# Politics Updates

# Obama

## No PC - Healthcare

**Obama spent his political capital on Obamacare**

**Lapointe 7/2** – Staff Writer for the Washington Times (Mike is a political writer interested in analyzing the complexities of American politics and society. His work has appeared on the Huffington Post, Digital Journal, and on his blog, The Washington Times, Supreme Court healthcare decision gives Romney and GOP the advantage, 7/2/12, AD: 7/30/12, http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/americas-political-pulse/2012/jul/2/supreme-court-healthcare-decision-Romney-advantage/)

There are good reasons why Romney struggled to prove his conservative credentials throughout the Republican primaries. Now that the healthcare decision has gone Obama’s way, Romney needs only to refine his message. If nothing else, this strategy would help foster the former governor’s ever elusive conservative image. Many are quite emphatic about how dissatisfied they are with the Supreme Court’s decision. Much if not all of Obama’s political capital was used to push the 2,700 page piece of legislation through Congress in 2009. If Obamacare was struck down, there’s no question that Obama’s campaign would have been dealt a crushing blow. At this point however, the Republicans are simply much better positioned than the Democrats going forward. The Obamacare saga is far from over and will once again become the centrepiece of the Presidential campaign heading into November.

**Obama spent his political capital on health care**

**Baker 6/29** – Political Writer for the New York Times, (Peter, 6/29/12, AD: 7/30/12, For Obama, a Signature Issue That the Public Never Embraced Looms Large, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/30/us/politics/health-care-overhaul-is-still-no-hit-with-public.html?\_r=1&ref=peterbaker)

That Mr. Obama's presidency may be defined by the law would have seemed unlikely in March 2007, when as a presidential candidate he showed up for a health care forum in Las Vegas unprepared, by his own admission. When he finally developed a plan, he rejected requiring American adults to obtain health insurance and pilloried his chief opponent, Hillary Rodham Clinton, for supporting it. As he took office, health care was on his agenda but not yet dominant. The economy was in a free-fall; health care competed with issues like climate change and immigration for Mr. Obama's political capital. One adviser said if the White House had realized the economic troubles would be as sustained as they have been, health care might never have been on the table. Others disagree, arguing that health care did not detract from efforts to promote recovery.

## Immigration Thumper

**Obama has no political capital to spend**

**Sessions 6/15** – Staff Writer for The Daily Beast (David, 6/15/12, The Daily Beast is a political online newspaper, Content Section Will Evangelicals’ Immigration Shift Mean Common Ground With Obama?, AD: 7/30/12, http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/06/15/will-evangelicals-immigration-shift-mean-common-ground-with-obama.html)

Whenever presidents are looking for a bipartisan issue to champion, immigration reform is always at the top of the list of Washington insiders’ ideas. President George W. Bush lamented in his memoir that he chose Social Security reform as his second-term project instead of immigration reform. And an array of advisers around President Obama, from his former chief of staff William Daley to unnamed current aides, have told The New Yorker’s Ryan Lizza that immigration reform is a leading candidate for a possible second term in which the president has virtually no political capital to spend on massive policy battles on the scale of health-care reform

# Elections – Key to the Agenda

**Winning the election will result in a congressional win – key to the Agenda**

**Janakiramanan 12**-SundaranJanakiramanan is a professor in the field of finance, June 01, 12, (“Global Turnaround by mid-2013”, accessed at http://www.todayonline.com/Print/CommentaryandAnalysis/Commentary/EDC120601-0000006/Global-turnaround-by-mid-2013, accessed on 7/16/12)

Historically, whichever of the two main parties wins the presidency also tends to gain a number of seats in Congress. Currently, the Democrats hold a thin 51-49 majority in the Senate and the Republicans have a significant 240-192 majority in the House of Representatives. In all likelihood, these numbers will shift. If Mr Obama wins, then the Democrats are likely to strengthen their majority in the Senate and narrow the Republican majority in the House of Representatives. This outcome will provide Mr Obama and the Democrats with the political capital needed to pass such reforms as his recent "Five-Point To-Do List", which includes eliminating tax incentives for companies that outsource jobs and creating tax credits for small businesses that invest in clean energy.

## Winners Win - Debt Ceiling k2 elections

**The U.S. Debt Ceiling Crisis Is Key to the election-If Obama wins he will gain capital**

**Isfield July 12, 2012**-Gordon Isfield is Financial Post’s Ottawa correspondent, Financial post is a Canadian business magazine, (“‘Right now, the risk is pretty serious’: Council of Canadian Chief Executives’ John Manley”, accessed at http://business.financialpost.com/2012/07/12/right-now-the-risk-is-pretty-serious-council-of-canadian-chief-executives-john-manley/, accessed on 7/15/12)

The U.S. presidential election in November. Is it unlikely a deal will be reached on the U.S. debt-ceiling crisis by then? That certainly is not going to be resolved before election day. If it can be resolved by the lame duck Congress, whoever the president is going to be in January, that will be an asset for him. If Obama wins, that gives him a boost in political capital and, hopefully, there’ll be a recognition that the country actually needs to resolve its problem. I think what the world wants from the United States is certainty.

## AT: Winners Win:

**Winners Do not Win-Healthcare proves**

**Cusack 12**-Bob Cusack is a managing editor for the Hill has a B.A. in journalism from Loyola College in Maryland, 6/29/12, (“Healthcare’s Ruling’s winners and winners”, accessed at http://thehill.com/blogs/healthwatch/legal-challenges/235545-winners-and-losers-of-the-healthcare-ruling, accessed on 7/15/12)

The president used an enormous amount of political capital to pass healthcare reform, a legislative effort that spanned more than a year and caused other priorities to be shelved. The White House, however, failed to come up with an effective message to sell the law, which remains unpopular. Regardless, Obama went toe to toe with GOP critics of the law — and won. He gambled by agreeing to the high court review before the election instead of trying to hit the procedural brakes that could have pushed the case until 2013. Republicans acknowledge that this is a win for Obama, but say it will help get Mitt Romney in the White House.

# Elections Internals

## Turnout Key - Obama

**Turnout is key to Obama’s victory**

**UPI 2012** (United Press International, 7/13/12, 7/15/12, Poll: Turnout Critical for Obama Campaign, <http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2012/07/13/Poll-Turnout-critical-for-Obama-campaign/UPI-68441342197508/>)

PRINCETON, N.J., July 13 (UPI) -- Only 58 percent of young voters say they definitely plan to vote in the U.S. presidential election in November, a Gallup poll released Friday indicated. That is well below the 78 percent of registered voters overall who intend to take part in the election. Because young voters are more likely to support President Obama, that could be bad news for Democrats this year. Voters in the 18-29 age group historically are less likely to turn out than older people, but in 2004 and 2008 the deficit was smaller, Gallup said. Hispanic voters this year support President Obama by a 2-1 margin. But they also appear less likely to vote, with only 64 percent saying they will definitely cast ballots this year. Black voters, a group that overwhelmingly supports Obama, are less enthusiastic about turning out this year than they were in 2008. But 76 percent said they plan to vote. Polls give the president, at best, a slight lead over his likely Republican challenger, [Mitt Romney](http://www.upi.com/topic/Mitt_Romney/). "The challenge for Obama is that many of his strongest support groups, including young adults, blacks and Hispanics, have historically turned out to vote at lower rates than other subgroups," [Jeffrey Jones](http://www.upi.com/topic/Jeffrey_Jones/), a Gallup analyst, said. "So maintaining a relatively high level of turnout among these groups is a key to Obama's winning a second term." The data is based on Gallup Daily Tracking poll May 1 to July 10, with a random sample of 30,952 registered voters, including 2,803 young voters, 2,422 blacks and 1,622 Hispanics. The margin of error is 1 percentage point for the entire sample, 2 points for young and black voters and 3 points for Hispanics.

## Money Race K2 Swing States

**Winning the Ad war key in swing states – statistics prove**

**Page 12 – current Washington Bureau Chief for**[***USA Today***](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USA_Today) (Susan, current Washington Bureau Chief for [*USA Today*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USA_Today), won many awards including Merriman Smith Memorial Award, USA Today, Swing states poll: Amid barrage of ads, Obama has edge, 7/8/12, 7/15/12, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/story/2012-07-08/swing-states-poll/56097052/1>)

In most of the country, just about the only time campaign ads for the presidential candidates are on TV is when there's a news story *about* the ads. In the handful of battleground states that are likely to decide the outcome of the election, though, viewers can't escape arguably the most intense early barrage of ads in American political history. "In a swing state, you're part of the presidential campaign," says political scientist [Darrell West](http://content.usatoday.com/topics/topic/Darrell+West), author of*Air Wars.* "Everywhere else, you're outside." In a new USA TODAY/Gallup Poll of swing states, an overwhelming majority of voters remember seeing campaign ads over the past month; most voters in other states say they haven't. In the battlegrounds, one in 12 say the commercials have changed their minds about [President Obama](http://content.usatoday.com/topics/topic/People/Politicians,+Government+Officials,+Strategists/Executive/Barack+Obama) or Republican Mitt Romney — a difference on the margins, but one that could prove crucial in a close race. At this point, Obama is the clear winner in the ad wars. Among swing-state voters who say the ads have changed their minds about a candidate, rather than just confirmed what they already thought, 76% now support the president, vs. 16% favoring Romney. "We gave them new information," says Obama campaign manager [Jim Messina](http://content.usatoday.com/topics/topic/Jim+Messina). "Romney had been out there claiming success as governor," but Democratic ads have prompted voters to "take a look at his record" on job creation and as head of the private-equity firm [Bain Capital](http://content.usatoday.com/topics/topic/Bain+Capital). Messina also credits a $25 million buy for a positive ad "about the challenges the president inherited and what we had to do to move this country forward." To be sure, Obama's ads have done more to win back Democrats than to win over independents or Republicans: Thirteen percent of Democrats say their minds have been changed by ads, compared with 9% of independents and 3% of Republicans. Romney pollster Neil Newhouse calls the findings unsurprising. "It is expected to find that more voters say their views have changed about Mitt Romney; they simply don't know him all that well," he says. "On the other hand, there are few voters who are going to say their views have changed about President Obama. They know him pretty damned well." Obama and his allies have outspent Romney's side on ads so far by almost a third. Although the TV spots didn't start earlier than in recent elections, there have been more than ever before — including a negative flood from the new breed of super PACs — and they are continuing without the traditional summertime letup. In the 12 battleground states, the race is all but tied. Obama leads Romney 47%-45% among 1,200 registered voters in the poll June 22-29 — a tick closer than Obama's 48%-44% lead among 2,404 voters in the rest of the USA over the same period.

**Money race key to swing states – Bain-themed ads prove**

**Burns 2012 – Staff Writer for Politico** (Graduate of Harvard and Political analyst for Fox News, 7/11/12, Obama super PAC poll: Anti-Romney offensive moves swing states, Politico, <http://www.politico.com/blogs/burns-haberman/2012/07/obama-super-pac-poll-antiromney-offensive-moves-swing-128614.html>, 7/15/12)

Voters in five 2012 swing states have moved noticeably away from Mitt Romney since the Obama super PAC began attacking his business background on the air, according to polling conducted for the group Priorities USA Action. [**In a memo out this morning,**](http://images.politico.com/global/2012/07/priorities_usa_poll_release_memo_july_updates.html) Democratic pollsters Geoff Garin of Garin-Hart-Yang Research Group and Jefrey Pollock and Nick Gourevitch of Global Strategy Group outline their findings and conclude that Romney has taken a meaningful hit as a result of Bain-themed negative ads. “Mitt Romney’s business experience – the centerpiece of his case for the presidency – has proven to be much more of a liability than an asset in key swing states,” the pollsters write. “Clear negative trends have emerged in recent polling conducted in Colorado, Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.” The Democrats’ survey tested 3,800 likely voters in those five states, in the period from June 25 to July 3. The top line findings: by a 10-point margin – 37 percent to 27 percent – voters now say that Romney’s background at Bain Capital makes them less likely to vote for him. According to the poll, 58 percent of voters now agree with the statement that Romney’s priority in the private sector was “making millions for himself and his investors, regardless of the impact on jobs and the employees.” Overall, Obama leads Romney in the five swing states by 6 points, 48 percent to 42 percent. Romney’s favorability rating in those battlegrounds is 7 points underwater: 36 percent of voters have a positive view of him, versus 43 percent who have an unfavorable view. Romney looks damaged in the swing states, across the board, but the pollsters write that his problems are a bit more pronounced in the 11 media markets where Priorities has focused its advertising. [**The group has spent $10 million**](http://www.politico.com/multimedia/video/2012/07/priorities-usa-ads-are-working.html) so far on [**dark, negative ads casting Romney**](http://www.politico.com/blogs/burns-haberman/2012/06/new-antibain-ad-my-own-coffin-127072.html) as a cold-hearted businessman who fired workers and walked away with millions. In the advertising markets where the super PAC has attacked Romney, his favorability rating is 9 points in the negative direction (versus an average of 7 points overall) and 40 percent of voters say Romney’s business background makes them less likely to vote for him (versus 37 percent overall.) The data is sharply at odds with a Tuesday Romney campaign memo, which declared that the Democratic air assault on the former Massachusetts governor had proven “ineffective.” “Over 75% of the advertising the Obama campaign has run has been negative, anti-Romney ads, with at least 14 separate negative ads run against Mitt Romney,” the Romney campaign said. “Despite all of the negative advertising from the Obama campaign, polling numbers are exactly where they were before they started this onslaught.” While it’s true that the head-to-head data on the race between Obama and Romney haven’t moved much, there’s been [**a steady trickle**](http://www.politico.com/blogs/burns-haberman/2012/06/nbcwsj-poll-race-stable-romneys-businessman-brand-127388.html) of [**polling information indicating**](http://www.politico.com/blogs/burns-haberman/2012/07/poll-obama-barrage-barely-holds-back-romney-128306.html) that the ads have affected voters’ underlying perceptions of Romney. Neither the Democrats nor independent pollsters have suggested that the Bain ads – or other negative advertising run by the Obama campaign – have made Romney unelectable. But national strategists in both parties agree privately that the anti-Romney blitz, coupled with Romney’s passive response, has robbed the presumptive GOP nominee of the momentum he had coming out of the GOP primaries. And if Romney continues to benefit from a race that’s focused on the economy, the Priorities pollsters say Obama profits from a debate framed around which candidate is more aligned with the interests of the middle class. “President Obama is seen as the candidate best served to meet the needs of the middle class,” they write. “Obama also leads Romney by significant margins among a wide array of other personal traits from being the candidate “who can relate to the problems and concerns of people like you” (46% Obama vs. 34% Romney) to being the candidate who “is honest and someone you can trust” (40% Obama vs. 32% Romney).”

## Econ Not K2 Swing States

**Econ not key to swing states**

**Cilliza 7/23 – Staff Writer for the Washington Post** (Chris, 7/23/12, Chris Cillizza writes “The Fix”, a politics blog for the Washington Post. He also covers the White House for the newspaper and website. Chris has appeared as a guest on NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, Fox News Channel and CNN to talk politics, Swing state unemployment rates: Do they matter?, 7/23/12, The Washington Post, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/post/swing-state-unemployment-rates-do-they-matter/2012/07/23/gJQAuBhW4W\_blog.html?wprss=rss\_the-fix)

The relative health of the swing state economies, we argued, could well have more influence on how voters perceive the President’s progress on the nation’s financial well being than the overall unemployment rate. After all, what you see around you on a daily basis often impacts you more than what you may hear on the national news. Right? Nope, according to a piece written in February by our friends at the Monkey Cage blog. The Monkey Cagers have been gracious enough to allow us to re-post their entire piece below but here’s the CliffsNotes version from John Sides: Commentators are sometimes too quick to focus on the details of states and communities, which can downplay, if only by implication, how much national forces shape elections. In fact, the unique features of states have become less important over time.

## State Economic Factors Not K2 Elections

**State unemployment and economic factors don’t matter in an election – only national factors do**

**Sides 2/14 – PhD in Political Science** (Graduated from University of California, Berkeley in 2003, Associate Professor of Political Science at George Washington University, The Monkey Cage, 2/14/12, 7/23/12, Swing State Economies: Do They Even Matter?, <http://themonkeycage.org/blog/2012/02/14/swing-state-economies-do-they-even-matter/>)

Last week, Ryan Avent noted that the economies of swing states were growing more rapidly than other states. He suggests that this may help negate the fact that many swing states economies have been, in absolute terms, weaker than other states—a fact Ezra Klein called “Obama’s swing state problem.” But there’s a more important issue here that hasn’t been addressed: do the economic conditions of states even affect elections? In short, there’s not a lot of evidence that they do, above and beyond the effect of the national economy. For example, this paper by Stephen Ansolabehere, Marc Meredith, and Erik Snowberg documents an association between change in state unemployment rates and both evaluations of the national economy and presidential approval. But the effects of the national economy matter much more: …independent variation in state unemployment rates has about 25% of the effect of similar variations in the national unemployment rate. …one percent increase in the national unemployment rate is associated with a roughly three percentage point decrease in presidential approval. Controlling for national trends, an additional one percentage point state-level increase in unemployment is associated with roughly a 0.6 percentage point decrease in approval…the independent correlation between state-level unemployment and approval is roughly 20% of the national-level correlation. I explored the relationship between state economies and presidential elections in a previous post. Let me recapitulate those findings. First, Thomas Holbrook found that state-level economies—measured with unemployment or changes in real per capita income—had no relationship to presidential election outcomes in the states in 1960-84, once measures of the national economy were taken into account. Second, Daniel Eisenberg and Jonathan Ketchum’s study of the 1972-2000 elections also finds that the national economy outweighs the effect of state and county economies: Evidently, voters believe the president has little effect on their local economy, and they do not form their evaluation of the national economy based on surrounding conditions. This finding suggests that people form their opinions of the national economy based on non-local factors, such as the national media. As I said in my post, commentators are sometimes too quick to focus on the details of states and communities, which can downplay, if only by implication, how much national forces shape elections. In fact, the unique features of states have become less important over time. Andy has shown that states have become more similar in their partisan shifts from election year to election year—that is, the shifts (or “swings”) have become more uniform across states. The most consequential economic fact is the national trend and perceptions of that trend.

