# **Notes:**

Jackson Vanik is actually not going to pass anytime soon, Congress has been working on repeal of Health Care, and starting next week are beginning to talk about tax cuts. Therefore, there is not a lot of literature on the agenda item. It is likely that Jackson Vanik will be back after the election.

On the question of Magnitksy – Putin is willing to “talk” about it in hopes of increasing relations. Also, Magnitsky was talked about in a committee hearing. Russia wasn’t too pleased about it, but at the same time they really want Jackson Vanik to be repealed.

Some cards say that even if anything passes, the effects won’t be seen till after the lame duck session. The majority of them, however, say that Obama is focused on the election right now and all major bills aren’t going to be talked about till afterwards.

# **\*\*JACKSON VANIK**

# **Neg**

## Will Pass

### Generic

#### **Jackson Vanik will pass as long as Magnitsky and Syria settlements made with Russia – Putin is on board**

**JTW 7/10** [The Journal of Turkish Weekly, “Putin Worried Over Europe and ‘Anti-Russian’ US Plans” Tuesday, July 10, 2012 <http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/138118/putin-worried-over-europe-and-%C3%ABanti-russian%C3%AD-us-plans.html> SMerchant]

A number of U.S. Senators have threatened not to vote for the repeal of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which restricts trade relations with Russia, unless the Magnitsky bill is attached. Putin has vowed to respond to both the Magnitsky bill and the projected U.S. missile shield in Eastern Europe. Putin said the solution of "many global and regional problems" depended on Russia-U.S. relations, adding he has been "taking note" of U.S. officials' "harsh statements" about Russia One such area of disagreement is Syria, where the warring sides should be encouraged to achieve a political settlement through dialogue, Putin said. “No effort should be spared to compel the conflicting sides to work out a peaceful political solution to all disputes,” he said. “We need to foster that dialogue.” A repetition of a “Libyan scenario” in Syria is unacceptable, he warned.

#### Everyone is on board to pass JV

**McCormack 7/6** [Richard A. McCormack, Writer for Manufacturing and Technology news “On Russia Free Trade Issue, Big Business Interests Run Against Domestic Manufacturers” July 6th, 2012, Volume 19, No. 11 <http://www.manufacturingnews.com/news/russiapntr76121.html> SMerchant]

Subsequent massive U.S. trade deficits have crippled the American economy's ability to create jobs. Entire industries have disappeared and governments lost their tax base. "The problem has been caused by America's inability or unwillingness to neutralize foreign unfair trade practices, including state capitalism and its inherent barriers and subsidies," says CPA. "The U.S. cannot afford to continue making the same mistakes again and again." But CPA is up against a pro-Russia business PR juggernaut. The Business Roundtable says on its Russia PNTR website that there is "a universe of support for Russian PNTR." At a Senate Finance Committee hearing, United States Trade Representative Ron Kirk said that PNTR would "expand jobs here at home." Without it, the United States will have "no leverage with Russia over areas of disagreement." He said that all of the trade treaties signed to date have "clearly contributed to economic recovery." Kirk noted that Russia is the world's seventh largest economy, "but is only our 20th largest trading partner -- with $42.9 billion in two-way trade in goods in 2011." Absent was mention that the "two-way trade" was skewed four-to-one in Russia's favor. He also crooned about how U.S. exports to Russia increased by almost 40 percent between 2010 and 2011 (by $2.3 billion, from $6 billion to $8.3 billion) but failed to mention that imports from Russia skyrocketed by three times that amount ($6.9 billion, from $25.7 billion to $34.6 billion). Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack was equally as effusive of PNTR with Russia, stating that U.S. agricultural exports to Russia were $1.4 billion, while agricultural imports from Russia were $25 million "This impressive performance by U.S. exporters has been accomplished in spite of Russia's imposition of non-science-based sanitary and phytosanitary measures and unjustified technical barriers to trade," said Vilsack. In directing his pitch to Montana Democratic Sen. Max Baucus, a fervent free trader from an agricultural state and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Vilsack said that "entrepreneurial Montanans have shipped more than $20 million in live cattle and bovine genetics to Russia in the past two years. Russia is an excellent market for cattle, genetics and USDA Choice and Prime cuts." The U.S. State Department is also a proponent of Russia PNTR. Providing Russia with Most Favored Nation trade status "would give ballast to our overall relationship with Russia and strengthen the case of those who argue that greater cooperation with America is good for the Russian people," said Deputy Secretary of State William Burns. "Over time, extending PNTR can help Russians achieve their goal of building a modern, successful and prosperous nation." Burns did not mention that Russia supports Syrian President Assad and has warm relations with Iran. Baucus is convinced that Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization "will mean thousands of jobs here in the United States, but only if we pass Russia Permanent Normal Trade relations legislation by August," he said. "If we do pass Russia PNTR, U.S. exports to Russia are projected to double within five years, and that means thousands of new jobs here at home. These new jobs come at no cost to us -- zero." Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) was on board as well, but he is no fan of Russia. Russia remains ruled by the iron fist of Putin and there is continued "disregard for the rule of law, human rights and democracy," he said. Russia still occupies Georgia. It is seeking to undermine the U.S. missile defense system in Europe, and it recently conducted the largest joint war games ever to be held in the Middle East with Syria, Iran and China. Russia ranks 143rd out of 183 countries in the 2011 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index, just ahead of North Korea and Somalia, said Hatch. "It repeatedly fails to abide by its international commitments." It has not fulfilled commitments related to intellectual property and it has never ratified the U.S.-Bilateral Investment treaty "another example of their failure to deliver on their economic promises," Hatch noted, calling Russia "corrupt" and a "rogue regime." "The Obama administration argues that the U.S. has no leverage over Russia by withholding PNTR. But they fail to acknowledge that it was the Obama administration that squandered America's leverage when the President decided to invite Russia to join the WTO to augment his failed reset policy," said Hatch. "With this leverage now gone, they argue that the myriad of economic problems we confront daily will be resolved through WTO litigation. We know from our experience with China in the WTO that this simply is not enough." The business case for PNTR with Russia is not very strong, Hatch noted, "especially when considering that Russia already committed to provide MFN treatment to our exports under the terms of our 1992 Bilateral Trade Agreement." Obama, Hatch added, "expects Congress to turn a blind eye to the barrage of bad news that demonstrates on a daily basis the deteriorating political, economic and security relationship between the United States and Russia. Russia continues to see itself and act as a military, strategic and economic counterweight to the United States. They view every aspect of this relationship through this lens, including their membership in the WTO. An administration 'reset' policy [toward Russia] that ignores this reality and consciously seeks to separate these interrelated issues is naive, dangerous and doomed to failure. We should support the ability of American workers to try and take advantage of Russia's impending membership in the WTO, but in so doing, Russia must be held accountable for its policies." The Russia PNTR legislation was introduced in the Senate by Sens. Max Baucus (D-Mont.), John Kerry (D-Mass.), John Thune (R-S.D.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.).

#### JV will pass within the next week

**Needham 7/10** [Vicki Needham, Staff Writer for The Hill, “Top US trade official urges congressional action on Russia” July 10th, 2012 <http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/236987-top-us-trade-official-urges-congressional-action-on-russia> SMerchant ]

The nation's top trade official on Tuesday urged Congress to lift a Cold War-era provision to grant Russia permanent normal trade relations. The call from U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk comes on the heels of the Russian Duma’s ratification of its membership into the World Trade Organization (WTO), an 18-year quest. “We are pleased to hear that Russia has completed this critical first step in its domestic process for approving the terms for becoming a member of the World Trade Organization," Kirk said. "We reiterate our call on Congress to act now on Jackson-Vanik and Permanent Normal Trade Relations legislation,” he said. Once the upper chamber of Russia's parliament, the Federation Council, approves the accession package, it then heads to the desk of President Vladimir Putin for his signature, which is expected before the July 23 deadline. When complete, Russia will gain membership in 30 days and Congress will need to act. That means lawmakers must clear a bill that will give U.S. exporters greater access to the world's ninth largest economy, and biggest outside of the WTO, before the August recess. "Russia’s membership in the rules-based global trading system of the WTO will contribute to Russia’s economic growth as well as provide us with new opportunities to guide and grow our bilateral economic relationship," Kirk said. That ramps up pressure on lawmakers in Washington to clear out the Jackson-Vanik provision, which would allow for normal trade relations. The Senate Finance Committee is planning to mark up legislation, most likely next week, that would combine a repeal of Jackson-Vanik with human-rights legislation known at the Magnitsky bill. The House Ways and Means Committee has not announced a markup yet, and an aide told The Hill they are still working with the Obama administration and the Senate on how to move forward. Panel Chairman Dave Camp (R-Mich.) has said he wants to move a clean repeal without any human-rights language.

