Newsmax 7/25/12 [Todd Beamon and Kathleen Walter, Contributors, “Obama Lacks Florida Jewish Vote Needed to Win Election”, http://www.newsmax.com/Headline/schoen-obama-romney-tied/2012/07/25/id/446491]

President Barack Obama and Mitt Romney are “in a 50-50 election right now,” political analyst and Democratic pollster Doug Schoen tells Newsmax.TV, adding that the president is lacking the crucial Jewish vote in Florida needed to win the election.¶ “I could make a compelling argument why either side is going to win,” Schoen tells Newsmax in an exclusive interview. “But I will say this: There’s never been as much at stake in an election in recent memory as there is in this one.¶ “Two competing views, two competing visions, and – from where I sit – this is a fight and a contest that has transcended importance for ourselves and for our children.”¶ One of Obama's biggest hurdles: capturing Florida's Jewish voters. The president, polls show, has about 60-65 percent of the Jewish vote, but, says Schoen, if Obama does not win “a full 75 percent...it could, in fact, be decisive.”¶ The state is “effectively deadlocked,” said Schoen, the author of “Hopelessly Divided: The New Crisis in American Politics and What It Means for 2012 and Beyond.”¶ “Jews are necessarily torn, because they see the president as somebody who, aspirationally, has committed himself to Israel,” he said. “At the same time, there have been concerns about the settlement policy and also about the nature of his commitment to do whatever it takes in Iran.

### Obama Losing Now – Voter Enthusiasm

#### **Obama will lose – voter enthusiasm**

Gallup 7/25/12 [Jeffrey M. Jones, pollster, “Democratic Voting Enthusiasm Down Sharply From 2004, 2008”, http://www.gallup.com/poll/156194/democratic-voting-enthusiasm-down-sharply-2004-2008.aspx]

PRINCETON, NJ -- Democrats are significantly less likely now (39%) than they were in the summers of 2004 and 2008 to say they are "more enthusiastic about voting than usual" in the coming presidential election. Republicans are more enthusiastic now than in 2008, and the same as in 2004. Track the 2012 race and compare it to past elections > These results are based on a July 19-22 USA Today/Gallup poll. They suggest a shift in Republicans' and Democrats' orientation to voting in the coming presidential election compared with the last two, with Republicans expressing more voting enthusiasm. The current 51% to 39% Republican advantage in voter enthusiasm is slightly larger than the 53% to 45% GOP advantage Gallup measured in February of this year. The voting enthusiasm measure gives a sense of Americans' motivation to turn out and vote but probably also their expectations of their preferred party's chances of winning. Thus, the Republican advantage may indicate a greater likelihood of voting among Republicans but also greater optimism about a Republican victory than was the case in 2008. In turn, Democrats are probably less optimistic about their chances of winning than they were in 2008. Gallup has found a relationship between voting enthusiasm and the outcome of midterm congressional elections, with the party that has the advantage generally faring better in the elections. That pattern also held in the 2008 presidential election, with Democrats reporting greater enthusiasm throughout the year and Barack Obama winning the election. The 2004 data provided less guidance as to the eventual winner, as the Republicans (68%) and Democrats (67%) had similar scores at the time of the election, which George W. Bush won narrowly.

### Obama Winning Now – Predictions

#### **Obama will win – predictions**

**Barrons 7/21/12** [Jim Mctague, Washington Editor, Sharp Trader: Obama Will Win”, http://online.barrons.com/article/SB50001424053111904346504577532810034930738.html]

I'm jealous. Over the years, my election predictions have proven no better than a coin-toss. Quantitative trader Reid Holloway, on the other hand, has called the actual electoral-vote outcome of three of the four past presidential elections. Roll over, Ty Cobb: If Holloway's 2012 prediction holds up, then he'll be batting .800.¶ What's on Holloway's magic viewing screen? The trader, who operates quietly from Litchfield County, Conn., foresees an Obama victory, with 325 electoral votes for the incumbent versus 213 for GOP challenger Mitt Romney. Holloway doesn't relish the outcome; he favors Romney-style self reliance over Obama's Big Government. But Holloway's computer model tells him Obama's victory is all but inevitable.¶ Holloway's election formula is based on one he developed to predict market volatility among the S&P 500's market segments. The market formula is a key tool for Holloway's proprietary trading firm, which is in the sub-$100 million size group. Each market segment has a mean volatility. When a segment's volatility moves to an extreme, his model flags it and predicts when it will revert to its norm.¶ Holloway's political model breaks the national presidential contest into 50 unique state elections. Each state has a philosophical mean. But sometimes a state will shift sharply either to the right or the left. This happened, for example, in 2008, when voters of all political leanings expressed their disdain for President George W. Bush by voting enthusiastically for Obama. Holloway's model measures these mood changes and predicts when a particular state will revert to its political norm.¶ In 1996, the first time that Holloway put his model to the test, he blew it. The model predicted a victory by Republican Bob Dole over Democratic incumbent Bill Clinton. Dole ran a campaign that is viewed by many experts as one of the worst in modern history. Holloway's 1996 model allowed for a strong showing by Reform Party Candidate Ross Perot, predicting that the charismatic billionaire would siphon votes away from Clinton. After all, Perot had received a 18.9% of the popular vote in 1992—the most votes garnered by any third-party candidate since 1912, when Teddy Roosevelt attracted 27% of the vote with the "Bull Moose" party. Perot's 1996 run turned out to be a fiasco: The chart-toting, hectoring candidate received about 8% of the popular vote, which was significant but not strong enough to affect Clinton.¶ HOLLOWAY HAS A PERFECT RECORD since then, accurately forecasting the Electoral College outcome for the 2000, 2004, and 2008 presidential elections. What his model shows this year is that voters have become so closed-minded that Romney cannot carry any state that went for Democrat John Kerry in 2004 and Obama can't carry any state that went for Republican John McCain in 2008. This is because a welfare mentality like Europe's has a stronger grip on us than we appreciate. It's not just the underclasses who feel entitled to transfer payments from the wealthy: Banks, energy companies, agricultural companies—you name it—have grown accustomed to special tax breaks.¶ Holloway predicts Obama will win in Florida, Iowa, Nevada, North Carolina, and Ohio—all crucial swing states. Romney will take Colorado, Indiana, and Virginia. No model is foolproof, of course. Successive financial crises have taught us this. Holloway says that Romney would win if he defied the model and took Florida, North Carolina, and Ohio. Unless the Republican can turn his troubled campaign around, however, the odds he will score this hat trick are steep.

### Obama Winning Now – Laundry List

#### Obama winning now – 10 reasons

PolicyMic 7/27/12 [Dee Meyer, contributor, “10 Charts That Prove Why Obama Has Nothing to Worry About in Election 2012”, http://www.policymic.com/articles/11840/10-charts-that-prove-why-obama-has-nothing-to-worry-about-in-election-2012]

In Obama’s re-election, pictures could be worth a thousand votes. Obama’s economic policies have worked in propping up the sagging U.S. economy, and he has done a good job handling foreign affairs dilemmas during his first term, despite of all the odds he has to overcome. Discerning voters will do their own research, gather pertinent information, shun political rhetoric and will see through the negativity of his opponents. Here are 10 charts and pictures indicating why Obama is the sure-fire winner in the 2012 presidential race. Obama naysayers, take a look and weep:

1) Obama revived the failing U.S. stock market.

2) Yes, the private sector is doing just fine.

3) Unemployment rate is down.

4) Auto sales are up.

5) Retail sales are improving.

6) Home sales are up.

7) Unemployment is down.

8) The GDP is growing.

9) Bin Laden is dead.

10) The auto industry is alive and well.