## AT: Public Sentiment K2 Elections

**Public Sentiment is not key-Moving away can win**

**Strauss Institute 12**- Strauss Instititue, June 27th 2012, (“Moving away from public Sentiment Can Win Elections”, accessed at, http://blogs.utexas.edu/straussinstitute/2012/06/27/moving-away-from-public-sentiment-can-win-elections/ accessed on 7/15/12) It Cites Walter J Stone, Elizabeth N Simas who wrote Candidate valence and ideological positions in U.S. House elections, from the American Journal of Political Science, page 54, 2010)

Research Summary: Common sense would tell us that candidates should align themselves ideologically with their district in order to win. Researchers Stone and Simas found that while this is true for incumbents, generally speaking, this is not true for challengers. Incumbents are more likely to have an advantage over challengers in public perception of their character, like their ability to work well with other leaders. In order to compensate for this, challengers, or in a minority of cases incumbents at a disadvantage, can adopt more extreme positions in order to gain financial contributions, and then a greater vote share. It seems that if the public perceives a candidate as lacking in one area, moving away from popular public sentiment actually can make good sense.

## AT: Money Race Key

**The money race doesn’t matter – already passed the saturation point**

**Roarty 2012 – Politics Writer for the National Journal** (Alex, Roarty graduated from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa., in 2007 with a degree in journalism and English, Why it really doesn’t matter if Romney outspends Obama, National Journal, <http://www.nationaljournal.com/2012-presidential-campaign/why-it-really-doesn-t-matter-if-romney-outspends-obama-20120707>, 7/16/12)

The [$100 million June haul](http://www.nationaljournal.com/2012-presidential-campaign/report-romney-s-june-take-exceeds-100-million-20120705) by the Republican National Committee and Mitt Romney's campaign is the latest confirmation that the GOP, with the help of a potential billion-dollar boost from independent groups, is prepared to shatter previous presidential spending records. Yet President Obama, even if he’s now likely to be outspent, could still collect more than $1 billion with help from unions and his own outside groups. Presidential races once measured by the hundreds of millions of dollars are now gauged by the billion. That shift has prompted hand-wringing, particularly among Obama supporters, that lackluster funding could doom the campaign. But the heavy emphasis on fundraising masks one key fact: Money means less in a presidential race than in its down-ballot cousins, at least when so much of it is sure to be spent. Barring either side stockpiling an overwhelming cash edge, even seemingly prodigious differences -- like, say, $300 million -- are unlikely to push campaigns to victory. “Money has a lot more impact in a race where there isn’t a lot of information out there,” said Kristen Soltis, a GOP consultant. “If I’m running against you for dogcatcher and you can outspend me 2- or 3-to-1, that’s a problem. But … it’s highly unlikely there will be many voters at the end confused about what Barack Obama believes, what Mitt Romney believes.” The financial buffer zone is attributable in part to the law of diminishing returns; how valuable, after all, is purchasing another day of airtime when the ad has been on air for two weeks? But it’s also owed to the unique place that the presidential campaign holds in the media, whose coverage is saturating. While Senate and House candidates need paid media to reach voters, earned media dominates the White House race’s messaging. Even if voters avoid watching TV or reading about it online, their opinions will be shaped by friends and family members who do pay attention. “Whether it’s Conan O’Brien or your friend on Facebook or what you read on Twitter, there is so much information people pay attention to that campaigns do not have to pay for,” said John Jameson, a Democratic strategist. “It’s clear voters are going to get the message. Every swing voter is going to have more than enough information to make up their mind.” Campaign ads, of course, can still change voters’ minds. Criticism of Romney’s tenure at Bain Capital is believed to already have hurt his standing in Ohio. And spending $25 million on a single ad campaign, as the Karl Rove-led outside group Crossroads GPS [announced on Friday](http://www.crossroadsgps.org/category/news/) that it planned to do, will command attention. But because both sides will have money, the emphasis is less on total spending than how effectively the campaigns spend the money. In other words, the total number of ads is far less important than whether any of them are memorable.

## AT: Money Race Not Key

**Even if there is a saturation point the gap matters – Democrats worried**

**Roarty 2012 – Politics Writer for the National Journal** (Alex, Roarty graduated from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pa., in 2007 with a degree in journalism and English, Why it really doesn’t matter if Romney outspends Obama, National Journal, <http://www.nationaljournal.com/2012-presidential-campaign/why-it-really-doesn-t-matter-if-romney-outspends-obama-20120707>, 7/16/12)

The Bain attacks are one of the few examples thus far of an ad campaign that’s “moved numbers,” said Bill Burton, whose outside group, Priorities Action USA, has spent at least $10 million spearheading the critical TV ads. “I don’t think you have to spend more money on the other side, your spending just has to be effective." The difference between running an ad 10 times or 100 hundred times is big, said Soltis. But the potency gap shrinks considerably when the decision is whether to air it 1 million or 2 million times. “At some point, it’s much more important that your message is memorable than the simple repetition of it,” she said. The law of diminishing returns takes particular hold as November approaches, when the debates and news events -- such as 2008’s financial collapse -- command most of the attention. Messages also are more tightly controlled by the candidates themselves -- a problem for outside groups that can’t legally coordinate with them. That dilemma could be a particular concern to Republicans, because their better-funded outside group apparatus will likely spend more on the general election than Romney himself. “In 2008, people remember the financial crisis, Sarah Palin; you remember Saturday Night Live, you remember the debates,” said one official with a GOP-affiliated independent group who spoke on condition of anonymity. “The fact is, it makes it very difficult for outside groups to crack into the narrative at the end of the race because so much of the messaging is by the campaigns, and we can’t coordinate with them.” To be sure, any campaign strategist, regardless of circumstances, would rather have more money than his or her opponent. And a cash advantage could change the electoral playing field, according to Michael Podhorzer, political director for the AFL-CIO. “For example, one path to victory for Romney is through Ohio and one of Michigan and Pennsylvania,” Podhorzer said. “In an ordinary presidential campaign, he might have money try to attack in one of those states and Obama would have resources to fight back. But with super PACs, they can continue the campaigns in all of those states. That’s a much harder thing to defend against.” Fighting to a draw in the cash battle also assumes that even if one side has a financial edge, it’s not gaping -- $1.2 billion to $1.7 billion, for instance. But Democrats publicly and privately fret that with the help of outside groups, Romney could open up a gap much larger than that. “Yes, Democrats should be worried,” Burton said. "If Mitt Romney has the resources to dramatically outspend the president, it will be” damaging.

# Models & Polls

## Models are Accurate

**Models predict the elections accurately**

**Abramowitz 11 – PhD in political science** (Alan, Alben W. Barkley Professor of Political Science at Emory University, History says Obama likely to win in 2012, Real Clear Politics, 02/11/11, 07/16/12, <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2011/02/11/history_says_obama_likely_to_win_in_2012_108859.html>)

This simple forecasting model does an excellent job of predicting the outcomes of presidential elections, explaining just over 90 percent of the variance in the incumbent party's share of the popular vote. The model has correctly predicted the winner of every presidential election since 1988 more than two months before Election Day. In 2008, the model correctly predicted a comfortable victory for Barack Obama over John McCain at a time when McCain had taken the lead over Obama in a number of national polls following the Republican National Convention. The results displayed in Table 1 indicate that the higher reelection rate of first term incumbents compared with other types of candidates is not a by-product of differences in economic conditions or presidential popularity. First term incumbents have an advantage of more than four percentage points compared with other candidates of the incumbent party after controlling for the effects of economic growth and presidential approval. What to Expect in 2012 It is far too early to predict the outcome of the 2012 presidential election. Economic conditions and the President's approval rating could change considerably between now and the middle of next year. However, the clear implication of the results in Table 1 is that regardless of who wins the Republican nomination, even modest economic growth and a mediocre approval rating in 2012 would probably be enough to give Barack Obama a second term in the White House. For example, an annual growth rate of three percent in the second quarter (slightly below the most recent estimate for the fourth quarter of 2010) and a net approval rating of zero at midyear (slightly worse than Obama's average rating over the past month) would result in a forecast of 53 percent of the national popular vote for the President which would almost certainly produce a decisive victory in the Electoral College. There is an important caveat that should be added to these conclusions, however. While the "time for change" forecasting model described above has correctly predicted the winner of the popular vote in the last five presidential elections, the last four winners-Bill Clinton in 1996, Al Gore in 2000, George W. Bush in 2004 and Barack Obama in 2008-all won by a smaller margin than expected. The predicted and actual popular vote margins in these elections are displayed in Table 2. On average, the winning candidate's popular vote margin was 4.5 points smaller than the margin predicted by the model. Four elections do not establish a clear trend, but the fact that all of these elections were closer than predicted and the fact that we haven't had a true landslide election since 1984 suggest that there is something else going on that is not captured by the forecasting model. That something may be polarization. Since the 1990s the American party system has been characterized by a sharp ideological divide between the two major parties, a close division within the electorate between supporters of the two parties, and high levels of party loyalty in voting. There is no reason to expect that pattern to change in 2012. If Barack Obama does win a second term in the White House, it will most likely be by a fairly narrow margin unless economic growth and the President's approval rating both show dramatic improvement in the next 18 months.

## Models > Polls

**Models better than polls – they draw on voting theory rather than a dependent variable**

**Lewis-Beck 2006 – PhD and Professor of American Politics** (Michael S., Teaches Political Science University of Iowa and got his PhD from University of Michigan and authored or coauthored over 200 articles or books, 11/27/06*, Election Forecasting: Principles and Practice*, pages 147-148, “Comparing Statistical Models to Alternative Approaches,” <http://www.studisocialiepolitici.unimi.it/papers/2006-11-27_Michael%20S.%20Lewis-Beck.pdf>)

After an election, statistical modellers are asked, ‘How did you do?’. The response should be, ‘Compared to what?’. For example, a certain statistical model that performs well compared to other statistical models, and also well compared to other approaches, may be judged excellent. However, another statistical model that is bested by most other models and opinion polls cannot be judged a success. There are various possibilities, so it is best to explore the terrain systematically. Besides the statistical modelling approach, which we will elaborate, three other scientiﬁc forecasting approaches merit mention here: vote intention surveys, vote expectation surveys and political stock markets. In vote intention surveys, a sample of voters is asked something like: ‘If the election were held tomorrow, which candidate would you vote for?’. The percentage vote shares in the responses are taken to forecast the ﬁnal vote shares. Gallup is the classic example here, although now there are many other ﬁrms asking the same sort of question. In vote expectation surveys, a sample of voters is asked something like: ‘Regardless of your personal preferences, who do you think will win the upcoming election?’. The distribution of responses serves to forecast the victor in the contest. The American National Election Study asks this question as do some commercial polling operations. In a political stock market, a group of traders invests money in candidates running for ofﬁce. More money is invested in candidates the traders judge as more likely to win. A candidate’s investment share provides a vote forecast for the candidate. The Iowa Electronic Market is the leading example of this sort of forecasting. Each of these approaches has been applied to forecast speciﬁc elections. They do not always give consistent answers. Note that, in principle, each is susceptible to rules of evaluation, as will be discussed below. Note, further, that these three approaches—vote intentions, vote expectations, the political stock market—are not based on any theory of the vote. Instead, they are merely providing point estimates on a dependent variable. The statistical modelling approach, in contrast, relies on electoral theory for its construction. It is my belief that, in the long run, the statistical modelling approach, because its draws on voting theory, will yield a better performance. Time will provide us the evidence on that speculation.

**Markets and models are more accurate than polls**

**Kou and Sobel 2004 – PhD in Statistics and Professor** (Steven Kou, Michael Sobel, PhD in statistics from Columbia Univeristy, Professor of Sociology at Columbia University, 2004, 07/15/2012, <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/stable/25791776>?, JSTOR) During the past twenty years, political scientists have also generated a large literature on the determinants of electoral outcomes (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000). The models used there to predict previous electoral outcomes have also served as a basis for forecasting candidate shares of the vote in forthcoming elections (for example, Fair 1978, 1996; Rosenstone 1983; Erikson 1989; Beck 1992, 2000; Campbell 1992; Gelman and King 1993; Erikson and Wlezien 1994; Campbell and Garand 2000; Wlc1;ien and Erikson, 2000). These longer-term forecasts, made several months to a year in advance of the election, often do not use trial-heat questions from preelection polls. Nevertheless, the better forecasting models generally yield more accurate predictions of the vote shares than public opinion polls conducted several months before the election (Gelman and King 1993).While election forecasts derived from substantive considerations interest political scientists because the forecasts can be compared with electoral outcomes to lest hypotheses, the more general subject of election forecasting is often regarded as tangential to the development of a science of politics, hence unworthy of serious professional attention. Such a view completely discounts the public need for accurate electoral forecasting. Electoral outcomes in democratic countries have far-reaching domestic and (sometimes) international impact. Individuals, corporate actors, and governments who anticipate being affected by the outcome of a (future election incorporate their expectations (forecasts) into current decisions and policies. Thus anticipated and actual electoral outcomes are associated with aggregate stock prices and foreign exchange rates (Blomberg and Hess 1997; Riley and Luksetich 1980; Brander 1991). Prices of selected stocks (or groups of stocks) may also be associated with anticipated outcomes (Herron el al. 1999; Knight 2003): for example. the price jump of pharmaceutical stocks one day before the 2000 U.S. presidential election, due to investors' beliefs that the Democratic party would not control both the executive and legislative branches of government (Kou and Sobel 2001). Major firms often deal with electoral uncertainty by making contributions to more than one candidate (party). A foreign Government making an economic policy decision today may well take into account its expectations about the outcome of a forthcoming U.S. election. In all these instances, rational decision making hinges on an accurate assessment of uncertainty. As opposed to poll-based forecasting, where the opinions of a probability sample of the electorate are aggregated, methods that combine the opinions of one or more experts are also sometimes used to produce election forecasts (see Rosenstooe 1983 for a critical evaluation of many of these procedures). Election markets, in which participants buy and sell candidate shares, are a systematic variant of this approach. In "winner-take-all" markets, shares of the winning candidate payout at positive values, while shares of the losing candidates payout at O. In vote share markets, a candidate's price is a forecast of his/her share of the vote. First implemented in large-scale fashion by researchers at the University of Iowa (Forsythe et a1. 1992). election markets were used to predict the 1988 U.S. presidential election. On election eve 1988, the price of a Bush share was within one- tenth of a percentage point of the vote share Bush received. None of the major polls conducted over the last few days before the election did nearly as well. The market also predicted the marginalized lead (percentage difference between the top two candidates) much more accurately than any of the major polls.