In Washington, Trade Representative Ron Kirk urged U.S. lawmakers to quickly approve permanent normal trade relations, known as PNTR, with Russia by lifting a Cold War-era provision that made favorable U.S. tariffs conditional on the rights of Russian Jews to emigrate freely. The Jackson-Vanik amendment is inconsistent with WTO rules requiring countries to provide equal treatment for imports from all other members, and also considered out of date. If Congress fails to approve PNTR, Russia could deny U.S. exporters the market-opening concessions it made to join the WTO, putting them at a disadvantage to suppliers in Europe, Asia and elsewhere around the world. "Russia's membership in the rules-based global trading system of the WTO will contribute to Russia's economic growth as well as provide us with new opportunities to guide and grow our bilateral economic relationship," Kirk said. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus, a Montana Democrat, has said he plans to push forward on a PNTR bill this month, but his counterpart in the House of Representatives, Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp, a Michigan Republican, has not made the same pledge. "Without PNTR, America's ranchers, farmers, workers and businesses will lose out to their foreign competition. I intend to mark up PNTR legislation as quickly as possible," Baucus said in a statement after the Duma vote.

#### Will pass and solves trade

**Sorensen 6/27** 2012, \*Loretta Sorensen writes for Midwest Producer, “Vilsack: Repeal Jackson-Vanik amendment or lose trade with Russia,” http://www.midwestproducer.com/news/markets/vilsack-repeal-jackson-vanik-amendment-or-lose-trade-with-russia/article\_dc5cff3e-c07b-11e1-a016-0019bb2963f4.html, AJ

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

#### Obama push and opposition to Magnitsky being attached---solves trade relations

**Needham 6/18** 2012, \*Vicki Needham is a staff writer for The Hill, “Obama presses for improved trade ties with Russia,” http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/233311-obama-presses-for-improved-trade-ties-with-russia, AJ

President Obama urged Congress on Monday to repeal a human-rights provision that will open up trade for U.S. businesses to Russia. Obama met Monday with Russian President Vladimir Putin and emphasized the need to improve and expand trade ties between the two nations at the Group of 20 summit in Los Cabos, Mexico. "In particular, we discussed the need to expand trade and commercial ties between the United States and Russia, which are still far below where they should be," Obama said during a press conference following the meeting. "And I emphasized my **priority of having Congress repeal Jackson-Vanik, provide permanent trade relations status to Russia so that American businesses can take advantage of the extraordinary opportunities** now that Russia is a member of the WTO," he said. Russia has scheduled a July 4 vote on its World Trade Organization membership, meaning Congress will have 30 days to repeal the nearly 40-year-old Jackson-Vanik provision that will pave the way for permanent normal trade relations (PNTR). Neither leader mentioned in their remarks, a human rights bill under consideration by Congress that could be tied to PNTR legislation. Jackson-Vanik was designed to put pressure on communist nations for human-rights abuses and emigration policies. Since the end of the Cold War, it has been used as leverage in trade talks to win concessions from Russia and other former Soviet bloc states. There is a growing push from House and Senate lawmakers to attach new human-rights legislation to the repeal. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) said last week that he backs a plan to pair legislation granting normal trade relations with Russia with the so-called Magnitsky legislation that would freeze assets and deny U.S. visas to Russian officials linked to human-rights abuses. The bill is named for Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian lawyer who died while in police custody. Russia is strongly opposed to the Magnitsky bill and has warned its passage would cool relations with the United States and could lead to retaliation. National Foreign Trade Council President Bill Reinsch sent a letter on Friday to all members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which will vote on the Magnitsky bill on Tuesday, **urging panel members to oppose the legislation, saying the bill should be limited in scope** to measures already taken by the Obama administration to deny visas to those involved with his death. But even pairing the legislation might not be enough for some lawmakers. Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), the ranking member of the Finance panel, and seven other Republicans said last week that they are concerned the Magnitsky bill is being watered down. They told Baucus they want to see a slew of other trade and foreign policy issues with Russia addressed before the PNTR vote. Business groups including the Business Roundtable and U.S. Chamber of Commerce argue that **not moving forward granting normal trade relations will hurt only U.S. businesses and won't change anything for Russia**, which, with the vote, is agreeing to accept a long list of specific terms to join the 153-member WTO. Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio) told The Hill last week that he helped craft many of provisions while he served as U.S. Trade Representative from May 2005 to May 2006 and, while he supports human-rights legislation, doesn't want it to derail normal trade ties.

### Chamber of Commerce Push

#### Chamber of Commerce has made JV a priority

**Ostrich 7/6** [Jay Ostrich, Staff writer for The Inquirer, “An antiquated trade barrier could hurt Pennsylvania manufacturers” July 6th, 2012 <http://articles.philly.com/2012-07-06/news/32552325_1_russia-wto-exports/2> SMerchant]

The problem is that once Russia joins the WTO, the Jackson-Vanik amendment will put the United States in violation of the WTO's requirement that every member grant every other member what's now called "permanent normal trade relations" status. As a result, while every other WTO country would benefit from Russia's lowered tariffs, America wouldn't. That spells trouble for companies that are trading with Russia, including the Elliot Group, a Pittsburgh area firm that sells compressor pumps in Russia; Zimmerman Industries, a Lancaster County firm that sells concrete mixers; and York International, which sells appliance parts. It would also mean fewer opportunities for companies that could benefit from Russia's lower tariffs in the future, especially Pennsylvania's manufacturers, which account for 90 percent of the state's exports. That's why major business groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce have made repealing Jackson-Vanik a priority.

### Texas Push

#### Texas is pushing for PNTR

**Hendricks 7/6** [D. Hendricks. Staff Writer for mysanantonio.com “Texas has trade opportunities in Russia Friday, July 6th, 2012 <http://www.mysanantonio.com/business/business_columnists/david_hendricks/article/Texas-has-trade-opportunities-in-Russia-3688549.php> SMerchant]

Texas has much in common with Russia, including sharing a history of successfully repelling large military invasions. Both Texas and Russia are big in agriculture, military equipment construction and energy exports. In 2011, Texas exported $1.6 billion worth of goods to Russia, supporting about 4,100 jobs, according to the Washington-based Business Roundtable, which is lobbying for normal trade relations. Shintech Inc. in Houston exported plastics to Russia. Choice Trailer Manufacturing in Katy has exported trailers. TMK-IPSCO in Baytown is a subsidiary of a Russian pipe manufacturer. Without normal trade relations, “Our foreign competitors — but not the United States — will be able to use WTO mechanisms to enforce Russia's commitments for their companies and workers,” a Business Roundtable report states. Texas could compete better in selling beef to Russia, for example. In 2011, 4 percent of Russia's beef imports came from the United States while 70 percent came from Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay. Texas companies should push Congress for normalized trade relations with Russia. Texas companies understand international trade better than anyone, and Russia is poised to be a solid customer.