## Models Fail

**Models fail – history attests**

**Silver 2012 – Political Analyst for the New York Times** (Nate, political analyst in national print, [online](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online), and [cable news](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_cable_news) media, Founder of fivethirtyeight.com blog which is part of the New York Times, 3/26/12, Five Thirty Eight, <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/26/models-based-on-fundamentals-have-failed-at-predicting-presidential-elections/>, 7/16/12, Models Based on ‘Fundamentals’ Have Failed at Predicting Presidential Elections)

Suddenly, the science of election forecasting became a hot topic and the number of models proliferated. Instead of a model here and there, six of them were published in advance of 1992 and then 12 in 1996. By now, the doubt has pretty much erased itself -- probably to an unhealthy extent. It is often asserted that elections are easy to predict and that the economy decides most of them. The publisher's description for Lynn Vavreck's [excellent 2009 book](http://www.amazon.com/The-Message-Matters-Presidential-Campaigns/dp/0691139636), "The Message Matters," for instance, made the following claim: The economy is so powerful in determining the results of U.S. presidential elections that political scientists can predict winners and losers with amazing accuracy long before the campaigns start. To be clear, that is the publisher's copy and not Ms. Vavreck's. However, statements like these have become [fairly](http://www.examiner.com/politics-in-washington-dc/do-campaigns-matter-short-no) [common](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brendan-nyhan/do-early-stage-candidate_b_823985.html), especially among a savvy group of bloggers and writers who sit at the intersection of political science and the mainstream media (a space that this blog, of course, occupies). But is it true? Can political scientists "predict winners and losers with amazing accuracy long before the campaigns start"? The answer to this question, at least since 1992, has been emphatically not. Some of their forecasts have been better than others, but their track record as a whole is very poor. And the models that claim to be able to predict elections based solely on the fundamentals -- that is, without looking to horse-race factors like polls or approval ratings -- have done especially badly. Many of these models claim to explain as much as 90 percent of the variance in election outcomes without looking at a single poll. In practice, they have had almost literally no predictive power, whether looked at individually or averaged together. I have made [theoretically grounded critiques](http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/03/what-do-economic-models-really-tell-us-about-elections/) of these models before -- but I had never gone back and looked at how well they actually did. Nor, to my knowledge, has anybody else done so in a comprehensive way. There have usually been postmortems after every election cycle, but we now have quite a lot of data -- nearly 60 forecasting models published by political scientists or economists in advance of the 1992 through 2008 elections. We should at least be able to get some basic sense for whether these models are as accurate in practice as they claim to be in theory. I will be going through these models one election cycle at a time, but I need to articulate a few ground rules first. If you don't care about this detail, scroll down past the bullet points. First, the key is that these models were published in advance of the election. It's not a prediction if you already know what happened. These modelers have a lot of choices to work with -- literally millions of plausible combinations of economic variables, alongside other factors like polls, variables to indicate wartime and peacetime, incumbency, and so forth. It's easy to fit these past data well just by testing out one specification after another until you come across a lucky one, like the robber who depresses every buzzer in a 15-story apartment complex until someone lets him in. It's much harder actually to make good predictions. Everything I'm looking at here was an actual prediction -- not a "retrodiction" that was published after the fact. Second, all of the forecasts were published by academic experts -- specifically, by economists or political scientists. Most were presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, which takes place around Labor Day. A few others were published in a journal but not presented at the meeting, while some were published at the academic's personal or professional Web site -- the idea is to be comprehensive. Most of the forecasts were published based on data available as of about August of the election year. A few were published sooner than that, and a couple were published later -- one or two in very early October. But July, August and September were the peak period. If a forecaster regularly updated his forecast over the course of the election (which is a good habit), I use his forecast from this July-to-September period to keep everyone on a level playing field. Third, I evaluate all published versions of a forecast. It's fairly common for a forecaster to publish multiple models -- and they don't always produce similar results. There's nothing inherently wrong with publishing different versions of a forecast. But one "trick" that some of the forecasters use is to highlight the version of the forecast that seems to match the polls or the consensus view, while burying the others in the fine print. One forecaster in 2008, for instance, published four versions of his model, two of which showed a clear advantage for John McCain and the other two for Barack Obama. Since there was abundant evidence by the late summer that Mr. Obama was the favorite, he recommended that people look at the pro-Obama versions. However, he was presumably doing so because he was aware of factors like polls that he hadn't originally deemed useful to include in his model. We treat all these versions equally: if it was published and has your name on it, it counts. But I do not go back and retrofit models that were discontinued and ceased to publish new forecasts. Fourth, there were some cases in which the models included variables that were not yet known at the time -- for instance, the economic growth rate in the fourth quarter of the election year. In each case, however, the forecaster pointed to what he believed to be the most likely value for this unknown variable and published a prediction accordingly. This was the figure I used -- what the forecaster published at the time -- and not the one based on data that became available after the fact. You should be aware, however, that economic data can be revised significantly. The forecasters tend to skirt this issue in their presentation of the models, which may be problematic since some economic series are revised in predictable ways and since it is often not clear whether their models are meant to be applied to original or revised data. Finally, I've placed the models into two broad groups. The ones I call "fundamentals" models do not look at any horse-race data -- meaning, no approval or favorability ratings, no head-to-head polls, and no primary results -- and claim to make a good forecast despite this. The models that I call "horse-race" models do include polls or (much less commonly) primary results alongside economic variables and other factors. The "fundamentals" models are highlighted in yellow in the charts that you will see below. Let's begin our review in 1992, when Bill Clinton beat the incumbent, George Bush. In the chart, I've listed what looks to be a number of different columns for each model, but really they're all getting at the same thing: How close was the model to the actual result? The industry standard is to publish a forecast of something called the "incumbent party two-way vote share," which is the percentage of votes the incumbent party's presidential candidate gets with third-party candidates excluded. In 1992, for instance, Mr. Bush got 46.6 percent of the two-way vote, while Mr. Clinton got 53.4 percent, ignoring Ross Perot's vote. I've always found this choice to be counterintuitive; most of us might know that Mr. Clinton defeated Mr. Bush by a margin in the mid-single digits, but people rarely talk about an incumbent's two-way vote share. So I've translated each forecast into a projected margin of victory for the incumbent candidate, treating the third-party vote as a known variable. These two versions are mathematically identical for all intents and purposes. Note, however, that the error will be expressed to be about twice as large by the second version. If you miss high on the Democrat's vote share by four percentage points -- which doesn't sound that bad -- most of that will have gone to the Republican instead, so you will have missed the margin between the candidates by about eight points (the difference between a toss-up race and a borderline landslide). You'll also see a calculation called the R.M.S.E., or [root-mean-square error](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Root-mean-square_deviation), sometimes also called the standard error. This is the type of error that these models are trying to minimize, so it is the most appropriate measuring stick. The standard error is slightly larger than the average error. However, it is only about half as much as the [margin of error](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margin_of_error). The six models in 1992 had a standard error of 7.5 points in predicting the incumbent party's margin, versus an average error of 5.6 points and a margin of error of 14.6 points. Those numbers might sound fairly high, and they are. A couple of models came quite close to the result in 1992, but others missed badly; Dr. Fair's, for instance, projected a nine-point win for Mr. Bush, when Mr. Clinton won by six points instead, an error of 15 points. The error figures for Dr. Fair's model and one other are highlighted in blue because they fell outside the 95 percent confidence interval as claimed by the forecast, something that should happen only one time in 20. In 1992, however, two of the six models failed by this test. The other thing to notice is that these models weren't in very much agreement with one another. Despite relying on much of the same data (and having "retrodicted" nearly identical and nearly perfect results for past elections), they projected everything from a nine-point win for Mr. Bush to a six-point win for Mr. Clinton. This is not a very good start: little consensus among the models, a high standard error, and much less accuracy than claimed. The 1992 election was quirky in some ways, however, because of the presence of Mr. Perot and because the economic data was mixed; G.D.P. grew, but jobs did not. Few such excuses could be made for the next election, in 1996, an easy win for Mr. Clinton in what was perhaps the least eventful election cycle of our lifetimes. Unfortunately, the models had many of the same problems. The spread in the models this year was even wider: everything from a 13-point win for Clinton to an 8-point win for Dole was forecast. Nine of the 12 models correctly predicted a Clinton win, but with that kind of spread, their overall performance wasn't much better: a standard error of 6.6 points. Since the misses were in opposite directions, taking an average of all 12 models would have given you a pretty good answer. But that's mostly because the horse-race models had a good year and were doing the hard work; three of the four "fundamentals" models missed badly (and called for a Dole win) despite what seemed like favorable circumstances for Mr. Clinton, given the peacetime and a good economy. It was 2000, however, when the models had their worst year: This was the only election of the five in which the models all picked the same winner -- all had Al Gore defeating George W. Bush. And Mr. Gore did win the popular vote by half a percentage point. The problem was that the margin wasn't large enough to allow him to prevail in the Electoral College. That wasn't supposed to happen, according to the models; instead, most had predicted a clear win for him, with two calling for him to win by almost 20 percentage points. Although one or two models, like Dr. Fair's, had a decent result, these cases were the exceptions, and the standard error for the 10 models that year was 11.3 points. The big miss in 2000 sparked a lively debate in the literature -- I would recommend the papers by [Larry M. Bartels](http://apsanet3b.inetu.net/imgtest/PresidentialVoteModels-Bartels.pdf) and [Morris Fiorina](http://www.stanford.edu/~mfiorina/2000%20BJPS%20Revision2_Paper.pdf) on the subject. Nevertheless, the forecasters continued on undeterred; in fact, a couple of new forecasts jointed the ranks in 2004. That year was a little better than 2000 -- only one of the 15 models called for a John Kerry win, with the rest predicting Mr. Bush's re-election. The problem is that these models judge themselves by how close they come to the incumbent candidate's vote share or margin of victory, and a number of them envisioned a much clearer win for Mr. Bush than he actually received. In fact, the model that called for a Kerry win (by two-tenths of a percentage point) was one of the better ones given how close the vote was; five others expected Mr. Bush to triumph by double digits. The "fundamentals" models were especially likely to miss high, since they ignored polling that showed a close race all year. The standard error for the 15 models was 7.1 points, similar to 1992 or 1996. There were even more models in 2008 -- 16 of them, counting different versions by the same forecaster. But this didn't increase the degree of consensus. Instead, the divide in the models was especially wide, with different "fundamentals" models predicting everything from a 7-point win for John McCain to a 16-point win for Barack Obama. Six of the 16 models produced results that fell outside of their 95 percent confidence intervals, mostly to the high side of Mr. McCain's vote. Their standard error was 7.8 points. That does not seem to me like amazing accuracy. In every election, some models did well but others did badly, with each cycle featuring at least one model that missed the vote margin by 13 or more points. In total, 18 of the 58 models -- more than 30 percent -- missed by a margin outside their 95 percent confidence interval, something that is supposed to happen only one time in 20 (or about three times out of 58). Across all 58 models, the standard error was 8 points of vote margin or 4.6 points of incumbent vote share. That was much larger than the error that the models claimed they would have -- about twice as large, in fact. The good news is that one group of models was considerably better than another, so at least there is something to learn from this. What does not seem to work as well is making forecasts based solely on "fundamentals" like economic data without also including polls. The models that ignored polls had a standard error of 9.8 points in predicting the vote margin (or a simple average error of 8.1 points and a margin of error of nearly 20 points). The "horse race" models were about 40 percent more accurate, with a standard error of 6.9 points and a simple average error of 5.6 points. The "fundamentals" models, in fact, have had almost no predictive power at all. Over this 16-year period, there has been no relationship between the vote they forecast for the incumbent candidate and how well he actually did -- even though some of them claimed to explain as much as 90 percent of voting results. Averaging the fundamentals models together reduces error slightly but not really enough to make them useful; it improves their explanatory power only to 7 percent from 4 percent. (We will explore this topic of model averaging more in the next installment of this series.) The horse-race models haven't been especially accurate, but they have at least gotten us somewhere. The typical horse-race model has explained about 50 percent of voting results during this period (and closer to 70 percent when you take a consensus of them). There is still some more work to do here -- comparing these models against how you would have done by looking at polls alone, looking at simple and unadorned economic variables like G.D.P., or even comparing the models against naïve forecasting techniques like expecting the vote to be split 50-50. The results are not going to be flattering, especially for the fundamentals models. That will be coming in the follow-up article. However, I do want to pre-empt one potentially incorrect interpretation of this evidence. I do not mean to suggest that the economy does not matter to elections, or that there is no predictive content in looking at economic variables. As this experiment should show you, the economy assuredly does not account for 90 percent of voting results. But it may well account for half of them. That doesn't mean these effects are easy to quantify, but you can probably get somewhere -- perhaps explaining about [40 percent of election results](http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/11/18/which-economic-indicators-best-predict-presidential-elections/) -- by using more sensible techniques. That's still enough to give a huge tailwind to an incumbent running in a good economy, and represents a big problem for a candidate running into a recession. To be sure, 40 percent is also much different than 90 percent. (And even that 40 percent will be hard to achieve given the uneven quality of economic data and economic forecasts -- it's more a ceiling than a floor.) I have certainly seen cases of political scientists going too far in playing down the effects of things like campaigns and candidate quality or ideology, but there is a lot of rich research in this area, and the forecasting models described here reflect just a small portion of it. Why have the fundamentals models had zero predictive power instead of even 40 percent? To be blunt, a lot of them are badly designed. They come up with illogical combinations of variables that fit the noise in the data rather than the signal and that are not robust to the difficulties in measuring the economy. Often, these forecasters are trying to maximize the fit in their software package in ways that directly trade off with predictive accuracy in the real world and that risk undermining their hypothesis. Some of the models are more sensible. The forecasts made by [Robert S. Erikson and Christopher Wlezien](http://www.apsanet.org/imgtest/PSOct08EriksonWlezien.pdf), for instance, are done very well and do a good job of accounting for pertinent information without resorting to [data-dredging](http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/24/models-can-be-superficial-in-politics-too/). The broader point is that we can get into trouble when we exaggerate how much we know about the future. Although election forecasting is a relatively obscure topic, you'll see the same mistakes in fields like finance and earthquake prediction in which the stakes are much higher. The book I've been working on is all about the mistakes made by forecasters and how to improve upon them. Examples like these of predictions failing badly in the real world are [very common,](http://www.amazon.com/Expert-Political-Judgment-Good-Know/dp/0691123020) and forecasts that seem too good to be true usually are. This year looks to be one of those complicated elections, and already the models are producing wildly diverging results -- everything from a [Republican landslide](http://www.douglas-hibbs.com/Election2012/2012Election-MainPage.htm) to a [lock-solid](http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/08/31/despite-keys-obama-is-no-lock/) Obama win. Be careful when you see these forecasts; the most confident-sounding predictions are often the most likely to fail.

## Polls Are Accurate- Gallop

**Gallup polling methods are accurate**

**Blumenthal 11 – Founding Editor of Pollster** (Mark, Senior Polling Editor of the Huffington Post, 5/25/11, 'Likely' Voters: How Pollsters Define And Choose Them, The Huffington Post, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/10/05/likely-voters-how-pollsters-choose-them_n_751560.html>, 7/19/12)

In the 1950s, Paul Perry, the legendary president of the Gallup Organization, combined seven questions much like these into an index. The greater respondents score on the index, the greater the the probability that they would vote. He then made an educated guess about the likely level of voter turnout -- say 40% of adults -- and used the index to select the 40% of the sample that scored highest on the index. That procedure proved to produce more accurate election forecasts than alternatives they tested, and remains the basic concept still used in the Gallup likely voter model to this day. Over the years, other media pollsters adopted similar approaches. Gallup still uses it, of course, and pollsters like the Pew Research Center and the ABC/Washington Post poll and others continue to apply close variants. While the Gallup-style model has its critics, let's set those issues aside for a moment and focus on this point: The classic, seven-question, Gallup-style index-and-cutoff model represents a minority of the "likely voter" polls we are now seeing at the statewide level. Moreover, the approaches that pollsters use vary widely, and resist easy categorization. The simplest way to describe what they do is to say there are a variety of different techniques that various pollsters mix and match. Aside from the classic Gallup model, these include: The CBS/New York Times variant, which is similar to the Gallup approach except that rather than select specific respondents as likely voters, it weights all registered voters up or down based on their probability of voting. The use of two or three questions to simply screen out voters at the beginning of the interview that say they are not registered and not likely vote. The application of quotas or weights to adjust the completed interviews to match the pollster's expectations of the demographics or regional distribution of likely voters. I break this one out separately because it remains among the most controversial likely voter "modeling" tools. Sampling respondents from lists that draw on official records of the actual vote history of individual voters, so that when the pollster calls John Doe, they already know whether Doe has voted in past elections. Finally, many believe that the use of an automated, recorded-voice methodology rather than a live interviewer is itself a useful tool in obtaining a more accurate measurement of the intent to vote. Some pollsters use a few of these methods, some use nearly all, so there are probably as many likely voter "models" out there as there are pollsters. The tools that pollsters apply also reflects a philosophical difference I have written about before: Most national media pollsters, especially those that apply the classic Gallup index-and-cutoff model, are wary of making a priori judgments about the demographics or attitudes of the likely electorate. They prefer to set up a theoretically-objective mechanism to determine what a likely voter is and trust it to determine the demographics and partisan balance of their sample. On the other hand, most (but not all) campaign pollsters -- those who (like me in a former life) conduct surveys on behalf of political campaigns -- have grown comfortable about drawing on data from other sources and applying their own judgment about the demographics and even the party identification of the likely electorate. All of these factors help explain why different polls that all theoretically measure the same "likely" electorate can produce very different results. Of course, the biggest question of all is whether these tools are working as well in this tumultuous election year as they have in the past. That's the question that I'll take up in the second part of this series.

## Polls Fail

**Polls fail – margin of error to high**

**Silver 2012 – Political Analyst for the New York Times** (Nate, political analyst in national print, [online](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online), and [cable news](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_cable_news) media, Founder of fivethirtyeight.com blog which is part of the New York Times, 6/13/12, Five Thirty Eight, 7/16/12, <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/13/statistical-noise-in-election-polls/>, Statistical Noise in Election Polls)

But if the overall numbers of the poll are of some significance, the notion that Mr. Obama is in much danger of losing his African-American voters is not really justified by the survey. The reason is simply that there isn’t a sufficient sample size to come to much of any determination about the question. The poll surveyed 810 North Carolina voters, and weighted its demographics such that 22 percent were African-American. If you do the math, that suggests that about 180 respondents in the survey were black. The [margin of error](http://americanresearchgroup.com/moe.html) on a 180-person subsample is quite high: about 7.3 percent. And that probably underestimates the real margin of error somewhat. The 22 percent African-American figure in the poll represents the results after demographic weighting. However, some demographic groups are considerably harder to get on the phone than others, African-Americans among them. Since the incidence of cellphone use is considerably higher among African-Americans than among white Americans, this difficulty will be especially true for a polling firm that does not include cellphone voters in its sample, as Public Policy Polling’s surveys do not. In practice, it is possible that Public Policy Polling got something like 100 African-American voters on the phone rather than 180, which would be associated with a margin of error of about 10 percent. In addition, all of these African-Americans were reached on landlines, and they may have different demographic characteristics (for instance, being older) than the cellphone voters that the survey missed. A more robust sample of African-American voters comes from the Gallup poll, which interviews about 3,500 people a week for its national tracking poll and does include cellphones in its sample. The Gallup poll suggests that Mr. Obama’s ratings among African-American voters may have dropped by a percentage point or two over the past few weeks, but probably not more than that. In the four full weeks of polling since Mr. Obama announced his support for same-sex marriage — which had been unpopular in the African-American community until recently — his approval rating has averaged 86 percent among black voters. That compares with 87 percent for 2012 as a whole. Mr. Obama’s approval rating among black voters in Gallup’s most recent week of polling, which ran from June 4-10, was 85 percent. There just isn’t any indication that there is much going on here, other than statistical noise. Although Mr. Obama may not win 95 percent of African-American voters in 2012, he will surely win an overwhelming majority of their support. Mr. Obama has much bigger problems to worry about. There is nothing theoretically wrong with looking at Mr. Obama’s support among different demographic subgroups. But doing so can lead to some bad analysis — sorry, there’s no polite way to put it — if you aren’t alert to this very basic issue of sample size. Furthermore, keep in mind that in addition to the already-high margin of error related to polling demographic subgroups, the margin of error is calculated in such a way that it is supposed to cover 95 percent of all possible cases. But it won’t cover 100 percent. The results from 1 in 20 polls — or 1 in 20 subsamples within polls — will fall outside the margin of error. There are roughly six presidential polls being released on an average day right now, and the number is sure to proliferate in the coming weeks. Each of those six polls might include demographic breakdowns for, say, 15 demographic groups. That means that on a typical day, you might have 90 demographic subsamples to pick from. Several of these results almost certainly will fall outside of the margin of error — they will be outliers. Unfortunately, the news media has a tendency to focus on the outlying results, while missing the consensus trend. The most implausible results often get the most attention. Meanwhile, we have entered an era where different polling firms — including Public Policy Polling — have substantial [“house effects”](http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/11/06/when-house-effects-become-bias/) or partisan leans. Margin-of-error calculations assume that pollsters are doing everything right — other than taking a random sample of a population, thereby introducing sampling error. But that is too forgiving a view. Polling firms introduce lots of “unforced” error into their polls because of the methodological shortcuts, like the failure to call cellphones. We’re now at a phase of the election cycle where there is just enough information to get yourself in trouble. With a half-dozen polls being released every day, you’ll have some ability to shop around in support of whatever narrative you might wish to advance. But there is not yet so much data that all these anomalies will wash out in the average. An appreciation for the noise intrinsic to polling — both that which is inevitable because of sampling error, and that which is introduced by polling firms because of improper methodology — is crucial if you want to have a well-informed idea of what will happen in the election. Demographic subgroups are associated with much higher margins of error than the overall numbers in a poll. So, weaning yourself from overreacting to every shift in the demographic numbers is a good first step to avoid being driven crazy between now and November.

# Elections Uniqueness

## Obama will win

**Obama will win – unemployment below national average or decreasing in swing states**

**Cilliza 7/22 – Staff Writer for the Washington Post** (Chris, 7/22/12, Chris Cillizza writes “The Fix”, a politics blog for the Washington Post. He also covers the White House for the newspaper and website. Chris has appeared as a guest on NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, Fox News Channel and CNN to talk politics, In swing states, economic picture a little brighter for Obama, 7/23/12, The Washington Post, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/in-swing-states-economic-picture-a-little-brighter-for-obama/2012/07/22/gJQA8Icq2W_story.html?tid=pm_politics_pop>)

But in the 12 (or so) swing states — where Democrats and Republicans will spend the lion’s share of their time and money in the 100 or so days between now and Nov. 6 — the economic picture is considerably sunnier. In seven of those 12 states — Iowa, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin — the unemployment rate is below the June national average of 8.2 percent. In some, it is considerably less than the national average; the June rates in New Hampshire, Iowa and Virginia were below 6 percent. Even in Ohio, a state hit hard by the collapse of the manufacturing sector, the unemployment rate is a full percentage point below the U.S. average. Republicans note that the unemployment rate rose between May and June in Colorado, Iowa, New Hampshire and Virginia, among other swing states. In the four swing states where the rate is above the national average — Florida, Michigan, Nevada and North Carolina — the trend line is headed downward. Nevada’s June unemployment rate was an eye-popping 11.6 percent, but that was down from 13.8 percent in June 2011. Ditto Florida (10.7 percent in June 2011, 8.6 percent now), Michigan (10.6 percent in 2011, 8.6 percent now) and North Carolina (10.6 percent in 2011, 9.4 percent now). Viewed even more narrowly, of the eight states that the Fix considers the truest swing states this fall — Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Ohio, Nevada, New Hampshire, Virginia and Wisconsin — the unemployment rate is below the U.S. average in five, above it in two and right at the national number in one (Colorado). If you allocated the electoral votes of those eight swing states solely based on the unemployment rate in each — giving the states with rates below the national average to Obama and those above it to Republican challenger Mitt Romney — the incumbent would claim 51 electoral votes, compared with 35 for Romney. Colorado and its nine electoral votes would be a push. Add that total to the states already solidly behind or leaning toward each candidate on the Fix electoral map and Obama takes 288 electoral votes, more than the 270 he needs to win. Now, simply assigning states to one of the two candidates based on the unemployment rate alone is a too-blunt measure. After all, the candidates — and the campaigns they run — matter. But the state-by-state unemployment numbers are a reminder that the 2012 election — like all presidential contests — is a national election in name only. That is, although the U.S. unemployment rate matters as a broad thematic, the rates in the eight to 12 swing states may well be more telling indicators of whether Obama can sell voters on his plans for the economy. That handful of states is where the election will be decided; the unemployment rates in places such as California (10.7 percent in June) and North Dakota (2.9 percent) are, essentially, meaningless. Even in the places where the unemployment rate is higher than the national average — particularly Florida — the downward trend line could (and we emphasize “could”) allow the incumbent to convince undecided voters that things are slowly but surely getting better. On the other hand — and, yes, in politics there is always another hand — the highest the national unemployment rate has ever been when a president has won reelection is 7.2 percent, for Ronald Reagan in 1984. Of the 12 swing(ish) states, six had rates above 7.2 percent, while a seventh — Ohio — had exactly that 7.2 percent rate. Make no mistake: The weak national economy has badly imperiled Obama’s chances of winning a second term in November. But the economic story in the swing states is slightly better for the incumbent, giving him and his team a glimmer of hope as they work to win in the fall.

**Obama will win – Supreme Court ruling mobilized base in key states – Nevada and Michigan**

**Beaumont, 2012 – veteran chronicler of presidential politics and the Iowa Caucuses** (Thomas, Des Moines correspondent for The Associated Press, Obama, Romney use health care ruling to rally core backers, Jackson Sun, 7/7/12, <http://www.jacksonsun.com/viewart/> 20120708/NEWS/120707008/Obama-Romney-use-health-care-ruling-rally-core-backers-, 7/9/12)

In Michigan, callers at the phone bank in Obama's Detroit campaign office and volunteers registering voters at nearby bus stops touted the ruling. Said John Hardy, a Detroit office volunteer, "It's energized some people who support the president but were on the fence about helping." Thousands of Iowans responded to a donation link included on a fundraising email from Obama's campaign and, in what Iowa campaign activists say is an unprecedented figure, at least 1,000 people also responded favorably to Obama's Iowa Facebook page after the ruling. "People are pretty darned excited," said Nancy Bobo, a Des Moines Democrat and Obama campaign volunteer. In Nevada, where Obama is in a tough fight with Romney over a state economy that's struggling to overcome double-digit unemployment, Democrat John Bruce Krausman said the ruling gives him a bit more confidence that Obama can win. "It means for the country that we can move forward," Krausman said.

**Obama winning - the 2012 election is personality driven and he crushes Romney on “likability”**

**Beinart, July 13, 2012** – Peter Beinart is the editor in chief of Open Zion, and is an American political pundit, A former editor of The New Republic, and he has written for Time, and The New York Times, (“Obama Does Not Always Get Good Job Ratings but His Likeability May Be the Key to a Win”, accessed at http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/07/13/obama-does-not-always-get-good-job-ratings-but-his-likeability-may-be-the-key-to-a-win.html, accessed on 7/15/12)

The most plausible explanation is that a lot of Americans just simply like the guy. When Obama took office in 2009, Americans held wildly positive views of his personal characteristics. According to Pew, 92 percent considered him a “good communicator,” 87 percent deemed him “warm and friendly,” 81 percent said he “cares about people like me,” 79 percent thought him “well-informed,” and 76 percent judged him “trustworthy.” Since then, each of those numbers has declined between 10 and 20 points. But they began at such stratospherically high levels that even with the drop, the public’s perception of Obama as a person remains remarkably cheery. Perhaps it’s because compared to past presidencies, Obama’s has been less plagued by scandal. Perhaps it’s because Obama’s personal story still makes people proud of America. Perhaps it’s because Obama is widely considered intelligent and well-spoken. Perhaps it’s because, like Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, but unlike John Kerry and Al Gore, he has that intangible quality: authenticity. He seems comfortable in his own skin. For whatever reason, Americans seem to give Obama the benefit of the doubt. When Pew asked them to describe him in a word earlier this year, the second most popular answer was “incompetent.” “Socialist” came in fourth. But the first, third, fifth and sixth most popular adjectives were “good,” “intelligent,” “honest,” and “trying.” The contrast with Mitt Romney could not be starker. According to the June Pew, while Romney leads on the economy, Obama enjoys a 31 point advantage on “connect[ing] to ordinary Americans.” He leads by 19 points on being “willing to take [an] unpopular stand.” By a 14 point margin, Americans consider him more “honest and truthful.” According to Gallup, Americans deem him more “likeable” by a whopping 17 points. **This 2012 election may, in fact, be** the most **personality-driven** in recent memory. For several presidential election cycles now, Pew has been asking voters why they support their favored candidate: “Leadership,” “Experience,” “Stand on Issues,” or “Personality.” Among Romney supporters, 4 percent cite personality, the same percentage as cited it for Al Gore in 2000. For John McCain in 2008, the figure was 3 percent. For George W. Bush and John Kerry in 2004, it was 8 percent each. For Obama this year, it’s 18 percent.

## Obama Focusing on Base

**Obama’s focusing on base turnout while using negative ads to gain undecided voters**

**Cilliza 7/23 – Staff Writer for the Washington Post** (Chris, 7/23/12, Chris Cillizza writes “The Fix”, a politics blog for the Washington Post. He also covers the White House for the newspaper and website. Chris has appeared as a guest on NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, Fox News Channel and CNN to talk politics, Obama campaign pushes back on ‘burn rate’ criticism, 7/23/12, The Washington Post, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/post/obama-campaign-pushes-back-on-burn-rate-criticism/2012/07/23/gJQAfrTm4W\_blog.html?wprss=rss\_the-fix)

A NBC-Wall Street Journal poll released earlier this month showed that Romney’s image among voters in swing states had taken a hit, a trend that NBC’s Mark Murray attributed to the Obama ad onslaught. Wrote Murray: Romney’s favorability numbers have dropped, possibly reflecting the toll the negative Obama TV advertisements are having on the former Massachusetts governor in these battlegrounds. Messina’s contention is that “this race at a national level is relatively locked in right now” but that the NBC-WSJ data suggests that the money being spent in swing states to define Romney is already paying dividends. (Worth noting: Most polling in swing states suggests Obama runs ahead of Romney but that margin is almost always within the poll’s margin of error.) More broadly, Messina’s self-described “big bet” is that in an election expected to be extremely close —and which almost no one is undecided — that being able to identify and turn out Obama supporters hold the key to winning. That calculation is similar to how the Bush campaign viewed the 2004 electorate — breaking with the past strategy of targeting independents to instead identify and make sure their own base turned out first and foremost. Messina and the rest of the Obama team are trying to replicate that Bush approach while simultaneously trying to convince independent/undecided voters that Romney isn’t the candidate for them with a slew of negative TV ads. That’s an expensive proposition. We’ll know in 106 days whether Messina made the right bet or whether he (and his candidate) went bust.

## Obama Spending More

**Obama is spending more than Romney – more important than cash on hand**

**Cilliza 7/23 – Staff Writer for the Washington Post** (Chris, 7/23/12, Chris Cillizza writes “The Fix”, a politics blog for the Washington Post. He also covers the White House for the newspaper and website. Chris has appeared as a guest on NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, Fox News Channel and CNN to talk politics, Obama campaign pushes back on ‘burn rate’ criticism, 7/23/12, The Washington Post, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/post/obama-campaign-pushes-back-on-burn-rate-criticism/2012/07/23/gJQAfrTm4W\_blog.html?wprss=rss\_the-fix)

In the wake of a report that the Obama campaign’s burn rate — the amount of money they are spending per month on the race — has raised concerns among some within the party, the president’s campaign manager insisted that every penny is being well spent. “We made a big bet in this campaign,” Obama campaign manager Jim Messina told the Fix in an interview this afternoon. “Ground organization matters and building one takes a lot of money. It’s an expensive proposition.” Messina added that the campaign is spending less at this point than George W. Bush spent at the same time in the 2004 campaign despite building a ground game and “currently fending off six or seven Republican super PACs.” The Obama campaign spent $58 million in June — $38 million of which went to a massive television ad campaign in a handful of swing states. Romney, by contrast, spent $27.5 million in June. That spending disparity allowed Romney to pass Obama in cash on hand at the end of the month; Romney and the Republican National Committee ended June with $170 million in the bank as compared to $144 million for Obama and the Democratic National Committee. To date, the Obama campaign has spent $107 million on television ads, according to data provided to the Fix by a Republican media buyer. Romney has spent $35 million on ads. “In terms of ad spending this is the period when voters are learning about Romney’s record and we want to be a part of that conversation, ” said Messina. “In the battleground states as people get to know Romney’s record they like it less and less.”

## Romney Winning – Money Race

**Romney is dominating the money race – super PAC proves**

Walker 2012– Reporter for The New York Observer (Hunter, 7/9/12, Both Presidential Campaigns Want You to Think Their Opponents Have More Money, The Politicker, 7/15/2012, <http://politicker.com/2012/07/each-campaign-trying-to-claim-the-other-has-more-money/>)

After their big fundraising haul, the Romney campaign had $160 million in cash on hand at the end of last month. The Obama campaign has yet to report how much they had left in the bank at the end of last month, so it’s not clear precisely where the money race stands at the moment, but what is apparent is that, for reasons of either brand or expectation management both campaigns want to make it seem like they’re coming from behind in the cash game. Of course, while campaign coffers provide the primary funding for a ground game and advertising strategy, these numbers don’t include the money being raised by super PACs supporting each candidate. On that front, Mr. Romney is [ahead by a large a margin](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/08/magazine/can-the-democrats-catch-up-in-the-super-pac-game.html?pagewanted=all).

**States**

## West Virginia Not key

## Virginia Turnout Key - Obama

**Turnout key to Virgina**

**CBS News 7/13** (Lucy Madison, Staff Writer for CBS, Obama returns to key Virginia region hoping for '08 repeat, CBS News, July 13, 2012, July 15, 2012, <http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-57471599-503544/obama-returns-to-key-virginia-region-hoping-for-08-repeat/>)

Many Democrats worry that low turnout, which dogged Deeds in 2009, will come back to haunt Mr. Obama in 2012, particularly when it comes to young people and minorities. Whereas black voters comprised 20 percent of Virginia voters in 2008, that number had dropped to 15 percent just a year later. According to CBS News Elections Director Anthony Salvanto, Deeds' loss in 2009 demonstrated that despite the president's big gains in 2008, Virginia is still a battleground state. "Certainly the electorate in 2009 is not the same as it will be in the presidential race," he said, noting that overall turnout is expected to be much higher in a presidential election. But re-energizing his young, black and minority supporters will likely be a key factor in Mr. Obama's success. "He needs to generate a large turnout again among African-Americans, Hispanics and other minorities, as well as young people," said Sabato. "You put all that together and it makes a lot of sense for him to visit the area repeatedly in November."

## AT Virginia Turnout

**ID Laws will affect Virginia Turnout**

**CBS News 7/13** (Lucy Madison, Staff Writer for CBS, Obama returns to key Virginia region hoping for '08 repeat, CBS News, July 13, 2012, July 15, 2012, <http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-57471599-503544/obama-returns-to-key-virginia-region-hoping-for-08-repeat/>)

One factor at play in that equation is a new voter ID law passed in Virginia, which opponents argue will disproportionately impact some of those key voting groups Mr. Obama is trying to get to show up. The Obama campaign stresses its efforts at grassroots efforts aimed at educating voters about the new law, but its impact on the election remains an open question. *(Obama reflects on his first years in office and looks forward to second term in interview with CBS News' Charlie Rose.)* "We're not immune to the voter suppression tactics that the Republicans have been working throughout the country," said Deeds.