## Internal Link

**JV repeal solves trade and nuclear conflict**

**Bloomberg 7/2** 2012, “The Right Way to Repeal Jackson-Vanik,” http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-07-02/u-s-should-upgrade-russian-trade-without-rights-sanction.html, AJ

The U.S. Congress should encourage the opening of the world’s seventh-largest economy by upgrading Russia to the status of Permanent Normal Trade Relations. That requires the repeal of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, a set of trade restrictions adopted in 1974 that was designed to compel the Soviet Union to allow emigration of its Jewish population, a goal that has long ceased to be appropriate or useful. Since the early 1990s, successive U.S. administrations have granted annual waivers of its terms. Now, keeping the law on the books would put the U.S. in violation of WTO rules and allow Russia to penalize American companies. WTO membership will further bind Russia and President Vladimir Putin to a global regime of rules and laws and also **open opportunities for U.S. companies**. Those are important goals in their own right. Failure to repeal Jackson-Vanik would just give Russia free rein to punish U.S. companies. Congress can, and should, shine a strong spotlight on Russia’s deplorable human-rights record by putting the Magnitsky Act before President Barack Obama as a separate piece of legislation. Yet for all the act’s good intentions, we think its desire to sanction not just people linked to the Magnitsky case is overbroad. In addition, its positive effects don’t outweigh the costs of censuring a country whose help the U.S. and **the world needs to curb Iran’s nuclear program and to unseat the murderous regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria**.

**More evidence**

**Moscow Times 7/5** 2012, “U.S. Businesses Favor Increasing Trade Ties,” http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/us-businesses-favor-increasing-trade-ties/461676.html, AJ

Now, they're looking to embrace America's top Cold War foe even as critics say its human rights record is still lacking. With the backing of such U.S. businesses as Caterpillar, President Barack **Obama's administration is eyeing Russia**, the world's seventh-largest economy, as a top trade priority in its campaign to double exports by the end of 2014. "Russia should be Caterpillar's largest market," Bill Lane, a lobbyist for the Illinois-based company, said recently. The country is already in the top 10 among more than 170 export destinations for Caterpillar, which does not disclose sales by country. With its mineral and energy resources, **Russia would be a boon for the earth-moving-equipment maker**, Lane said. The United States shipped $8.3 billion worth of goods to Russia in 2011, 0.6 percent of all U.S. exports for the year, Commerce Department data show. Exports of U.S. goods and services to Russia may reach $22 billion annually during the next five years, according to the Business Roundtable, a Washington-based industry group for chief executive officers of companies including Boeing, Dow Chemical and Citigroup. That would benefit American exporters, except for a 1974 trade law that restricted trade with the Soviet Union. Under WTO rules, all members are supposed to grant each other **permanent normal trade ties**. If Congress doesn't repeal the law's Jackson-Vanik Amendment, U.S. companies may lose out on tariff reductions and potential deals in Russia, according to U.S. businesses and officials. "**Our businesses and our innovators and exporters will be at a competitive disadvantage** compared to their global counterparts," U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk told the Senate finance panel on June 21. The United States also won't be able to use the WTO's dispute-resolution process in dealing Russia, he said. U.S. lawmakers have 16 working days to act before leaving for a five-week recess, according to the Coalition for U.S.-Russia Trade, an organization led by 22 U.S. companies and industry groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Texas, Illinois, California and New York may be the biggest beneficiaries of improved trade status. Those states exported about $3.5 billion in goods to Russia last year, including beef, mining equipment and General Electric-manufactured turbine parts, according to the Business Roundtable. "We do have concerns about human rights in Russia, and we have concerns in particular about this case," Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said June 27 during a visit to Finland. "We think there is a **way of expressing those concerns without derailing the relationship**." Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp, a Michigan Republican, has said he plans to push for a bill without the human-rights provision attached. Sergei Kislyak, Russia's ambassador to the United States, has warned of an unspecified reprisal if the United States attaches the human-rights bill to trade legislation.

## Magnitsky Passage

### Already Passed – No Impact

#### **Senate Panel approves Magnitsky bill – no impact**

Rubenfeld 6/26 [Samuel Rubenfeld, writer for the Wall Street Journal “Senate Panel approves Magnitsky bill” June 26th 2012 <http://blogs.wsj.com/corruption-currents/2012/06/26/senate-panel-approves-magnitsky-bill/> SMerchant]

A U.S. Senate committee unanimously approved a bill targeting human rights violators around the world. The bill, named after Sergei Magnitsky, a lawyer for Hermitage Capital Management who has been lionized around the world as a martyr and a whistleblower after he made allegations of a huge fraud scandal in Russia and died while in the hands of Russian authorities, is more universal than its House-approved counterpart, which only targeted Russian human-rights violators. “This bill is absolutely motivated by the circumstances of Sergei Magnitsky, but it is universal in its application,” said Sen. Ben Cardin (D., Md.), after the vote, according to a post on Foreign Policy’s The Cable blog. “The sponsors of the House bill have encouraged me to keep it universal, so I think it will not be difficult to get the House to go along with the universality.” As the Magnitsky scandal unfolded, the U.S. created a secret visa blacklist of those it said were involved in the case. Moscow responded with its own list. The bill would make the U.S. list public, broaden it to include other human-rights abusers and ban those on the list from banking at U.S. financial institutions. It was approved by voice vote in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee following a short debate. For the bill to become law, the House and Senate will have to reconcile the differences and each pass identical legislation. Russia has vowed to retaliate if the Magnitsky bill becomes law. Moscow has said its passage would negatively affect its cooperation with Washington on a number of issues, among them Afghanistan, Iran and nuclear weapons. By making the legislation more universal, it would ostensibly tamp down Russian criticism, according to The Cable. Cardin said the Magnitsky bill will now be joined with an initiative to grant Russia permanent normal trade relations status so that U.S. companies can take advantage of the country’s pending accession to the World Trade Organization, The Cable reported.

# Aff

## Won’t Pass

**Won’t pass**

**Moscow Times 7/5** 2012, “U.S. Businesses Favor Increasing Trade Ties,” http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/us-businesses-favor-increasing-trade-ties/461676.html, AJ

The challenge: Russia provokes a maelstrom of conflicting sentiments in the United States, some deeply rooted in 20th-century history. Some American lawmakers say that although improved trade ties are important, the former U.S. adversary **needs to be held accountable for human-rights abuses**, lax respect for the rule of law and support for the Syrian regime. "Russia continues to see itself and act as a military, strategic and economic counterweight to the Unites States," Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah, the top Republican on the finance panel, said at a June 21 committee hearing. Even with the pressure from corporate America and the White House, U.S. lawmakers **may not act as quickly** as supporters would like. "I**t's going to be pretty tough" for Congress to vote on repeal of trade restrictions before November**, Andrew Kuchins, director of the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said in a phone interview. "I don't think that the administration really wants to have a broad debate about its Russia policy" **before the elections**, he said. **Republicans are also reluctant to support an Obama foreign-policy goal**, and members of both parties want to see more support from the White House, Kuchins said. While Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus, a Montana Democrat, said that his panel later this month would consider a bill to repeal the trade restrictions, companion **legislation doesn't yet exist** in the House.