**Military vote key to Virginia – breaks for Obama**

**CBS News 7/13** (Lucy Madison, Staff Writer for CBS, Obama returns to key Virginia region hoping for '08 repeat, CBS News, July 13, 2012, July 15, 2012, <http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-57471599-503544/obama-returns-to-key-virginia-region-hoping-for-08-repeat/>)

Making a play for the military vote When Mr. Obama makes his case in Virginia Beach today, there's another demographic that will be high on the campaign's radar: retired and active military members, of which Hampton Roads boasts a high population. "It's clearly a group that Obama needs to court once again," said Sabato. Polls with regard to this group, he said, are "all over" the place. And while he says Romney, as the Republican nominee, has a "natural appeal" among them, Obama has a few cards of his own he can play. "Osama bin Laden and his generally successful foreign policy will come in there," said Sabato, also noting the president's policy on Afghanistan. "That's why he has to appeal to them." Indeed, recent polling shows that despite a traditional Republican advantage among current and retired members of the military, the president may have recently made some inroads with the population: A [May poll by Reuters/Ipsos](http://www.reuters.com/article/interactive/idUSBRE84C02120120514?view=small&type=domesticNews) showed Mr. Obama leading Romney nationally among veterans and their families by 7 percent. The Obama campaign aims to make that a pattern. "We're drawing a stark contrast between President Obama and Mitt Romney on veteran affairs," said Benenati. Pointing to Romney's [opposition to bringing troops home from Iraq](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/election-2012/post/mitt-romney-calls-obama-iraq-decision-an-astonishing-failure/2011/10/21/gIQANpjD4L_blog.html), as well as the fact that he at one point floated the idea of privatizing the veteran health care system (a proposal he later backed away from), Benenanti argues, "the contrast between the two couldn't be starker."

## Virginia Key

**Virginia key to Obama’s victory**

**Madison 2012 – Staff Writer for CBS News** (Lucy, Staff Writer for CBS, Obama returns to key Virginia region hoping for '08 repeat, CBS News, July 13, 2012, July 15, 2012, <http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-57471599-503544/obama-returns-to-key-virginia-region-hoping-for-08-repeat/>)

(CBS News) In 2008, President Obama became the first Democratic candidate since 1964 to carry Virginia in a presidential election. This time around, the president's campaign is working hard to ensure that a second victory in the state doesn't slip out of his reach. As part of that effort, Mr. Obama on Friday heads to the southeastern part of Virginia, the first stop in a two-day swing across the commonwealth, where he'll underline his commitment to middle-class voters and draw a stark contrast between himself and presumptive Republican nominee Mitt Romney. "Southeast Virginia is an important region in an important state. This is going to be a close election," said Frank Benenati, regional press secretary for the Obama campaign. "We are going to reach out to every single Virginian we can." Despite Mr. Obama's relatively comfortable margin of victory over John McCain in Virginia in 2008 - he bested McCain 53 percent to 47 percent - the president will likely face a tougher challenge there this November. While a handful of recent polls give him an edge over Romney in the state, small towns and rural areas, where Mr. Obama did unexpectedly well in 2008, now present an opportunity for Republicans to make gains. Virginia's southeastern Hampton Roads region, which includes Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, Newport News and Hampton, is crucial territory for Mr. Obama. *(CBS News Radio White House correspondent Mark Knoller reports from Obama campaign trail in Virginia.)* "There are three big regions that matter in Virginia: Northern Virginia, which is substantially Democratic; the Richmond area, which is more substantially Republican; and Hampton Roads, which is in the middle," said Larry Sabato, a professor of politics at the University of Virginia and director of the UVA Center for Politics. "Hampton Roads tends to be the swing region. I think the Obama forces fear some erosion there." "To win Virginia, a Democrat, any Democrat, has to at least hold his own in Hampton Roads," adds Democratic state Senator Creigh Deeds, who ran an unsuccessful bid for governor in 2009. Deeds should know: He lost the region to Republican Bob McDonnell in 2009, and the governorship along with it. Ramping up turnout

**Agenda - Senators key**

## --Collins key

**Senator Collins Key to agenda- she is responsible in the eyes of the Senate**

**Barrett 7/13**- CNN Senior Congressional Producer (“Collins earns Ripken-like status with 5,000th straight Senate vote,” Cable News Network Politics, July 13, 2012, <http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/12/politics/collins-5000th-vote/index.html>, accessed July 15, 2012)

Washington (CNN) -- As one of a shrinking number of moderate Senate Republicans willing to vote across party lines, Susan Collins is accustomed to enormous attention being paid to many of the votes she casts. After all, her yeas or nays often determine whether key legislation lives or dies. On Thursday, senators once again turned their attention to a vote by the junior senator from Maine. This time, though, it was not because the outcome of a bill was in question, but because Collins cast her 5,000th consecutive vote, a streak she's kept alive since taking office in 1997. "It is a great honor to serve in the U.S. Senate and represent the people of Maine," Collins said. "Voting is a senator's most important responsibility, and I feel strongly about making every effort possible to be present when the roll is called." Collins' achievement was praised by Republicans and Democrats alike. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, said it is "a tenacious accomplishment indeed, and represents the work ethic and dedication Senator Collins has for the people of Maine and for the Senate." "We all know she's one of the hardest-working members of the United States Senate," he added. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nevada, said, "I hope I don't get in trouble, but I really like her. I appreciate her ability to work with us, work with everybody." Collins has "always been known for her ability to compromise, (and) legislation is the art of compromise," Reid noted. "I think that the tone that she has set ... is magnificent." Collins' milestone is not a Senate record. Former Sen. William Proxmire, D-Wisconsin, holds that with 10,252 straight votes between 1966 and 1988. Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, who has cast 6,446 consecutive votes since 1993, is second. Collins is third, after passing about a year ago the 4,705 votes by the late Sen. Robert Byrd, D-West Virginia. While it would take years for the 59-year-old, third-term senator to catch the front-runners, the 5,000 mark is still an impressive, achievement on par with Cal Ripken, the baseball legend who holds the big league record for consecutive games played. It was earned through determination, perseverance, diligent scheduling and, as she tells it, a willingness to risk bodily injury not to miss a vote. "At first, I did not have a goal of having a perfect voting record," Collins told CNN on Wednesday as she stepped off the Senate floor following a routine vote on a federal judge. But after completing her first two years, Collins said she recognized she had not missed a vote and decided at that point to emulate another Maine senator, Margaret Chase Smith, whose consecutive voting streak went for years before it was ended in 1968 by hip surgery. Smith, with 2,941 consecutive votes, is fifth on the all-time list. "The people of Maine have a great work ethic, and I think they appreciate the fact that I make such an effort to always be present to cast a vote to represent them," Collins explained. "Now I realize I've been blessed with very good health and I've been fortunate that I've been able to make every vote, but it has taken a great deal of effort, as well." The closest she came to almost missing a vote was in August 2007 on a run-of-the-mill amendment to an unglamorous small business bill. Stuck in a lengthy committee meeting in one of the Senate office buildings, Collins said she became "increasingly uneasy" as time ticked by despite promises from the cloak room that the vote would be held open until members of her committee could make their way to the Capitol. Finally, deciding she could not take a chance, she bolted from the committee room. "I ran down the steps to the subway, jumped onto the subway. Literally ran up the escalator in the Capitol, twisting my ankle rather badly in doing so because I had high heels on. And when I got to the floor, the cloakroom's staff was frantically searching for me and actually had the doors held open. "I burst in and cast a vote, the very last person to vote. It was after that final question had been posed: 'Is there anyone else in the chamber who wishes to vote or to change his vote?' So it literally was seconds before the gavel fell. And it would have been too late," she said. "Then, the next 13 members of the committee leisurely arrived over the next 15 or 20 minutes and were furious to learn they had missed the vote," she said. "So I was glad I went with my instinct." In another close call, Collins said she and fellow Maine Republican Olympia Snowe, and Sen. Scott Brown, R-Massachusetts, were boarding a flight home at Reagan National Airport when US Airways workers stopped her with an urgent message from the Capitol. They "burst into the gate area and said 'Stop, don't get on that plane,'" Collins said. "We were literally boarding the plane and (they) told us to get back to the Capitol where there was going to be another unexpected vote." Speaking of air travel, Collins said she regularly flies from Portland or Bangor to Washington on Sundays instead of Mondays to avoid flight complications that could jeopardize Monday afternoon votes. "That means sacrificing some personal time," she acknowledged. It also means sacrificing face time with voters -- even in an election year. In 2008, when she was running for re-election, she chose to stay in Washington for votes instead of going to Maine for the announcement of a key endorsement by the Democratic mayor of Lewiston, the state's second largest city. It was a hard-earned political prize many senators might have skipped a vote or two to relish. Over her long streak, there have been a lot of tough votes in which she's endured pleas from both parties to vote with them. One of the most controversial was the one she cast for President Barack Obama's economic stimulus bill in 2009. She was one of three GOP senators to vote for it, and it would have failed if any one of them voted no. However, in return for her vote, she won concessions from the president and Democratic-controlled Congress to lower the overall price tag of the bill. Collins says she does not regret that vote. "I think it's really important to cast your vote and to do so on the basis of the best information that you have at the time, and that's what I did in the case of that vote." Collins began her Senate career as a staffer for then-Sen. William Cohen, R-Maine, whose seat she would win in 1996. Her first two votes were for Clinton administration appointees Madeleine Albright as the first female secretary of state and Cohen as secretary of defense. It's not all hard work for Collins. Her recent engagement to Thomas Daffron, with whom she worked in Cohen's office in the 1970s, is testament that she has a life outside of politics. However, when it came to scheduling her wedding, the senator picked August when the Senate is on a long recess. Why? She doesn't want to miss any votes, an aide explained.

## --Brown key

**Brown is key Republican opposition- against health care and the Affordable Care Act**

**LeBlanc 7/15**- Associated Press Writer (Steve, “In Mass. Senate race, health care still hot topic,” Boston.com, July 15, 2012, http://www.boston.com/2012/07/15/acc-entry-cont/hkzbEmkC6qc8rrikenjScI/story.html)

BOSTON (AP) — In Massachusetts’ contentious U.S. Senate race, few issues divide the two candidates more sharply than the health care law signed by President Barack Obama and upheld by the Supreme Court. Republican Scott Brown ran for the Senate in 2010 vowing to be the crucial 41st vote needed to block the initiative, which ultimately passed despite his opposition. He remains critical of the law. His Democratic challenger, Harvard Law School professor Elizabeth Warren, has praised the Affordable Care Act, which was modeled after a 2006 Massachusetts law signed by then-Gov. Mitt Romney, a Republican. Warren said the federal law has helped expand access to health care in Massachusetts and the nation. Last month’s Supreme Court ruling has only intensified the debate. The latest salvo came from Brown in response to reports that U.S. employers added only 80,000 jobs in June, a third straight month of weak hiring. The unemployment rate was unchanged at 8.2 percent. Brown called the numbers ‘‘grim’’ and faulted in part what he said were the ‘‘job-killing taxes on individuals, families and small businesses’’ that Warren supports, including those in the health care law. ‘‘These are bad ideas under normal circumstances, but with our economy teetering on the brink, Professor Warren’s economic prescription would push us over the precipice,’’ Brown said in a statement. Warren has been equally emphatic in her support of the law and her criticism of Brown. ‘‘This decision ensures that millions of children, seniors, and families will continue to benefit from health care reform,’’ Warren said in a statement after the ruling was announced. Warren has highlighted some of the law’s more popular elements — including banning insurance companies from denying coverage to those with pre-existing medical conditions and allowing adult children to stay on their parents’ insurance until age 26. ‘‘Scott Brown doesn’t spend a lot of time talking about the issues. But he is very clear on one position: Scott Brown wants to repeal the Affordable Care Act,’’ Warren campaign manager Mindy Myers wrote in a letter to supporters. One reason the debate is so testy is the role Massachusetts played in helping craft the federal law. The 2006 state law served as a blueprint for Obama’s law — including one of its most debated elements, the ‘‘individual mandate’’ that requires nearly everyone be insured or pay a tax penalty. In 2010, 44,000 Massachusetts tax filers were assessed the penalty, a drop from the 67,000 required to pay the penalty in 2007, the first year it was assessed. Since the law took effect, an additional 400,000 individuals have gained insurance, meaning about 98 percent of residents are now covered, according to state officials. When he was pushing the bill in 2006, Romney favored the mandate, saying it would target ‘‘free riders’’ — those who can afford health coverage but instead rely on emergency rooms for free care, driving up insurance premiums for everyone else. Romney ended up winning bipartisan support for the measure among Massachusetts lawmakers, including Brown, then a state senator. Despite their support for the state law, Romney and Brown both say the federal law should be repealed. Brown has said that since Massachusetts passed its own health care overhaul, it doesn’t need a federal law. Brown has been particularly critical of a 2.3 percent tax on the sale of medical devices included in the federal health care law, which he said would put an added burden on the more than 200 medical device manufacturers in Massachusetts. More recently, Brown’s campaign has tried to paint Warren as a supporter of a single-payer health care system — a government-run health care system intended to provide universal coverage. Neither Massachusetts’ law nor the law signed by Obama creates such a system. Brown’s campaign points to a book chapter Warren co-authored in 2008 that stops short of explicitly endorsing a single-payer system. ‘‘We approach the health care debates from a single perspective: maintaining the financial stability of families confronting illness or injury,’’ Warren and co-author Deborah Thorne wrote. ‘‘The most obvious solution would be universal single-payer health care. This would allow people to get the care they need — without risking bankruptcy to pay for it.’’ In an interview on NECN after the Supreme Court decision was announced, Warren answered ‘‘no’’ when asked if she supported a single-payer system. ‘‘The point is, what we've got to do, is we've got to keep moving in the direction of getting more families covered and bringing down the costs of health care, and I think we've taken a big step in that direction,’’ Warren added.Continued...

**Senator Brown is key- steps up for new solutions**

**Cali 7/14**- (Joshua, “Cali: Brown offers positive solutions,” The Metrowest Daily News, July 14, 2012, http://www.metrowestdailynews.com/opinions/letters\_to\_the\_editor/x1052259253/Cali-Brown-offers-positive-solutions)

With so much gridlock in Congress, Scott Brown has been one of the few leaders to actually find solutions to some of our nation’s problems over the past two years. He stepped up to the plate with his “Hire a Hero,” initiative, that gives tax credits to companies that hire veterans. He is currently leading the fight to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, and also working on the Stolen Valor Act, which will ensure that no one can lie about having served in the military for personal gain. In addition, Senator Brown proved to be the tie-breaking vote to pass through historic Wall Street Reform, and he worked to pass the STOCK Act, preventing insider trading by members of Congress. The ability to legislate effectively is a key reason why the people of Massachusetts need to reelect Scott Brown. Rather than push for unrealistic and unconstructive solutions, Senator Brown has proven himself to be someone who can break through and make actual progress.

**Senator Brown key to agenda- he supports bipartisanship**

**Cataneo 5/2**- (“Needham politics: Brown says bipartisanship key to winning,” Wicked Local Needham, May 02, 2012, http://www.wickedlocal.com/needham/news/x1942571645/Needham-politics-Brown-says-bipartisanship-key-to-winning#axzz20idz8IIL)

Needham — Sen. Scott Brown said he will rely on his status as a bipartisan politician in the upcoming U.S. Senate race. “I’m going to rely on my record and the fact I’m doing what I said I’m going to do,” said Brown. “I’m not a rock thrower. I’m a problem solver.” Brown, who attended Needham’s Little League Opening Day on Sunday, April 29, is running as an incumbent in the upcoming race, likely against Democrat Harvard Law professor Elizabeth Warren. After throwing out a ceremonial first pitch and stopping to pose for pictures and sign autographs, he spoke to the Needham Times about local recovery and public transportation. “Obviously everything I’m doing is focused on jobs,” said Brown in response to a question about how federal policy can shape recovery on a local level. Brown cited his role in the creation of the Crowdfunding Bill, which is intended to help small businesses start up, and his support for a repeal of a three percent withholding tax on businesses and tax credits for businesses that hire unemployed veterans, both part of President Obama’s jobs package. “The thing that’s been frustrating is that it’s been so partisan lately,” said Brown. In response to a question about a Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority’s plan to hike fares and cut services, Brown said his constituents have spoken to him about the plan. He said he thinks the MBTA needs to streamline and consolidate, and if any opportunities for federal grants come up he will discuss them. Brown has appeared in Needham several times in the past month, including attending the opening of the Great Hall series in Needham’s new Town Hall on March 24. Warren’s campaign has also hosted several events in town, including several fundraising open house parties. Mary Tibma, coordinator of Brown’s campaign in Needham, said campaigning for an incumbent is different than campaigning for a challenger, since he is already well-known in Needham, especially since he represented the town as a state senator until his election to the US Senate in 2010. Needham residents who support Brown say they appreciate his bipartisan approach and his record on job creation. “He’s had legislation that relates to jobs, and jobs are such a key issue for our country as a whole,” said Tibma. “I like his approach, and his approach is, I’m going to look at both sides, do my research and make a decision,” said Michael Niden, a consultant who has been part of the Brown campaign for about a year.

# Elections Links

## CCS Popular

**CCS popular with public from concern of climate change**

**Stephens 2006 - Ph.D. in Environmental Science & Engineering** (Jennie C., Assistant Professor of Environmental Science and Policy at Clark University, Department of International Development, Growing interest in carbon capture and storage (CCS) for climate change mitigation, Fall 2006, 7/20/12, <http://sspp.proquest.com/static_content/vol2iss2/0604-016.stephens.pdf>)

Interest in technologies associated with carbon capture and storage (CCS) has been growing rapidly in both the public and private sectors over the past five to ten years as governments, industry, and individuals grapple with how to reconcile increased energy demand with the need to reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO2) concentrations to mitigate the risks of climate change. CCS technology involves capturing the CO2 produced during fossil-fuel combustion and storing it in underground geologic reservoirs instead of emitting it into the atmosphere. The idea of engineering the storage of carbon has developed from relative obscurity to an increasingly recognized approach to stabilizing atmospheric CO2 concentrations. This paper (1) identifies several influential nongovernmental stakeholders and discusses their contributions to CCS and (2) describes how governmental influence through political positions, government-supported research and development, and economic policy tools and international treaties have influenced CCS initiatives. While the relative strength of nongovernmental and governmental influences is not quantified, this treatment of the various factors contributing to the advancement of CCS technology highlights the complexity associated with integrating developments in science and engineering into sustainable practices. As the current impacts and future risks of climate change become more apparent, and the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide (CO2) continues to increase, carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies provide a potentially valuable set of tools for achieving the magnitude of emissions reductions required for CO2 stabilization as society gradually transitions to a non-fossil fuel energy system. Interest in CCS technologies has been growing rapidly in both the public and private sectors over the past five to ten years as governments, industry, and individuals grapple with reconciling increased energy demand with the need to reduce atmospheric CO2 concentrations to mitigate climate change.

## CCS Unpopular

**CCS is unpopular with the public**

**Calderon 2011 – degree in Science Communication** (Lucy, Journalist, Carbon capture storage is still to gain public approval, Scidev.com, 7/19/12, http://scidevnet.wordpress.com/2012/07/15/carbon-capture-storage-is-still-to-gain-public-approval/)

‘Carbon capture storage’ (CCS) is a contentious proposal that is suggested as one remedy to tackle global warming. CCS involves capturing carbon dioxide at coal- or gas-fired power stations and industrial units, transporting it by pipeline or ship to a storage site, and injecting it via a circular and small diameter hole made by drilling underground for long-term storage. The promoters of the technology say it could reduce carbon dioxide levels in the air by 33 per cent by 2050. Sounds an easy and quick-fix for global warming? The obvious reason for public’s wariness is: who would like to store carbon, pipelines and all, in your backyard?

## Critical Bikes Popular

**Bike infrastructure is popular with the public**

**FHWA 2012 – Federal Highway Administration** (5/7/12, 7/19/12, Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach, [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environm ent/bicycle\_pedestrian/guidance/design\_guidance/design.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environm%20ent/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/design_guidance/design.cfm))

Bicycling and walking issues have grown in significance throughout the 1990s. As the new millennium dawns public agencies and public interest groups alike are striving to define the most appropriate way in which to accommodate the two modes within the overall transportation system so that those who walk or ride bicycles can safely, conveniently, and comfortably access every destination within a community. Public support and advocacy for improved conditions for bicycling and walking has created a widespread acceptance that more should be done to enhance the safety, comfort, and convenience of the nonmotorized traveler. Public opinion surveys throughout the 1990s have demonstrated strong support for increased planning, funding and implementation of shared use paths, sidewalks and on-street facilities.

## Electric Vehicles Unpopular

**Electric Cars Unpopular-Free Market proves**

**TimesFreePress.com 12**-Chatanooga Times Free Press, March 19th, 2012, (“GM’s Suspension Of Chevrolet Volt Production a rebuke of federal subsidies, accessed at <http://timesfreepress.com/news/2012/mar/19/time-to-end-failed-subsidies/>, accessed on 7/19/12)

The free market has provided a symbol of how **unpopular electric cars** are despite subsidies the government showers on them to promote their development and purchase. Washington uses your tax dollars to give $7,500 tax credits to people who buy certain electric-powered vehicles. The state of Tennessee unwisely offers a $2,500 credit as well. But despite the government's defraying the cost of the cars, the public simply doesn't want them.

## Freight Rail Popular

**Freight rail is popular with the public – especially when implemented through the federal government**

**Rail Future 2006 – Campaign for better passenger and freight rail network** (02/13/2006, 7/19/12, Rail Future, Rail for Future, <http://www.railfuture.org.uk/tiki-read_article.php?articleId=960>)

Americans are keen to see more people and freight going by rail in future, according to a public opinion poll. And local trains are seen as more important than long-distance inter-city services and far more important than cars. The league table of popularity is as follows: Commuter trains 44%, long-distance trains 35%, local buses 23%, air 23%, local car 11%, long-distance car 10%, long-distance buses 6%. The Harris Poll asked the question: "In the future, as more people travel, which two of the following would you like to see have an increasing share of all passenger transportation?" Respondents listed the following factors as most important for the choice of travel: safety 47%, energy efficiency 44%, and cost 29%. This survey also included questions on who should be mainly responsible for maintaining and improving the transport system at a local level and nationally. Overwhelmingly, the American public thinks it should be a government rather than private sector responsibility. Local transport State government (36%) and local government (27%) are seen by the largest numbers of adults as having the main responsibility for maintaining and improving the transport system at a local level. Fewer think that the federal government (16%) or private companies (10%) should have this responsibility. National transport Two-thirds (68%) of adults believe national transport should be a responsibility of the federal government. Relatively few see this as the responsibility of state government (13%), local government (2%) or private companies (8%). These results show that for most adults, transport is a public good for which government has the primary responsibility. However, that does not mean that they are opposed to the private sector providing much of the actual transport. But they believe government, not the private sector, should make transport policy. Freight rail also received strong support in the survey. Freight rail (63%) comes far ahead of all other modes that adults would like to see have an increasing share of freight transportation. They are followed by: air freight (35%), and lorries (24%)

## Highway Trust Fund Popular

**Highway Trust Fund is popular with the public**

**Mineta and Skinner 2012 - former Cabinet members under President Bush** (Norman and Samuel, Mineta was United States Secretary of Transportation and Skinner was U.S. Secretary of Transportation and White House Chief of Staff, Politico,   Transportation policy needs push to get moving, 4/22/12, 7/20/12, [http://www.politico.com/news/stories/041 2/75438.html](http://www.politico.com/news/stories/041%202/75438.html))

Much about our transportation debate is familiar — funding challenges and policy disagreements are always part of the reauthorization process. But these challenges are exacerbated now by a chronic shortfall in revenue for the Highway Trust Fund, the fiscal austerity that is driving our political discourse and a lack of public trust in the federal transportation program. The tradition of broad bipartisan support for investments in surface transportation has largely broken down. We must get that back. Research and experience show, however, that this erosion of transportation support does not necessarily extend to the public. Most citizens still voice support for public spending on transportation when they realize it can result in positive local outcomes. The public is also receptive to the message that smart transportation investments make a positive long-term contribution to economic growth, U.S. competitiveness and job creation.

## Highway Trust Fund Unpopular

**The highway trust fund does not have public support – rural areas hate it**

**Kredell – Writer for USC News** (Matthew, University of Southern California News, Transit Policy Is Pivotal on Road to the White House, 4/17/12, 7/19/12, <http://news.usc.edu/#!/article/33401/transit-policy-is-pivotal-on-road-to-the-white-house/>)

“The problem with that is that next year the highway trust fund is going to be officially bankrupt,” Schweitzer said. “We can’t keep passing these extensions.” More permanent solutions include raising the federal gas tax; focusing on user fees, fares, tolls and ticket sales rather than taxes; creating a national infrastructure bank that would leverage private investment to fund public-work endeavors; and reducing the federal transit role or eliminating it all together and make it a local issue. The first two options do not go over well with voters. “In my opinion, the conversation is much better now than it was a decade ago,” Rhoads said of spreading user fees. “It’s there but it’s just highly unpopular among voters, so there’s not many leaders [who will put it] on their agenda.” There are a lot of people, particularly the ones who live in rural areas, who don’t understand why they should be paying for rail in Dallas and would like to see the federal gas tax eliminated. As a donor state that contributes more gas tax to the feds than it gets back, California would be better off by turning that 18.4 cents per gallon into a state tax.

## HSR Popular

**HSR is popular with the public – polls prove**

**APTA 12 – American Public Transportation Association** (January 2012, 7/20/12, An Inventory of the Criticisms of High-Speed Rail With Suggested Responses and Counterpoints, <http://www.apta.com/resources/reportsandpublications/Documents/HSR-Defense.pdf>)

As is clear, there are specific, over-drawn extrapolations in each of these statements. For example, they suggest that because three governors (one of whom would later reapply for funding) who campaigned against rail improvements in their respective states and won, all governors are against federal passenger rail improvement funding and all voters everywhere also oppose the federal initiative. Even the most basic understanding of logic would tell the casual reader that this construction does not hold up. Plus, there are ample and recent polls that show broad public support for the federal passenger rail improvement initiative.

## HSR Unpopular

**High Speed Rail Unpopular-Polls Prove**

**Shackford 12**-Scott Shackford, July 18, 2012, (“[Gov. Jerry Brown, Signing High-Speed Rail Bill: "You have to take the bull by the horns and start spending and investing in things that make sense”](http://reason.com/blog/2012/07/18/gov-jerry-brown-signing-high-speed-rail), accessed at <http://reason.com/blog/2012/07/18/gov-jerry-brown-signing-high-speed-rail>, accessed on 7/19/12)

Despite the governor's enthusiasm**, high-speed rail has become increasingly unpopular** around the state, **and polls show a majority of voters now oppose the plan** largely because of its record costs and uncertain prospects for completion. Brown, who was silent publicly when the Legislature debated his bullet train plan two weeks ago, now needs Californians back on board but said Wednesday he wasn't concerned by the polls.

## Mass Transit Popular

**Even if Mass Transit Use Is Declining-It is still popular**

**Newswanger 11**-Phillip Newswanger is a staff writer for Inside Buisness, (“Mass Transit Usage In the U.S. Declines”, accessed at <http://insidebiz.com/news/mass-transit-usage-us-declines>, accesed on 7/19/12)

These are the latest figures from the American Public Transportation Association, a trade group representing mass transit advocates. The report, published quarterly, includes figures not only for rail but also for bus ridership across the country. The decline in the United States could be attributable to a number of factors, including low gas prices, less frequent travel and lack of availability. And America is a nation of drivers, seeking freedom and the open road. Witness the television commercials advertising the newest models. Studies have also shown that mass transit in America is more popular in heavily populated areas of the country, such as the Northeast and Los Angeles.

## Mass Transit Unpopular

**The Public Opposes Mass Transit-Convenience, and freedom**

**Barnes 11-** Fred Barnes is an executive editor of The Weekly Standard , March 7th, 2011, (“The way we drive Now”. accessed at <http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/way-we-drive-now_552546.html>, accessed on 7/19/12)

The simple fact is most people prefer to travel by car because it’s convenient, which mass transit rarely is. They can go from place to place directly, choosing their own route and schedule. They can do so day and night. They can stop as frequently as they wish for any reason (do errands, drop off kids, etc.). This phenomenon has a name: freedom.

## New Orleans Unpopular

**The Public Opposes Mass Transit-Convenience, and freedom**

**Barnes 11-** Fred Barnes is an executive editor of The Weekly Standard , March 7th, 2011, (“The way we drive Now”. accessed at <http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/way-we-drive-now_552546.html>, accessed on 7/19/12)

The simple fact is most people prefer to travel by car because it’s convenient, which mass transit rarely is. They can go from place to place directly, choosing their own route and schedule. They can do so day and night. They can stop as frequently as they wish for any reason (do errands, drop off kids, etc.). This phenomenon has a name: freedom.

## NIB Popular

**NIB is popular with public – seen as investment, not investment**

**Rothman 2012 – Staff Writer for the Public Works Agency** (Eric, Public Works Agency, 6/10/12, 7/20/12, Why Creating a National Infrastructure Bank Makes Sense, http://pwapn.publicworksagency.com/articles/2/why-creating-a-national-infrastr)

A national infrastructure bank would provide loans or loan guarantees for big projects deemed to be in the public interest -- and attract private investment by offering low cost access to capital and a path to profit from tolls, fares and other charges. The bank would leverage the government’s outlay to lend more. An initial $5 billion a year for five years could result in $50 billion or more in loans. And because these loans would be paid back with interest, the institution would become self-sustaining. Financing for such a bank would be seen as an investment, not “spending.” The resulting projects would not only improve lives and safety, but would also go a long way toward replacing the many construction jobs lost in the recession. Every dollar spent on public infrastructure yields a $1.59 boost to gross domestic product according to Moody’s Analytics

**NIB is popular- public and bipartisan support**

**Rothstein 12**- Editor of EINNews (Joe, “ An Infrastructure Bank: Democrats and Republicans Both Like It. Why Won't They Create It And Put Millions of People to Work?” January 30, 2012, http://uspolitics.einnews.com/column/78189117/an-infrastructure-bank-democrats-and-republicans-both-like-it-why-won-t-they-create-it-and-put-millions-of-people-to-work)

Investors continue to plow hundreds of billions of dollars into U.S. treasury bonds, even though those bonds repay virtually nothing in interest. Why? Because in an uneasy world economy, U.S. treasuries are about the least risky place to park money. Shoe boxes under the bed aren’t an option for pension funds, sovereign funds and other organizations, governments and billionaires. Even while much of the world is obsessing about high levels of public and private debt, the fact is that trillions of dollars are loose in the world, anxious to find places to earn interest, dividends and profits. That’s why it’s baffling that the federal government hasn’t launched a major initiative to lure that capital to help restore what everyone concedes is the nation’s tattered infrastructure. Measures to set up public-private financing partnerships are languishing in Congress, victims of political gridlock, even though many heavyweight political figures and influential lobbying groups are big fans of such partnerships President Obama and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, for example, are both on record favoring an infrastructure bank that attracts private investment to help restore and build roads, bridges, water and sanitation systems, and other public facilities. The public itself has seldom wavered on the need for infrastructure investment. About this time last year the Rockefeller Foundation underwrote a study by two NYU researchers, Michael Likosky and Laura Noren, who tested support for this statement: “Encouraging more private investment is an acceptable way to provide additional funding for national transportation infrastructure.” Approval was registered by 85 percent of the Republicans who responded, 73 percent of the Independents and 78 percent of the Democrats.

## NIB Unpopular (TIFIA)

**NIB unpopular- we already have Tifia**

**Yarema, 11** --- chair of the Infrastructure Practice Group at the law firm, Nossaman LLP (10/12/2011, Geoffrey, Congressional Documents and Publications, House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Highways and Transit Hearing - "National Infrastructure Bank: More Bureaucracy and More Red Tape" Factiva, JMP)

Chairman Duncan, Ranking Member DeFazio and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify today. My name is Geoff Yarema. I chair the Infrastructure Practice Group at the law firm, Nossaman LLP. We advise state and regional transportation agencies around the country in the innovative procurement, contracting and financing of large transportation projects in ways that minimize the use of federal gas tax revenues. Nossaman has assisted in the delivery of many of the signature projects that have utilized the foundational mechanisms provided by the existing surface transportation authorization bill, SAFETEA-LU, helping to build the next generation of transportation infrastructure. I was also privileged to serve, at the behest of former Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters, as a Commissioner on the 'National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission (the "Financing Commission"). My testimony today reflects my experience on the ground advising public agencies and my two years of work on the Commission. A. The Evolution of Federal Infrastructure Funding. As the Subcommittee is well aware, the role of the federal government in delivering large transportation infrastructure projects is changing. Historically, the function of the federal government has been to provide both funding and to regulate how that funding is spent. Today, federal resources for transportation infrastructure fall far short of need and the expectation that the federal government would or could fix the nation's aging surface transportation system with a direct infusion of federal dollars is fading. Compelled by these very real fiscal constraints, the federal government has been moving away from the traditional, apportionment-based funding paradigm and toward a credit assistance and incentives-based model that leverages fewer federal dollars to maximize local, state and private contributions to finance large transportation projects of regional and national significance. B. The Evolution Is Already Underway.