#### Jackson Vanik won’t pass till after the election

**Colley 6/21** [Carroll Colley, writer for Foreign Policy, Posted by Ian Bremmer “Presidential campaign politics delays U.S. recognition of Russia at WTO” <http://eurasia.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/06/21/presidential_campaign_politics_delays_us_recognition_of_russia_at_wto> SMerchant]

While Russia will enter the WTO in late August, U.S. industry will be left on the sidelines until Congress removes the Cold War-era impediment to greater trade between the former foes. But it's a safe bet that Congress won't graduate Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment, which is necessary to grant permanent normal trade relations to Russia and take advantage of its accession to the WTO, before the November election. The reason? Russia is perpetually steeped in controversy, and U.S.-Russia relations have become a campaign issue in the race between Republican Mitt Romney and President Barack Obama. U.S. industry likely won't be able to take advantage of greater market access in Russia until the lame-duck session at the end of the year, and possibly later. The White House is much more focused on November 6 (Election Day) than August 23 (the approximate date of Russia's WTO entry). Only after repeated requests from Republican lawmakers for senior level officials to testify on the Hill -- widely viewed as a Republican maneuver to force the administration to speak on the record about its Russian policy -- did the administration relent by sending the duo of Deputy Secretary of State William Burns and U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk to testify before the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee. The White House calculates that a "yes" vote on graduating Russia from Jackson-Vanik (a 1974 provision that ties trade relations to freedom of emigration and other human rights considerations) would have little electoral upside, and might even harm Obama before the election. Obama's meeting on June 18 with President Vladimir Putin on the margins of the G20 in Los Cabos seemingly failed to produce a breakthrough on Syrian policy. Headlines about ongoing arms shipments bound for Syria and the potential for continued Russian intransigence at the U.N. Security Council also represent potential political liabilities during the election home stretch, not to mention a host of domestic political issues. Romney, meanwhile, has called Russia the U.S.'s greatest political "enemy" -- and later changing that description to "foe" -- because he senses a potential weakness in an Obama foreign policy that has otherwise produced several notable successes. It would be much simpler, politically, if supporters of graduating Russia from Jackson-Vanik could cast it as a vote for American business, as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton did in a recent opinion piece. But they can't. Passage is complicated by the Magnitsky bill, human rights legislation that targets government officials involved in the case of Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian lawyer who died in police custody in 2009. Largely viewed as a replacement for Jackson-Vanik, the stated aim of the bill is to deny visas to corrupt officials, freeze any U.S. accounts they have, and publish their names. The reality is that the Obama administration last summer instituted its own visa ban and any potential offenders have long ago transferred any funds from the U.S.. The net effect of the bill, therefore, is the "naming of names," which would represent a significant embarrassment to the Putin regime. The bill enjoys broad bipartisan support, with a number of lawmakers stating publicly that passage of the Magnitsky bill is a prerequisite for their vote on Jackson-Vanik. The Obama administration has sent contradictory messages about its support for the Magnitsky bill. While originally opposing the bill, the administration seems to have accepted the inevitable and has been working with its primary author, Democratic Sen. Ben Cardin of Maryland. One recent Senate version provides for the public list as well as a confidential annex, which would largely allow the administration to circumvent the thrust of the bill by invoking national security exemptions. This is strongly opposed by a number of senior lawmakers, including Sen. John McCain, who was a co-sponsor of the effort to repeal Jackson-Vanik on the caveat of corresponding passage of the Magnitsky bill. As the August recess rapidly approaches, the window for graduating Russia from Jackson-Vanik prior to its WTO accession closes. Obama appears to have little room to maneuver in expending political capital on the matter without raising the risk of elevating Russia-and its collateral baggage including Syria, Georgia, Iran, and domestic protests-to a legitimate campaign issue. Unless Congress moves forward on its own prerogative-which appears unlikely-the repeal of Jackson-Vanik won't get passed before November, or later, leaving the world's largest economy unable to take advantage of the accession of the WTO's newest member.

#### Congress won’t be voting on anything till the lame duck session

Van Susteren 7/9 [Greta Van Susteren, writer for Fox News Insider “Does this bother you? Am I wrong?” July 9th, 2012 <http://gretawire.foxnewsinsider.com/2012/07/09/does-this-bother-you-am-i-wrong/> SMerchant]

Are you aware of the fact that the Members of the House, the Senate and the President (and of BOTH PARTIES) are holding off until after election to tackle important national problems? They are all waiting for the so called ‘lame duck’ session after the November election when they know you can’t clobber them in the election booth for how they do or do not do their job. Politicians who are hiding out until the lame duck session care more about their jobs than they do about dealing with real problems like the tax code, immigration reform, the debt ceiling (we will be hitting it again soon), Bush tax cuts etc. These are real problems to you…but for them, it is something to avoid until after election when they are immediately accountable to you. If politicians cared more about doing their jobs and solving the nation’s problems they would be bold — they would stay here in Washington and insist on working to solve the nation’s serious problems NOW – not pushing it off to the safety of the lame duck session. There is NOTHING to stop the House, the Senate and the President from working RIGHT NOW and even 24/7 to solve the very real problems of America – except their lame excuse we hear so often that ‘this is how it is always done.’ Time to change. We don’t have to do it like it has always been done. Times are much too serious. Many Americans are scared..suffering. Politicians don’t have to wait until after election (to the lame duck session), and they don’t have to spend their time now just blaming each other. By waiting until after the election, to the lame duck session, we lose 6 months of time to solve a problem. That hurts. Real leaders would step up now…insist that everyone stay here in Washington and work on the problems that they themselves should have handled already or perhaps even caused by inactivity or bad policy. They ARE the stewards of our nation…so if things are off track, they might want to check the mirror! President Obama, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Speaker Boehner have the power to make everyone stay in Washigton and handle these real problems – rather than the wait 6 months to hide under cover of the lame duck session. Will they? Should they? Am I wrong?

## Thumpers

### Tax Cuts

#### Tax cuts extension on top of the agenda

**Rosen and Lightman 7/10** [James Rosen and David Lightman, Staff Writers for the Richmond Times – Dispatch “Obama seeks extension of Bush-era tax cuts for most” July 10th, 2012 <http://www2.timesdispatch.com/news/world-new/2012/jul/10/tdmain01-obama-seeks-extension-of-bush-era-tax-cut-ar-2045235> SMerchant]

President Barack Obama expressed confidence Monday that he can win an election-year fight with Republicans over taxes and the economy despite three straight months of weak job growth. Obama urged Congress to pass a one-year extension of the Bush-era tax cuts for most Americans, but aides said he would veto a bill that included providing relief to households earning $250,000 or more, as GOP congressional leaders and presumptive Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney want to do. "Let's not hold the vast majority of Americans hostage and our entire economy hostage while we debate the merits of another tax cut for the wealthy," Obama said in the White House's ornate East Room. Obama's appeal drew a disdainful response from Republicans on Capitol Hill. "President Obama is still asleep at the switch when it comes to our economy and jobs," said House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio. Boehner spokesman Michael Steel noted that Obama made his pitch "just days after another dismal jobs report," which showed the unemployment rate holding at 8.2 percent in June and the economy adding only 80,000 jobs during the month. The president claimed broad political support for his refusal to back across-the-board tax relief after Dec. 31, when the Bush tax cuts are set to expire. "The American people are with me on this," he said. "Poll after poll shows that's the case." White House aides said Monday that if Obama is re-elected, he will veto any move to extend all the upper-income tax cuts. The price tag for the upper-income tax cuts is about $800 billion over 10 years. The tax cuts passed during the George W. Bush administration expire Dec. 31, along with the payroll tax cut approved under Obama. If all those cuts go away, a middle-income family with income around $70,000 would face a tax increase of about $3,000. Higher-income families would feel a much bigger bite. Obama upped the ante by framing the November election as a referendum on his advocacy of middle-class tax cuts vs. Romney's desire to extend tax relief to all Americans regardless of income. "In many ways, the fate of the tax cut for the wealthiest Americans will be decided by the outcome of the next election," Obama said. "My opponent will fight to keep them in place. I will fight to end them." Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, readily accepted the challenge. He called the president's proposal "a massive tax increase on job creators and on small business." "Successful small businesses will see their taxes go up dramatically, and that will kill jobs," he told Virginia-based conservative radio host John Fredericks in an interview taped to air this morning. Obama said Bush's tax cuts "didn't work" and blamed his "top-down economics" for the 2008 economic collapse and subsequent recession. At the same time, Obama called for extending the same tax cuts to what he said would be 98 percent of all Americans were the $250,000 household income cap — with a limit of $200,000 for individuals — to be imposed. Obama said the lower tax rates for affluent Americans are "a major contributor to our (federal budget) deficit." In Virginia, Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Timothy M. Kaine is distancing himself from Obama's tax proposal — by $250,000. Kaine, a former governor who recently served as Democratic National Committee chairman, issued a statement Monday agreeing with the premise of the president's proposal but not the threshold. Instead, Kaine proposed allowing the taxes to rise only on those earning $500,000 or more, and he urged lawmakers to find compromise. "I disagree with those Republicans who argue that the Bush tax cuts should be made permanent in their entirety," Kaine said in a statement. "I also disagree with the president on the level at which we should allow them to expire. If everyone sets partisanship aside, we can find the right balance between helping families and businesses and making progress toward reducing the deficit." Kaine's opponent in the Senate race, former Gov. and Sen. George Allen, has sought to tie Kaine to Obama's policies.