This shift in thinking about the federal government's role in financing transportation infrastructure is evidenced by one of the key components of President Obama's proposed Jobs Act: the much-buzzed about national infrastructure bank. The concept, as the President has explained it, would be to use federal dollars to leverage private investment to finance large public works projects. The President has touted the ability of an infrastructure bank to harness substantial private and other non-Federal dollars for capital-intensive projects, including transportation projects that are critical to mobility, goods movement and economic growth. Frankly, I couldn't agree more. I couldn't agree more because, as far as transportation projects are concerned, we already have a national infrastructure bank - it's called TIF1A. Authorized by the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, the TIFIA program has been providing federal credit assistance to large-scale highway, transit and rail projects since 1998. In the 12 years that the U.S. Department of Transportation (the "USDOT") has been administering the TIFIA program, we have seen how effective federal offerings of tow-cost financing can be in accelerating the delivery of qualified projects - projects that generate significant economic benefits, implement new technologies and attract private and non-Federal investment. Under TIFIA, the USDOT helps project sponsors, including state departments of transportation, transit operators, local governments and private entities, to assemble project capital by providing long-term financial assistance in the form of secured loans, loan guarantees and letters of credit. Currently, TIFIA credit assistance is available to finance only 33% of the eligible costs of a project, the applicant needing to demonstrate the creditworthy means of repaying the TIFIA loan and funding the remaining two-thirds of eligible project costs from private investment, commercial loans, federal-aid highway or transit grants. In this way, TIFIA loans provide foundational financing that encourages public sponsors to identify and dedicate project funding from non-federal sources. Costs the U.S. Treasury incurs to provide TIFIA credit assistance typically amount to about 10% of the face value of the credit provided.

Therefore, every $1 of TIFIA credit subsidy creates $10 in the face amount of a loan, which in turn, helps finance a $30 project. In terms more proportional to the scale of project eligible for TIFIA assistance, $100 million in federal credit subsidy can result in $1 billion in federal loans to support a $3 billion project. With this unique level of leverage, TIFIA helps build major projects of regional and national significance at a relative bargain price to the federal government.

## NIB Unpopular

**National Infrastructure Bank is unpopular – the public hates gas tax**

**HRA 2011 – Hart Research Associates** (The Rockefeller Foundation, Public Opinion Strategies, The Rockefeller Foundation Infrastructure Survey, 02/14/2011, 7/20/12, http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/80e28432-0790-4d42-91ec-afb6d11febee.pdf)

Even with a highly polarized electorate that remains steadfast in its belief that things in the nation are off on the wrong track there is wide agreement—across the partisan spectrum—that leaders in Washington should be seeking common ground. Nowhere is this more true than legislation related to the country’s transportation infrastructure. Indeed, two in three voters say that making improvements in infrastructure is very important, and most voters say that in its current state the nation’s transportation system is barely adequate. Voters seek better and safer roads and more public transportation options, widely agreeing that the United States would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system. Moreover, few believe that current government spending in this area is efficient and wise, and voters welcome a range of reforms in how transportation projects are financed. At the same time, as is the case with many spending-related issues today, voters are unwilling to personally pay for additional funding of national transportation projects. While wide support exists for encouraging more private investment, imposing penalties on over-budget projects, and establishing a National Infrastructure Bank, there is very little support for increasing the federal gas tax or increasing tolls on interstate highways and bridges.

## Port Dredging Popular

**Port Dredging is Popular-Public has an influence on dredging and dredging is important to them**

**Fuller 11-**Kelly Marshall Fuller is a staff writer for Georgetown Times, October 26,11, (“Pubic Comment Sought by Port Task Force”, accessed at <http://www.gtowntimes.com/local/Public-comment-sought-by-Port-Task-Force>, accessed on 7/19/12)

The public will get their first say in the port dredging process during Thursday’s meeting of the Port Dredging Task Force. The meeting, which is scheduled for 6 p.m. at the  Georgetown County Courthouse, will allow attendees to ask questions and make comments. The Task Force was formed for the purpose of finding funds for dredging for the Port of Georgetown. For the first three meetings, public comment was not allowed during the meetings. Chairman Tim Tilley said the meeting format was changed because  it has been shown that getting the port dredged is very important to county residents.

## Short Sea Shipping Popular

**Short Sea Shipping is Publicly Liked-Public Benefits Prove**

**Perakis and Denisis 08**- ANASTASSIOS N. PERAKIS and ATHANASIOS DENISIS Department of Naval Architecture & Marine Engineering, University of Michigan, December 2008, (“A survey of Short Sea Shipping and its prospects in the US , accessed at

<http://www.maritimeadvisors.com/pdf/Survey%20of%20SSS%20Prospects%20in%20the%20U.S..pdf>, accessed on 7/20/12)

A comprehensive analysis of the external benefits of SSS is presented in the second study that was conducted by the National Ports and Waterways Institute at the University of New Orleans [24]. These public benefits, such as relieving highway congestion, improving air quality and road safety, are identified and quantified for two cases of prospective short sea operations in the US east coast; a short route from New York to Boston and a longer route from New York to Miami. In both cases, the use of ro-ro ships appears to be very competitive compared with the truck mode in terms of the projected required freight rate, because of the high external costs of the trucks. In the third study by the same institute, these quantified external benefits are applied for the assessment of the Harbour Maintenance Tax (HMT), which is one of the obstacles to the expansion of SSS [25]. The HMT is a fee paid every time a vessel Centers a US port for any delivery of domestic or international cargo. The study examined the onsequences of a possible elimination of the HMT. The conclusion is that the external monetary benefits of SSS outweigh the revenues from that fee.

## Title XI Unpopular

**Loan Guarantees Unpopular – Loan guarantee programs don’t pass**

**CDFI, 2009 -** **is a national network of community development financial institutions**[Opportunity Finance Network’s Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) State Legislation and Advocacy Guide  is a national network of community development financial institutions,  CDFI State Legislation and Advocacy Guide, 2009, Opportunity Finance, [http://www.opportunityfinance.net](http://www.opportunityfinance.net/)]

Finally, **loan guarantee legislation** allows opportunity finance institutions to lower the costs of capital because the state government acts as the guarantor, and agrees to pay a percentage or the entire amount due on a loan instrument in the event of nonpayment by the borrower (the CDFI). This reduces the lender’s risk exposure, allowing that entity to deploy more capital into distressed communities. This type of legislation has declined in its prevalence in state legislatures in recent years. Loan guarantees continue to be a relatively unpopular type of legislation for state governments. While there were four introduced last session that would provide loan guarantees, there were five such bills introduced this session. However, none of these bills passed their legislatures this session: California A.B. 1410, a sustainable development initiative, Connecticut House Bills 6478 and 5201, a small business and mortgage lending legislation, respectively, and Texas Senate Bill 1602, a small business-focused bill.

## Mass Transit Unpopular

**The Public Opposes Mass Transit-Convenience, and freedom**

**Barnes 11-** Fred Barnes is an executive editor of The Weekly Standard , March 7th, 2011, (“The way we drive Now”. accessed at <http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/way-we-drive-now_552546.html>, accessed on 7/19/12)

The simple fact is most people prefer to travel by car because it’s convenient, which mass transit rarely is. They can go from place to place directly, choosing their own route and schedule. They can do so day and night. They can stop as frequently as they wish for any reason (do errands, drop off kids, etc.). This phenomenon has a name: freedom.

# Lobbies

## Lobbies k2 Agenda

**The President Relies on Lobbies to get his agenda passed through Congress**

**Trethan 12**-Phaedra Trethan is a freelance writer who also works as a copy editor for the Camden Courier-Post. She formerly worked for the Philadelphia Inquirer, 2012, (“Presidential Legislative Powers”, accessed at http://usgovinfo.about.com/od/thepresidentandcabinet/a/preslegpower.htm , accessed on 7/16/12)

In order to help get his legislative agenda passed by Congress, the president will often ask a specific lawmaker to sponsor bills and lobby other members for passage. Members of the president's staff, such as the vice president, his chief of staff and other liaisons with Capitol Hill also will lobby representatives to try to garner support for the legislation.

## Transportation Lobby key

**The Transportation Lobby Holds Power-They hold the power to spook off bills**

King 10-Aubrey King is the executive director for the Western States Tourism Policy Council, 7/8/2010, (“WSTPC National Issues Bulletin July/August, 2010”, accessed at http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/wstpc/Publications/IssuesBulletin2010\_07\_08.pdf, accessed on 7/15/12)

Kienitz said, DOT is only an observer, not a participant on the current Hill debate on climate and energy legislation. He noted recent rumblings that the climate bill or parts of it could come up in the Senate as part of the energy debate. However, he believes there will likely be no transportation component to this version of the bill, because he said climate bill authors were spooked by the power of the transportation lobby in demanding a large piece of the action. So, for now he said, they have decided to drop the transportation piece, rather than trying to accommodate to transportation interests or to openly fight them.

## Highway Lobby Key

**The Highway Lobby is one of the most effective lobbies in Congress**

**Gillies, 04**-Andrew Gillies is an associate editor for Forbes, August 4 2004, (“Highway Lobby, Smooth Operators”, accessed at http://www.forbes.com/2004/08/04/cz\_ag\_0804beltway.html, accessed on 7/15/12)

Despite Congress' fitful efforts to renew a multiyear federal transportation bill, **the highway lobby has once again proved its reputation as one of Washington's most effective operators.** How effective? Think $52 billion. Since 1991, funding for highway and mass transit has been rolled up into a giant package reauthorized every six years. The existing law, a $218 billion program known as Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), was enacted in 1998. It expired last September.

## ARTBA (Road Lobby Key)

**ARTBA is effective in congress**

**Earthgarage 12-** Earthgarage 2012, (“Government Programs”, accessed at http://www.earthgarage.com/resources/18-government-programs.html, accessed on 7/15/12)

The ARTBA is an aggressive and effective advocate on behalf of the U.S. transportation design and construction industry before the Congress, White House, Executive Branch and federal agencies. The association's member firms, organizations and public agencies most often cite the association's stellar track record in growing the federal transportation construction market as a primary reason for their membership. The ARTBA has been influential in the passing of every major transportation bill in Congress since its inception the late 1990's.

**Road Lobby is effective in Congress**

**American Road And Transportation Builders Association 12**- American Road & Transportation Builders Association, 2012, (“Advocacy”, accessed at http://www.artba.org/advocacy/, accessed on 7/15/12)

ARTBA is an aggressive and effective advocate on behalf of the U.S. transportation design and construction industry before the Congress, White House, Executive Branch and federal agencies. The association's member firms, organizations and public agencies most often cite the association's stellar track record in growing the federal transportation construction market as a primary reason for their membership. ARTBA has been a major player in the passage of every major piece of federal transportation legislation, from the first Federal-Aid Road Act (1916)...to TEA-21 (1998)...AIR-21 (2000)...SAFETEA-LU (2005) and MAP-21 (2012).

## AT: ARTBA (Road Lobby Key)

**The Road Lobby is not in the driver’s seat of transportation funding anymore**

**Lewis 10**-Matthew Lewis is a staff writer for The Cutting Edge, May 3rd 2010, (“Road Gang, Highway Lobby Wary as Livability Advocates Gain Momentum”, accessed at http://www.thecuttingedgenews.com/index.php?article=12162&pageid=37&pagename=Page+One, accessed on 7/15/12)

All that makes federal transportation spending as important to the road building industry as ever. But the road lobby is no longer the only one in the driver’s seat when it comes to setting transportation funding priorities. The Obama administration is determined to make its own mark on transportation policy by completing and repairing the current highway system while adopting an increasingly diverse menu of investments in mass transit, bike paths, and pedestrian walkways for neighborhood residents who don’t own a car.

**The Road Gang tried and failed lobbying congress-they are not key**

**Lewis 10**-Matthew Lewis is a staff writer for The Cutting Edge, May 3rd 2010, (“Road Gang, Highway Lobby Wary as Livability Advocates Gain Momentum”, accessed at http://www.thecuttingedgenews.com/index.php?article=12162&pageid=37&pagename=Page+One, accessed on 7/15/12)

The federal road gang, however, extends far beyond the companies that pour concrete and make basic materials and equipment needed to build new roads. It includes engineers who design highways, labor unions that work on them, automobile associations, toll road operators, truckers, and a variety of regional public and private coalitions. Together, these groups spent more than $65 million lobbying Congress in 2009 on a variety of issues including the next long-term transportation bill. Their political action committees have given more than $62 million to federal candidates since 2005. But six months after the last federal transportation law expired, none of them have a new spending bill to show for all their efforts. An informal collection of construction industry executives, political operatives, lobbyists, and transportation writers who actually call themselves “The Road Gang” have for decades met to discuss federal policy. They represent perhaps the closest approximation to defining the catch-all that is the road lobby, or as this group also calls itself, “Washington’s highway transportation fraternity.” It is not so much secret as it can be insular.

## AT: Coal Lobby Key

**The Coal Lobby has lost power-Regular American Citizens Have Taken away their power**

**Biggers 11**- Jeff Biggers is an book writer and has won the David Browner Award Before on one of the books he wrote, April 5th, 2011, (“Retaking Capitol Hill from Big Coal: DC Strategist JW Randolph on Next Steps for Anti-Mountaintop Removal Movement”, accessed at http://www.alternet.org/module/printversion/150498, accessed at 7/15/12)

When I was just a kid in the mountains, I saw all this incredible energy being created around this horrible issue of mountaintop removal. But Congress and the President never mentioned it. The missing piece, it seemed to me, was a connection between the national movement created by the Appalachian people who were so incensed by this issue and our elected officials in Washington. Through monthly citizen lobbying efforts, Appalachian Voices and the Alliance for Appalachia has succeeded in bringing that message and our energy to Washington, and it is having an enormous impact. The coal lobby doesn’t get freebies anymore, because thousands of regular American citizens -- who are on no kind of payroll – are standing up and going toe-to-toe with them. And there is nothing more powerful than citizens who are taking their stories straight to decision makers. To beat the coal industry it is important that the people of Appalachia continue to communicate our vision and our values beyond just one bill or one amendment or one case in court. Victories may come piece-by-piece, but you can’t shape the future if you don’t win the hearts and minds of the other people in Appalachia and America as a whole. I think that the pro-mountaintop movement is particularly good at letting people know that sure, we want to end mountaintop removal, but we also want to ensure that our miners are safe, that the communities we have are wholesome, and that what economy we have is sustainable. JB:House Republicans unleashed a full-throttle attack on the EPA and its jurisdiction over mountaintop removal permits in their proposed 2011 budget. Considering the ease in which those EPA-stripping amendments passed, how do you gauge the clout of anti-mountaintop removal constituents on the Hill vs. Big Coal lobbyists? And what chance do those amendments stand with the Senate–and President Obama?JR: Well, those riders have only passed the House of Representatives, along with a host of other horrible and nihilistic amendments about a host of other issues that have absolutely nothing to do with spending. No pro-mountaintop removal amendments will make it out of the Senate, and it looks like Appalachian Voices and the Alliance for Appalachia will be successful in keeping those amendments out of the final budget. That will be a BIG victory for the people of Appalachia over the coal lobby.

# Obama Good

## K2 Solve HIV/AIDS

**Obama is key to solve HIV/AIDS- committed to universal health care**

**Change.gov 12**- (“The Obama-Biden plan to combat global HIV/AIDS,” Change.gov, 2012, http://change.gov/pages/the\_obama\_biden\_plan\_to\_combat\_global\_hiv\_aids/)