#### **After congress debates about healthcare this week, Obama’s focus will shift to Tax Cuts**

**Billups 7/10** [Erin Billups, Staff Writer for Hudson Valley – Your News Now – “Republican agenda includes effort to repeal health care law” July 10th, 2012 <http://hudsonvalley.ynn.com/content/politics/591114/republican-agenda-includes-effort-to-repeal-health-care-law/> SMerchant]

As the President Monday once again called on Congress to repeal tax cuts for those making $250,000 or more annually, Democrats in contentious races like Upstate New York's Kathy Hochul, distanced herself from the administration calling, instead, for higher taxes for those making over $500,000. Hochul said, "People know I don't agree with the President on every issue, but I do agree with him that we do need to give some certainty to the members of the middle class." With a struggling economy, the stakes are high this election year and members of Congress are fine tuning their message to voters. The Republican-led House plans to vote on keeping the Bush tax cuts in place in the coming weeks, part of a month-long agenda aimed at highlighting where they say Democrats have gone wrong. "We want to make sure the American people understand what we're working on in the House and what the Senate is not doing," Representative Renee Ellmers said. This week, the House is focusing on repealing the administration's health care laws that were upheld by the Supreme Court. "This is nothing short of economic malpractice. We can and we must do better," Representative Nan Hayworth said. The House held two hearings Tuesday, previewing Wednesday's vote to repeal the health care laws. Republicans have voted over 30 times to overturn them. Democrats say enough is enough. Hochul said, "The Supreme Court has spoken. It's the law of the land. Let's not waste anymore time." It's clear the agenda set by the House will be ignored by the Democratic-run Senate. On the floor Tuesday, veteran Congressman Charles Rangel condemned the GOP’s election year program. Rangel said, "It's bad for this Congress and it's bad for our great country." Next week, the House plans to highlight the Democrats' lack of a plan to deal with the massive cuts to military spending. And in the following weeks, they will focus on burdensome regulations for businesses and maintaining the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy.

### Health Care

#### Health care is on top of the agenda

**9News.com 7/10** [9News – Colorado’s News Leader “Republicans look to repeal the health care law” July 10th, 2012 <http://www.9news.com/news/article/276865/339/Republicans-look-to-repeal-the-health-care-law> SMerchant]

Congress is covering some familiar ground today. House Republicans today are heading back into battle against President Obama's health care reform law. "They would make people believe that it's all free; it's going to cost someone," Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Florida, said. The House is brushing aside the Supreme Court decision upholding the law, and Senate Democrats sure to shoot down any repeal. The Senate is already looking ahead to the next big battleground - extending the Bush-era tax cuts. "What are the consequences of taking more money from successful people?" Sen. John Kyl, R-Arizona, asked. Senate Republicans are pushing back - hard - on President Obama's call to extend the cuts for one year, but only for those making less than $250,000 a year. "Let's not hold the vast majority of Americans and our entire economy hostage while we debate the merits of another tax cut for the wealthy," President Obama said. In a radio interview, Mitt Romney called the proposal an economic misstep. "We just saw a terrible jobs report just last week, and now to add a higher tax on job creators and on small businesses is about to worst thing you can do to create jobs," Romney said. The President is telling Congress not to bother with an across-the-board tax cut extension. He says he'll veto it.

### Multiple Thumpers

#### Infrastructure, Clean energy, and education creation is on top of the agenda

**Kasperowicz 7/9** [Pete Kasperowicz, writer for The Hill. “House plans five-hour debate on healthcare repeal; WH warns veto” 7/09/12 <http://thehill.com/blogs/floor-action/house/236877-house-plans-five-hours-of-debate-on-healthcare-repeal-law> SMerchant]

The House will hold five hours of debate on Tuesday and Wednesday on legislation that would completely repeal the 2010 healthcare law, which is being called up by Republicans in light of the Supreme Court's decision that the individual health insurance mandate is constitutional. The House Rules Committee approved a rule late Monday setting out the lengthy debate on a bill that is expected to pass with Republican support, but very little, if any, Democratic support. The Repeal of Obamacare Act, H.R. 6079, was formally introduced by House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.) on Monday. Later Monday evening, the White House put out a statement saying President Obama would veto the bill if it were presented for his signature, something that won't happen given Senate opposition. "The administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 6079 because it would cost millions of hardworking middle-class families the security of affordable health coverage and care they deserve," the statement said. "It would increase the deficit and detract from the work the Congress needs to do to focus on the economy and create jobs. "The last thing the Congress should do is refight old political battles and take a massive step backward by repealing basic protections that provide security for the middle class," it added. "Right now, the Congress needs to work together to focus on the economy and creating jobs. Congress should act on the president's concrete plans to create an economy built to last by reducing the deficit in a balanced way and investing in education, clean energy, innovation and infrastructure. "If the president were presented with H.R. 6079, he would veto it." Under the rule for the House bill, the House committees on Education and the Workforce, Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means will each control one hour of debate. House committees on Budget, Judiciary and Small Business will each control 30 minutes. Finally, House Majority Leader Cantor and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and/or their designees will split the last 30 minutes of debate time. The House is expected to start work on the bill by debating and approving the rule, which will take an hour early Tuesday afternoon. A final vote on passage on the bill itself is expected Wednesday.

## Magnitsky

### A2 Committee Passage

#### It only passed through a panel – the bill hasn’t been passed yet – and Russia is ANGRY – if the bill fully passes, it’ll crush relations

Oman Tribune 6/27 [Oman Tribune on 6/27/12 “US Senate panel clears Magnitsky sanctions bill“ <http://www.omantribune.com/index.php?page=news&id=122450&heading=Other%20Top%20Stories> SMerchant]

US Senate panel late on Tuesday unanimously approved a bill that would penalise Russian officials for human rights abuses, a measure with broad support in Congress that Russia protests would be an unwarranted intrusion into its internal affairs. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed the ‘Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act’, named after an anti-corruption lawyer who died in 2009 after a year in Russian jails. It is sponsored by Democratic Senator Ben Cardin. The bill would require the United States to deny visas and freeze the assets of Russians linked to Magnitsky’s death, as well as those of other human rights abusers in Russia or anywhere in the world. Moscow expressed outrage over the US Senate’s approval of the bill and warned Americans that adoption of the sanctions would strain US-Russian relations. “The effect on our relations will be extremely negative,” Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov was quoted by state news agency Itar-Tass as saying. “We are not only deeply sorry but outraged that - despite common sense and all signals Moscow has sent and keeps sending about the counterproductive nature of such steps - work on the ‘Magnitsky law’ continues.” Ryabkov said adoption of the bill could derail improved ties between Moscow and Washington, part of a policy initiative by the Obama administration to “reset” ties that had become increasingly strained under his predecessor George W. Bush. “It appears American lawmakers want to break the positive trend in our relationship with such serious irritants,” Ryabkov told Vesti-24 state television. “There is still time for the initiators of the Magnitsky law to again weigh the situation and ponder the consequences.” US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton downplayed the risk to relations with Moscow. “We made it very clear that we do have concerns about human rights in Russia, and we have concerns in particular about this (Magnitsky) case,” Clinton said in Helsinki. “We think there is a way of expressing those concerns without derailing the relationship and that is what we are working with our Congress to do and we have every reason to believe we can accomplish that.” A similar measure was passed by a House of Representatives committee earlier this month, but it limits the sanctions to Russia. It has yet to come to a vote in the full House. Despite bipartisan support in Congress, the measure’s future prospects remain uncertain, in part because the Obama administration is unenthusiastic about it. The administration’s position has prompted some Magnitsky bill supporters to threaten not to vote for a White House priority this year - permanent normal trade relations with Russia - unless this bill is attached. Democratic Senator Max Baucus, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, has promised to add the Magnitsky measure to the legislation on trade relations with Russia when his panel votes on the trade bill later this summer. The death in police custody of Magnitsky, a Russian who worked for the equity fund Hermitage Capital in Moscow, spooked investors and blackened Russia’s image abroad. The Kremlin’s own human rights council says he was probably beaten to death.

### Hurts relations

#### Tanks Relations

**Englund and Lally 7/10** [Will Englund – Pulitzer Prize winner, Correspondent for The Washington Post. Kathy Lally, his wife, also correspondent for the Washington Post “Russia to join World Trade Organization” Tuesday, July 10, 2012 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/russia-to-join-wto-after-parliamentary-vote/2012/07/10/gJQAFwolaW_story.html> SMerchant]

A delegation from Russia’s upper house of parliament, the Federation Council, is in Washington meeting with members of Congress over the move to repeal Jackson-Vanik. One argument is that Russia and Israel today allow visa-free travel between the two countries. But there is a proposal to tie repeal of Jackson-Vanik to the passage of what’s called the Magnitsky bill, which places visa and financial sanctions on Russian officials associated with the death in pretrial detention of a whistleblower who unearthed a $230 million tax fraud, only to be charged with the crime himself. That bill has been vehemently denounced by Russian officials who see it as an intrusion into their domestic affairs and worry about the precedent it would set.

# **\*\*ELECTIONS**

## AFF

### Obama Losing---Polls

#### Romney’s winning---polls

**Dinan 7/9** 2012, \*Stephen Dinan is a staff writer for The Washington Times, “Obama loses ground to Romney in key measures of poll,” http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/jul/9/obama-loses-ground-to-romney-in-key-measures-of-po/, AJ

Mitt Romney continues to hold a **whisker-thin 1-percentage-point lead** over President Obama in a head-to-head election match-up, but the former Massachusetts governor is eating into the president’s air of inevitability, according to the latest The Washington Times/JZ Analytics poll released Monday night. The poll found Mr. Romney leading **43 percent to 42 percent** — about the same margin as the poll in May, but Mr. **Obama slipped on several key measures**, including fewer voters who say they expect him to win, and fewer who say they are voting for him because he’s the best candidate. Voters, who by a small margin say they agree with the Supreme Court’s ruling upholding health care, still seem in a mood to punish Mr. Obama for it — particularly among independents. The poll found 45 percent of self-identified independents said they are less likely to support the president now after the ruling, compared with 20 percent who said the ruling made them more likely to back him. John Zogby, the pollster who conducted the survey, said Mr. Obama had been ticking upward in other polling last month, but the **health care ruling appears to have arrested that momentum**. “What happened was he was leading on the basis of doing better among independents. But this time around, there’s a shift — still a lot of independents who are undecided, but **Romney has the plurality now,**” Mr. Zogby said. “The health care issue, at least at the moment, is tipping away from Obama among independents, and has caused other independents to kind of park themselves in the undecided parking lot.” “An incumbent president polling 42 percent at this point in time is not good,” he said. Mr. **Obama also has slipped in one measure of enthusiasm**. In the May poll, 64 percent of the president’s supporters said they were backing him because he was the “best candidate,” but that slipped to 57 percent in this survey. The number voting for him because they dislike Mr. Romney or find Mr. Obama the “lesser of two evils” grew 9 points. Another piece of news for Mr. Romney came Monday, when the two campaigns announced some of their fundraising numbers. Mr. Romney and his Republican allies reported raising $35 million more in June than Mr. Obama and allied Democratic committees. The Romney campaign said that fundraising is a signal of discontent with Mr. Obama, on **which they hope to capitalize**.

### Obama Losing---Independents

#### Republicans are winning---independent voters

**McCormick 7/11** 2012, \*John McCormick: MSN Money, “Surge in independent voters cuts Dems' edge,” http://money.msn.com/politics/post.aspx?post=26cdbf84-036a-48b9-9216-49803e04439b, AJ

**Independent voters are growing in numbers at the expense of Democrats in battleground states most likely to determine this year's presidential election**, a Bloomberg News analysis shows. The collective total of independents grew by about 443,000 in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire and North Carolina since the 2008 election, according to data compiled by Bloomberg from state election officials. During the same time, **Democrats saw a net decline of about 480,000** in those six states, while Republicans, boosted in part by a competitive primary earlier this year, added roughly 38,000 voters in them, the analysis shows. "Democrats hit the high-water mark for registration in 2008, so it's natural that they are going to see some drop-off," said Michelle Diggles, a senior policy analyst with the Democratic-leaning Third Way research group in Washington who conducted a similar study earlier this year. The rise of independent voters has had a major impact on recent election results. As inactive Democrats have been erased, **Republicans this year managed to move ahead** with the most active registrations for the first time in six years.

#### Romney is winning independents and swing-states

**Bailey 7/10** 2012, \*Holly Bailey: ABC News, “Independent voters increase in key swing states,” http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/OTUS/independent-voters-increase-key-swing-states/story?id=16749151#.T\_2W3u24LzI, AJ

Democrats are **losing ground in voter registration in six key battleground states** as more voters elect to register as independents, according to a new Bloomberg News analysis of state voter records. As Bloomberg's John McCormick reports: The collective total of independents grew by about 443,000 in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire and North Carolina since the 2008 election, according to data compiled by Bloomberg from state election officials. During the same time, **Democrats saw a net decline of about 480,000** in those six states, while Republicans--boosted in part by a competitive primary earlier this year--added roughly 38,000 voters in them, the analysis shows. The shift comes four years after President Barack Obama won the White House in 2008 thanks in part to wide support among independents. But indy voters swung back toward Republicans during the 2010 midterms, helping the GOP retake the House—**a shift that may help Romney**. According to the latest Washington Post/ABC News poll, Romney holds a **14-point lead over Obama among independent voters nationally**.

#### Critical factor in the election

**Peoples 6/15** 2012, \*Steve Peoples is a former Providence Journal political reporter who covers national politics for Roll Call, “Independent voters are key in Romney backyard,” http://newsok.com/independent-voters-are-key-in-romney-backyard/article/3684549, AJ

DERRY, N.H. — Perhaps no presidential battleground will test the leanings of critical independent voters more than the “Live Free or Die” state, the launching pad for Mitt Romney’s White House bid. The latest University of New Hampshire poll showed that half of voters in the state approve of Obama’s job performance. The survey, conducted before the **economy showed signs of softening in April**, gave Obama a 9-point lead. Independents — the **group expected to decide contests in key battleground states** — favored Romney.

## NEG

### Obama Winning---Laundry List

#### Obama will win---assumes your warrants

**Morici 7/10** 2012, \*Peter Morici is an economist and professor at the Smith School of Business, University of Maryland, and widely published columnist, “Even with high unemployment, Obama wins Re-election,” http://www.upi.com/Top\_News/Analysis/Outside-View/2012/07/10/Outside-View-Even-with-high-unemployment-Obama-wins-Re-election/UPI-24451341916200/, AJ

COLLEGE PARK, Md., July 10 (UPI) -- Unemployment hangs stubbornly at more than 8 percent, yet, defying election history, U.S. President Barack **Obama would handily win a second term** if voters went to the polls today. Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt **Romney hasn't capitalized on the stagnant economy** because after sewing up the GOP nomination, he **failed to move quickly on issues critical** to key demographic groups and act on the challenger's imperative to offer a better alternative to the president's policies. To win conservative primary voters, Romney rejected the Dream Act, which enjoyed bipartisan sponsorship in Congress and would permit young adults brought to America illegally as children to earn citizenship by completing two years of college or military service. After securing the nomination, Romney failed to define a compromise position more acceptable to Hispanic voters and permitted Obama to pre-empt the issue by suspending deportation of those young adults. **Obama enjoys an overwhelming lead among Hispanic voters**. Romney vows to repeal ObamaCare but is vague about what would replace it. The president's healthcare reforms may be too expensive and encourage private firms to offshore jobs to escape costly coverage for employees; however, the law contains provisions popular among the elderly and with women -- for example, much improved Medicare prescription drug coverage and coverage for children with chronic conditions. No surprise! **Obama leads Romney in Florida -- a must-win state for any Republican candidate**, along with Texas, given the Democrats' lock on California and New York. And the president enjoys a significant lead among women in battleground states. On the economy, Romney sounds like a broken record, repeating an annoying theme and undermining his appeal. Constantly harping Obama's economic policies have failed, he asserts his business experience qualifies him to create millions of new American jobs. Voters recognize Obama inherited a bigger mess than any president since FDR, managed to stabilize the economy and created more than 3.6 million jobs since the recovery began in October 2009. At Bain Capital, Romney earned his fortune reorganizing troubled companies -- often shutting facilities, outsourcing jobs and firing employees. Little in that history indicates he knows much about shaping public policies to encourage new industries, attract private investment, instigate innovation and generally help U.S. companies compete in global markets and bring jobs to America. During the early days of his campaign, he talked a lot about the right things -- dealing with unfair competition from China and developing domestic oil -- but since, he has loaded up on Bush administration economic advisers and emphasized broader themes like deregulation and tax and spending cuts. He hasn't explained how his proposals on trade, energy, healthcare, banking, taxation and regulation would create jobs -- now, not down the road by unshackling Adam Smith's "invisible hand." Obama, in the spirit of Harry Truman, is out on the hustings in Pennsylvania and the Midwest extolling his rescue of GM and Chrysler, his vision for clean energy jobs, and an America that puts the middle class first. The president's claims may be thin on facts, especially given the massive debt he is piling up to pay for it all. However, in that part of the country, **considerable progress has been accomplished**. The president leads Romney in the polls in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. To win, Romney must go to those places -- spend lots of time, not just advertizing dollars -- and explain exactly how he intends to bring back jobs from Asia and create new ones, get banks lending to businesses again and lower healthcare costs without throwing too many Americans into the breach of an unaffordable free market. The governor hasn't done that, and instead, Obama has been able to define the campaign in terms of the Obama way or the old way -- aka George W. Bush redux in the person of Mitt Romney. That's everyone's poltergeist.

### Obama Winning---Latinos

#### Obama is winning Latinos

**Klofstad 7/9** 2012, \*Casey A. Klofstad is an associate professor of political science at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL, “Support for Obama Appears Solid Among Latinos in Florida,” http://www.huffingtonpost.com/casey-a-klofstad/florida-latino-voters\_b\_1660191.html, AJ

A major part of the dialogue on the 2012 presidential election has centered on which candidate will win the hearts and minds of the ever-growing Latino electorate. New survey data collected by Latino Decisions give us a glimpse into how this competition is playing out in the "swing state" of Florida. These data were collected from Latino registered voters. As such, the findings I discuss below are representative of Latinos in Florida who, because they are already registered to vote, are likely to be more politically engaged, and thus more likely to vote. Which candidate is winning the Latino vote in Florida? Figure 1 shows that at this point in the race, Latinos in Florida are much more likely to support President Obama than Governor Romney. This said, it is worth noting that supporters of both Obama and Romney are certain of their vote at this point in the campaign. To see why Obama has more support among Latinos in Florida, it is useful to look at what issues the Latino electorate are most concerned about in this election. Respondents to the recent Latino Decisions poll were were asked, "What are the most important issues facing the [Hispanic/Latino] community that you think Congress and the President should address?" Figure 2 shows that immigration and a general response of "fix the economy" are perceived equally to be the most important issues facing the Latino community in Florida this election. However, if you also consider the additional response category "create more jobs / unemployment," economic issues are more salient than immigration among Latinos in Florida. One note, however: immigration is more salient among Latinos in other states surveyed by Latino Decisions. For example, in the border state of Arizona, where debate continues over SB 1070, the so-called "show your papers" policy where anyone on the street can be asked for identification to prove their immigration status, immigration ranks higher (43 percent) than the combination of the two economic issues (39 percent) asked about in the survey. While immigration policy is not as salient an issue as the economy is among Florida Latinos, this issue still has the potential to influence the election there. As an example, Latino Decisions randomly assigned survey respondents to answer one of two questions about a hypothetical candidate for the presidency. Both questions stated that the candidate had a plan to fix the economy that the respondent agreed with. However, one of the questions described the candidate as having a tough stance on illegal immigration (i.e. "illegal immigrants are a threat to America who have committed a crime, we can never support amnesty for illegals"), while the other question stated that the candidate was supportive of immigrants (i.e. "America is a nation of immigrants, we need to treat immigrants with respect and dignity and help them become part of America instead of attacking them"). Figure 3 shows that Florida Latinos would be far more likely to support the candidate espousing positive views of immigrants. While these questions likely exaggerate the stances on immigration that Romney and Obama will take during the race, in general this finding bodes well for **Obama who is more liberal on immigration than Romney**, especially given his recent directive to the Department of Homeland Security to stop deportation of undocumented immigrants who are in college or the military. In total, 55 percent of Latino Decisions respondents in Florida stated that they were more enthusiastic about the president after he initiated the directive. In contrast, in response to Governor Romney calling Arizona's strict immigration policies a "model" for the rest of the country to follow, 59 percent of Latino Decisions respondents in Florida described themselves as less enthusiastic about the Romney campaign. Suffice to say, Obama has the support of Florida Latinos. The question remains as to whether this will be reflected at the polls; support is only meaningful if the supporter actually turns out to vote. While I speculated that the continuing effort to purge the voter rolls on non-citizens in Florida might suppress Latino voter turnout, 87 percent of Latino Decisions respondents in Florida stated that they were "almost certain" to vote this fall. And supporters of Romney and Obama both intend to turn out; 95 percent of respondents who were certain of their support for either candidate reported that they were "almost certain" or "probably going" to vote. So, while neither candidate appears to have an enthusiasm advantage with regard to turnout, Obama's popularity among Florida Latinos (see Figure 1) is still a **net advantage for the President**.

#### They’re key to the election

**People & Kuhnhenn 6/22** 2012, \*Steve People and Jim Kuhnhenn, Associated Press, “Hispanic vote may be key to victory,” http://articles.philly.com/2012-06-22/news/32353198\_1\_latino-vote-hispanic-voters-illegal-immigrants, AJ

ORLANDO, Fla. - No longer a back-burner issue, immigration is roiling the presidential race as President Obama and Republican Mitt Romney seek to court the nation's swelling Hispanic population. The outcome could **influence political battle lines and shape U.S. politics for generations**. With Election Day less than five months away, **Hispanic voters are energized and paying close attention**, said Arturo Vargas, executive director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, which hosts this week's convention. "There's a lot at stake. We're talking about a significant share of the American electorate that could well decide this election," Vargas said. "It's only now that both candidates are turning their attention to the Latino vote." Indeed, both sides are crafting aggressive strategies to appeal to a demographic that is by no means monolithic but has supported Democrats in recent elections. Some Republicans fear - and Democrats hope - that Obama could capitalize on this moment to help solidify Hispanic voters as predominantly Democratic this fall and for years to come, much as President Lyndon B. Johnson secured the black vote for Democrats as he pushed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The stakes are high, not only for states with larger Hispanic populations such as Florida, Nevada, and Colorado, but for a growing number of other battlegrounds - Ohio, North Carolina, and Virginia among them - where **even a modest shift among Latino voters could be significant**. The United States' **Latino population surged from about 35 million in 2000 to 50 million in 2010**, according to the Census Bureau. As the presidential candidates head to the Florida convention, Obama is riding a wave of Latino enthusiasm over his decision to allow hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants to stay in the country and work. Under the administration plan, illegal immigrants can avoid deportation if they can prove they were brought to the United States before they turned 16 and are younger than 30, have been in the country for at least five continuous years, have no criminal history, and graduated from a U.S. high school, earned a GED, or served in the military. The move was politically timely, in the heat of the campaign and with Obama needing to energize a key part of his base of supporters - many of whom had grown disenchanted over the last three years. While the direct beneficiaries of the directive can't vote for Obama, his action has **widespread support among American Latinos**. In fact, Obama has long enjoyed support among Hispanics - he won 67 percent of the Latino vote in 2008. But he risked losing their enthusiasm, partly because Hispanics have been among the hardest hit by the economic slowdown. Obama also lost some support because he hasn't fulfilled promises of a comprehensive overhaul of the immigration system and because his administration has been aggressively deporting illegal immigrants. Obama senior adviser David Axelrod predicts that the president could exceed his 2008 performance with Hispanics this year, noting that his opponent then was Sen. John McCain, who had initially pushed for an overhaul of the immigration system. Axelrod contends that Romney is "hopelessly twisted up on this issue." The Romney campaign has struggled to offer a consistent response to the president's move. Romney has assailed Obama's "broken promises" on immigration in recent days but has focused on the new policy's temporary status as his prime criticism. "These people deserve to understand what their status will be long term, not just four and a half months," Romney said on Fox News Radio this week. "And that's why I think it's important for me and for Congress to come together to put together a plan that secures the border, that insists that we have an employment verification system, and that deals with the children of those who have come here illegally on a long-term basis, not a stopgap measure." Still, **Romney's own immigration policy is unclear** as he works to distance himself from harsh conservative rhetoric that was common during the extended GOP primary season earlier in the year.

#### Obama is winning swing-state Latinos---polls

**Burns 6/22** 2012, \*Alexander Burns writes for POLITICO, “Obama leads big with swing-state Latinos,” http://www.politico.com/blogs/burns-haberman/2012/06/obama-leads-big-with-swingstate-latinos-126994.html, AJ

Latino Decisions, which released a poll earlier this week showing the White House's immigration announcement had stoked **Latino enthusiasm for President Obama**, is out with data this morning showing Obama ahead of Romney by big margins among Latino voters in the swing states. No huge surprises here, but **more confirmation of what's become a defining trend in the race**: New polling released June 22, 2012 by Latino Decisions and America’s Voice finds President Obama maintaining a wide lead over Republican Mitt Romney among Latino registered voters in five key battleground states. The poll interviewed 400 Latinos each in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Nevada and Virginia – all states expected to be very competitive in 2012 where Latino voters could decide the outcome. In Florida, the poll found Obama leading Romney by a margin of 53% to 37%, a slight increase from a 50% to 40% lead Obama held over Romney in a January 2012 Latino Decisions/Univision News poll in Florida. In the five states combined Obama lead Romney 63% to 27%, however in southwestern battlegrounds of Arizona, Colorado and Nevada Obama performed even better. In Arizona Obama received 74% to 18% for Romney, in Colorado he was favored by 70% to 22% and in Nevada 69% to 20%. In Virginia, Obama lead 59% to 28% over Romney among Latino registered voters. Obama won the Latino vote by 36 points nationally in 2008, which is the same margin he leads Romney overall across these five swing states (in 2008, Obama won Latinos 67 percent to John McCain's 31 percent; here, he leads 63 percent to 27 percent.) Republicans are hopeful that Romney will be able to make at least some marginal headway before November, but **right now the gap in Latino support between the candidates looks as wide as ever**.

### Obama Winning---Swing States

#### Dems winning swing-states---key to the election

**Easley 6/27** 2012, \*Jonathan Easley writes for The Hill, “Polls: Obama expands lead over Romney in key battleground states,” http://thehill.com/blogs/ballot-box/polls/234993-polls-obama-expands-lead-over-romney-in-key-battleground-states, AJ

President **Obama is expanding his lead over Mitt Romney in swing states that will be key in determining the outcome of the 2012 election**, two new polls show. According to an NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll released late Tuesday, Obama leads Romney 50 percent to 42 in a survey of likely voters in Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin. Obama won all of those states in 2008 and will need to keep about half in the Democratic column if he’s to secure reelection. The same poll taken in May showed Obama with a 48 to 42 percent lead over Romney in those battleground states. Obama’s lead in the swing states is outsized, however, in comparison to the NBC/Journal national poll that found the president leading by only 3 percent, within the poll’s margin of error. A Quinnipiac University poll of Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania released on Wednesday produced similar results. That survey finds Obama ahead by 9 in Ohio, 6 in Pennsylvania and 4 in Florida. While Quinnipiac’s results show a slight dip from Obama’s 8-point lead in Pennsylvania in the same poll taken in May, the president has grown his lead in the other two states. In May Obama trailed Romney in Florida 43-44 and topped Romney 44-42 in Ohio. “If he can keep those leads in all three of those key swing states through Election Day he would be **virtually assured of reelection**,” said director of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute Peter A. Brown in a statement. “Of course, the election is more than four months away, which is a lifetime in politics.” Obama is buoyed in the Quinnipiac poll by **massive leads among his most reliable constituents — women, young voters and Hispanics**. In addition, Obama performs well in areas that Romney could until now count as strengths — with independent voters and on the economy. Independent voters had been breaking toward Romney nationally, but Obama leads Romney 44 to 37 among independents in Florida, 45 to 36 in Ohio and 43 to 37 in Pennsylvania. Additionally, voters in those states are split over which candidate would do a better job on the economy — an argument that Romney has made the primary focus of his campaign, claiming that Obama has run out of time to manage the nation’s recovery. In Florida, Romney edges the president 46-44 on economic issues. Obama leads 45-38 in Ohio, with the two candidates tied at 44 in Pennsylvania. Romney had historically low favorability ratings during the primary season, which continues to dog his campaign in the general election. Quinnipiac finds that in Florida 37 percent have a favorable view of Romney compared to 42 unfavorable, he’s at 32 positive and 46 negative in Ohio, and at 34 positive, 39 negative in Pennsylvania. The NBC-Journal poll showed Romney’s favorability rating has dropped in the 12 battleground states since he effectively secured the Republican nomination. Obama has positive favorability ratings in Florida and Ohio, and is slightly underwater, 45-47, in Pennsylvania. While the NBC-Journal poll found the Republican base, including those who identify as Tea Party supporters, has begun to rally around a Romney candidacy, he still faces a **considerable enthusiasm gap against President Obama**. A majority of Romney supporters — 58 percent — said their vote is more against Obama than for Romney, while 72 percent of Obama supporters said their vote was for the president rather than against Romney. The NBC/Wall Street Journal poll was conducted from June 20-23 and has a 3 percent margin of error. The Quinnipiac University Poll was conducted from June 19-25 and has a 3 percent margin of error.

### Obama Winning---AT Independents

#### Independents aren’t key---Obama’s winning without their support

**Walter 7/11** 2012, \*Amy Walter: ABC News, “Obama Has Problems With Independent Voters,” http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/07/obama-has-problems-with-independent-voters/, AJ

Digging into the crosstabs of our ABC/Washington Post poll it’s clear that **Obama has a significant problem with independent voters**. On every measure, independents are significantly more disappointed with the president and more open to a Mitt Romney message. While 45 percent of voters overall say they approve of Obama’s handling of the economy, just 37 percent of independents believe that. **Obama has a 12 point advantage among all voters** on the issue of “who has presented a clearer plan for dealing with the economy – Obama or Romney?” But among independents that flips to an eight point advantage for Romney. Even on the issue of Romney’s record in business, independent voters are more sympathetic to the Republican. Among all voters, more thought that Romney in his work as a corporate investor **did more to cut jobs than create them** (42 percent to 36 percent). But among independents, that flips to a six point advantage for Romney – 43-37 percent. So, why isn’t Romney ahead? As ABC pollster Gary Langer points out, **the Democratic base is more energized and engaged**.