There are an estimated 33 million people across the planet living with HIV/AIDS, including more than 1 million people in the U.S. Nearly 6,000 people die every day of AIDS. Despite advances in knowledge about HIV and effective treatment options, the rate of HIV infections has not fallen, and, in fact, is rising dramatically in certain racial and ethnic groups. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden believe that we must do more to fight the global HIV/AIDS pandemic, as well as malaria and tuberculosis. In 2006, President-elect Barack Obama traveled to Kenya and, along with his wife Michelle, took an HIV/AIDS test to encourage African men and women to be tested for the disease. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden believe in working across party lines to combat this epidemic. President-elect Barack Obama has worked in both the Illinois and U.S. Senate to increase awareness and to promote greater investment for HIV/AIDS in America and abroad. As president, Barack Obama will continue to be a global leader in the fight against AIDS. HIV/AIDS IN AMERICA Implement a National HIV/AIDS Strategy: President-elect Barack Obama has pledged that, in the first year of his presidency, he will develop and begin to implement a comprehensive national HIV/AIDS strategy that includes all federal agencies. The strategy will be designed to reduce HIV infections, increase access to care and reduce HIV-related health disparities. His strategy will include measurable goals, timelines and accountability mechanisms. Obama passed legislation in Illinois to require public service announcements promoting HIV/AIDS screening. As president, Obama will continue to increase awareness of the disease. Fix the Nation’s Health Care System: Nearly 46 million Americans are uninsured in this country. President-elect Barack Obama is committed to signing universal health care legislation by the end of his first term in office that ensures all Americans have high-quality, affordable health care coverage. The Obama-Biden health plan will save a typical American family up to $2,500 every year on medical expenditures by providing affordable, comprehensive and portable health coverage for every American; modernizing the U.S. health care system to contain spiraling health care costs and improve the quality of patient care; and promoting prevention and strengthening public health to prevent disease and protect against natural and man-made disasters. The Obama-Biden plan will ensure that people living with HIV have access to lifesaving treatment and care. Bring Medicaid Coverage to Low-Income, HIV-Positive Americans: Obama is a cosponsor of the Early Treatment for HIV Act, which would help provide Medicaid coverage to more low-income, HIV-positive Americans. The bill would also increase the number of people who receive the medications necessary to treat HIV infections. Fight Disparities in Minority Communities: HIV/AIDS has hit some communities harder than others. For example, while African Americans make up 13 percent of the U.S. population, they make up 49 percent of new HIV/AIDS cases. AIDS is the leading cause of death of African American women aged 25-34, and the third leading cause of death of African American men in the same age group. In 2005, 64 percent of women living with HIV/AIDS were black. In our nation’s capital alone, African Americans account for 81 percent of new reports of HIV cases and about 86 percent of people with AIDS. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden are committed to targeting resources to promote innovative HIV/AIDS testing initiatives in minority communities and partnering with a wide-range of community leaders from churches to community organizations. But we must also tackle the scourge of poverty where HIV and AIDS proliferate. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden will continue to fight poverty and homelessness, key drivers of this epidemic. We need to better target care for people in communities of color, where the disease is moving most quickly. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden will tackle the root causes of health disparities by addressing differences in access to health insurance coverage and promoting prevention and public health, both of which play a major role in addressing disparities. They will also challenge the medical system to eliminate inequities in health care through quality measurement and reporting, implementation of effective interventions such as patient navigation programs and diversification of the health workforce. Improve Quality of Life for Those Living with HIV/AIDS: President-elect Barack Obama is a strong supporter of the Ryan White Care Act (RWCA), which provides critical access to life-saving treatment and care for over half a million low-income Americans with HIV/AIDS. The RWCA is one of the largest sources of federal funds for primary health care and support services for patients with HIV/AIDS. The bill was named after Ryan White, an Indiana teenager whose courageous struggle with HIV/AIDS helped educate the nation. Throughout the recent reauthorization of the RWCA, Obama worked closely with RWCA service providers, the Chicago Department of Public Health, and the Illinois Department of Public Health to analyze and find ways to improve the program for Illinois and for the nation. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden will continue to protect the multifaceted care upon which RWCA beneficiaries depend. Promote AIDS Prevention: In addition to assuring access to treatment, President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden believe we need to increase the focus on preventing new infections. We cannot keep pace with treatment needs if we don’t also focus on prevention. This means pursuing a strategy that relies on sound science and builds on what works. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden support comprehensive sex education that is age-appropriate. They support increasing federal appropriations for science-based HIV prevention programs. They support the JUSTICE Act, which would prevent transmission of HIV within the incarcerated population. They also support legislation that would lift the ban on federal funding for needle exchange as a strategy to reduce HIV transmission among injection drug users and their partners and children. Assure Adequate and Safe Housing for Those Living With HIV: President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden support increased funding for Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) and other pertinent housing programs. These programs aim to assure that adequate and safe housing is available for all disabled and low-income people with HIV/AIDS in the U.S. Expand Funding for Research: President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden will expand funding for research, especially for prevention options including a vaccine and microbicides. Microbicides are a class of products currently under development that women apply topically to prevent transmission of HIV and other infections. President-elect Barack Obama led an effort with Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and others to introduce the Microbicide Development Act, which will accelerate the development of products that empower women in the battle against AIDS. In the United States, the percentage of women diagnosed with AIDS has quadrupled over the last 20 years. Today, women account for more than one quarter of all new HIV/AIDS diagnoses. Expand Access to HIV/AIDS Testing for Pregnant Women: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that voluntary HIV screening be included in the routine panel of prenatal screening tests for all pregnant women. In the Illinois State Senate, President-elect Barack Obama sponsored the successful Prenatal HIV Prevention Act, which ensures that every health care professional who provides health care services to a pregnant woman will provide HIV counseling and offer HIV testing. He also passed legislation in Illinois requiring that insurance coverage under the Illinois Insurance Code, Health Maintenance Organization Act and the Voluntary Health Services Plans Act include coverage of prenatal HIV testing. GLOBAL HIV/AIDS Provide Universal Access for the Global Fight Against HIV/AIDS: President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden know that in the 21st century, progress must not just mean political freedom – it must mean freedom from fear and freedom from want. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden believe that a comprehensive, long-term approach to combating HIV/AIDS is an important investment in our common security and humanity. They have pledged to provide at least $50 billion by 2013 for the global fight against HIV/AIDS, including our fair share of the Global Fund, in order to at least double the number of HIV-positive people on treatment and continue to provide treatments to one-third of all those who desperately need them. This funding will allow the U.S. to meet its commitments that have been flat-funded by the Bush Administration, which includes expanding existing programs to help the millions of children orphaned and made vulnerable by AIDS, increasing the number of health care workers by at least one million, preventing violence against women and girls, and improving health care systems so that U.S. assistance can be fully and effectively utilized. Reauthorize and Revise PEPFAR: The U.S. has dramatically increased funding for global HIV and AIDS programs through the President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), but the program has faced controversy. President-elect Barack Obama believes that our first priority should be to implement the recently signed President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), legislation President-elect Barack Obama long-supported, to ensure that best practices – not ideology – to drive funding for HIV/AIDS programs. Strengthen Health Care Infrastructure: President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden are committed to increasing U.S. investments in the capacity building needed to ensure that poor countries are able to develop the health care infrastructure necessary to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS, promote basic health care, reduce the spread of malaria and TB, and prevent and, if necessary, contain the spread of avian flu and other pandemics. Increase Contribution to the Global Fund: President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden support increasing U.S. contributions to the Global Fund for AIDS, malaria, and TB so that our assistance is coordinated with aid provided by other governments and private donors and so that the burden on poor countries is reduced. Increase Access to Affordable Drugs: President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden believe that people in developing countries living with HIV/AIDS should have access to safe, affordable generic drugs to treat HIV/AIDS. They will break the stranglehold that a few big drug and insurance companies have on these life-saving drugs. They support the rights of sovereign nations to access quality-assured, low-cost generic medication to meet their pressing public health needs under the WTO’s Declaration on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden also support the adoption of humanitarian licensing policies that ensure medications developed with U.S. taxpayer dollars are available off-patent in developing countries. Invest in Clean Water: As more people have access to affordable drugs, the developed world must also invest in the clean water necessary to ensure that life saving drugs can be taken. More than 1 billion people lack access to clean water, and that number will increase with the impact of climate change. Through increasing funding by up to $1.3 billion annually and innovative programs like “play pumps,” President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden will expand access to clean water and sanitation. Close the Education Deficit: Worldwide, an estimated 100 million children – including nearly 60 million girls – are not attending school. By 2010, getting these children into school could cost $10 billion annually. To meet our share of that sum, President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden will invest at least $2 billion in a Global Education Fund. Achieve the Millennium Development Goals: As president, President-elect Barack Obama will double U.S. foreign assistance from $25 billion per year to $50 billion per year to ensure the U.S. does its share to meet the Millennium Development Goals, including halving the number of people who die of tuberculosis and/or are affected by malaria. In 2005, Obama cosponsored the International Cooperation to Meet the Millennium Development Goals Act. President-elect Barack Obama will target this new spending toward strategic goals, including helping the world’s weakest states to build healthy and educated communities, reduce poverty, develop markets, and generate wealth. He will also help weak states to fight terrorism, halt the spread of deadly weapons, and build the health care infrastructure needed to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS as well as detect and contain outbreaks of avian influenza. Invest in Comprehensive Poverty Reduction to Help Fight All Deadly Disease: In addition to the havoc wreaked by HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria continue to kill millions and undercut economic productivity in the developing world. Investments in fighting HIV/AIDS cannot come at the expense of investments in other key development challenges like preventing disease and improving child health and survival. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden will ensure the United States is committed to a comprehensive anti-poverty program. Reduce Debt of Developing Nations: Developing nations are amassing tremendous amounts of foreign debt that limit their economic development and make investments in public health, education, and infrastructure extremely difficult. Debt in Sub-Saharan Africa stands at $235 billion, 44 percent of the region’s gross domestic product and an increase of 33 percent since 1990. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden would work with other developed nations and multilateral institutions to cancel remaining onerous debt while pushing reforms to keep developing nations from slipping into fiscal ruin. President-elect Barack Obama and Vice President-elect Joe Biden also would better coordinate trade and development policies to use the full range of America’s economic power to help developing nations reap the benefits of the global trading system. Obama cosponsored the Multilateral Debt Relief Act of 2005 to provide multilateral debt relief to Heavily Indebted Poor Countries.

## K2 Solve Home Foreclosure

**Obama key to solve house foreclosures- Romney’s plan fails**

**Goehl 7/11**- the Executive Director of National People's Campaign (George, “President Obama Holds The Keys On Preventing Foreclosures,” The Huffington Post, July 11, 2012, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/george-goehl/foreclosure-crisis_b_1134582.html>, accessed 7-19-2012)

On Sunday, November 27th the New York Times ran an editorial, "Romney on Foreclosures," critiquing Mitt Romney's strategy to address the foreclosure crisis. The piece is right on target. Romney's plan, which is to essentially do nothing and let struggling homeowners across the board lose their homes, would further sink a housing market that has already reached historic lows. What the editorial does not address is that President Obama's plan, while not as mean-spirited as Romney's, continues to lack the boldness and scale needed to alleviate the crisis. President Obama, unlike candidate Romney, has the power to help stem the tide of foreclosures and heal our housing market right now. The starting point should be the potential foreclosure settlement with big banks. At question is whether the president accepts as sufficient the small settlement currently on the table, reportedly in the $15-20 billion range, or teams with Attorneys General Eric Schneiderman, Beau Biden, and Martha Coakley to push for something more commensurate with the abuses committed by the banks and the scope of the crisis. As the Times editorial notes, mortgages in America are $700 billion underwater. A settlement as small the one being considered would be a small drop in a very big bucket, signaling another victory for big banks, the 1%, and corporate money in our political system. It makes good economic sense for President Obama to push for a larger foreclosure settlement. A settlement that halts more foreclosures will stabilize our housing market, lift homes values, and inject new money into our economy. This would help Americans across the board, regardless of whether our mortgages are underwater or we are a homeowner or renter. The housing market makes up 15% of our Gross Domestic Product. It's hard to have a robust recovery when one-sixth of our economy is in its worst shape in generations. As the Commerce Department reported last week, median home sale prices have now fallen to their lowest level of the year. Since the housing bubble burst, over $7 trillion in home equity has been wiped out. Without courageous action by President Obama, more home equity will be lost, further weighing down our sluggish economy. To prevent foreclosures at a significant scale, principal reduction -- the writing down of mortgages to their actual value -- is a must. Principal reduction should be mandatory, not voluntary, for the big banks, and we should be discussing hundreds of billions in reduced principal, not tens of billions. Reforms focused solely on refinancing or forbearance and have been optional for banks have failed to make significant impact. By requiring the banks to adjust principal on a loan to actual value, we not only prevent foreclosures, but also inject the difference between the amount owed and actual value into the economy. It's another form of stimulus, but one that does not require taxpayer dollars. Reducing principal on mortgages is not a liberal or conservative idea. Economists from across the political spectrum have increasingly come out in favor of principal reduction as a key strategy for rebooting our housing market. For example, Martin S. Feldstein, professor of economics at Harvard, and chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under President Ronald Reagan, wrote in the NY Times that "failure to act means that further declines in home prices will continue, preventing the rise in consumer spending needed for recovery. As costly as it will be to permanently write down mortgages, it will be even costlier to do nothing and run the risk of another recession." Taking a more aggressive approach to addressing the foreclosure crisis doesn't only make good economic sense. It's good politics too. Any candidate running for president must consider the fact that swing states such as Nevada, Florida, Michigan, and Ohio are among the hardest hit by the housing crisis. In Nevada, 62% of borrowers are underwater. In Florida, 46% of borrowers are underwater. Since homeowners have a particularly high voting rate, every candidate should be looking to prove he or she has the guts to go toe to toe with the big banks, demand retribution for American families, and get our housing market back on track. If there was ever a battle that signified the struggle between the 1 percent and the 99 percent, this is it. By pushing for a settlement that reduces hundreds of billions of dollars in principal the president could buoy the same economy that has been a drag on his presidency. If he doesn't, he could end up underwater with the rest of us.

# ACA

## Obama will keep ACA

**Obama will uphold Affordable Care, but Romney will repeal it**

**Beaumont, 2012 – veteran chronicler of presidential politics and the Iowa Caucuses** (Thomas, Des Moines correspondent for The Associated Press, Obama, Romney use health care ruling to rally core backers, Jackson Sun, 7/7/12, <http://www.jacksonsun.com/viewart/> 20120708/NEWS/120707008/Obama-Romney-use-health-care-ruling-rally-core-backers-, 7/9/12)

A week after the decision, Democrat Obama's campaign is pointing to swollen ranks of campaign volunteers, in places such as Iowa and Michigan, who have been emboldened to protect the health care overhaul now that it has been declared the law of the land. Opponents had argued that the requirement that all individuals to buy health insurance was a constitutional overreach. "The law I passed is here to stay," Obama said to applause in Ohio last week. Republican challenger Romney says the anger on the right has boosted fundraising in presidential battlegrounds, with millions in small-dollar contributions pouring in from conservatives who see the former Massachusetts governor as the last hope for getting the law repealed. "What the court did not do on its last day in session, I will do on my first day if elected president of the United States. And that is I will act to repeal Obamacare," Romney said last week in response to the ruling.

## Romney will reject ACA

**Romney will repeal Affordable Care if elected – personal statements prove**

**Williams, 2012 – Huffington Post writer** (Bryon Williams, staff writer, Obamacare RIP, 7/9/12, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/byron-williams/obamacare-rip_b_1647835.html>, 7/9/12)

**Huffington Post, 2012** (Bryon Williams, staff writer, Obamacare RIP, 7/9/12, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/byron-williams/obamacare-rip_b_1647835.html>, 7/9/12)

Fellow citizens lend me your ears; I come to bury Obamacare, not to praise it. Obamacare, unlike the Affordable Care Act that the Supreme Court recently upheld by a 5-4 margin, is a political pejorative, part of a propaganda campaign, serving more to titillate and cajole. The presumptive Republican nominee Mitt Romney stated after the Supreme Court's decision, if elected, he would repeal Obamacare. If Romney was referring to the Affordable Care Act, assuming he has the votes in Congress, is he going to repeal the ability for those under 26 to remain on their parents insurance, those with pre-existing condition can't be denied coverage, or discounts for seniors on prescription drugs?

**Romney will repeal Affordable Care Act – polls prove he will have support**

**Drake, 2012 – Journalist and Editor of Montana Watchdog** (Phil, 25 years of journalism experience and editor of Montana Watchdog,  attended the University of Wyoming for two years, but got his bachelors of science degree in journalism from Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, 80% polled believe Romney’s claim he’ll repeal Obamacare if elected, Montana Watchdog, 7/9/12, <http://montana.watchdog.org/2012/07/09/80-believe-romneys-claim-hell-repeal-obamacare-if-elected/>, 7/9/12)

Voters overwhelmingly believe GOP presidential candidate **Mitt Romney’s** claim that he will repeal the **Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act** if elected. A new **Rasmussen Reports** national telephone survey finds that 80 percent of likely U.S. voters nationwide think it’s likely the health care law, commonly called **Obamacare,** will be repealed if Romney is elected president and Republicans win control of Congress. Fifteen percent see it as unlikely. The figures include 52 percent who believe a GOP sweep would make repeal very likely. This national survey of 1,000 U.S. likely voters was conducted on July 5-6, by Rasmussen Reports. The margin of sampling error is +/- 3 percentage points with a 95 percent level of confidence. Field work for all Rasmussen Reports surveys is conducted by [Pulse Opinion Research, Voters still overwhelmingly believe the likely GOP nominee’s claim that he will repeal the law if elected.](http://www.pulseopinionresearch.com/) A new Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey finds that 80 percent of likely U.S. voters nationwide think it’s likely the health care law will be repealed if Romney is elected president and Republicans win control of Congress. Just 15 percent see it as unlikely. The figures include 52 percent who believe a GOP sweep would make repeal Very Likely.  (To see survey question wording, [click here](http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/politics/questions/pt_survey_questions/july_2012/questions_election_impact_on_economy_health_care_july_5_6_2012).)

## ACA Good – Econ

**Repeal of ACA kills the US economy – it denies coverage to millions which increases health care costs and deficits**

**Volsky, 2012 –**deputy editor thinkprogress.org (Igor, , Consequences of the GOP’s Bill to Repeal Obamacare, Think Progress, 7/6/12, <http://thinkprogress.org/health/2012/07/06/512039/5-consequences-of-the-gops-bill-to-repeal-obamacare/?mobile=nc>, 7/9/12)

This free market mantra may resonate with the GOP base, but it does nothing to improve the economy or solve the health care crisis. Below are 5 consequences of the GOP’s repeal legislation: 1) Millions without coverage. A Congressional Budget Office [analysis](http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2011/01/06/137550/cbo-score-repeal/) of the GOP’s repeal measure from 2011 found that “32 million fewer nonelderly people would have health insurance in 2019, leaving a total of about 54 million nonelderly people uninsured. The share of legal nonelderly residents with insurance coverage in 2019 would be about 83 percent, compared with a projected share of 94 percent under current law (and 83 percent currently).” 2) Health insurance costs increase. The same analysis concluded that “many people would [end up paying more](http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2011/01/06/137550/cbo-score-repeal/) for health insurance— because under current law, the majority of enrollees purchasing coverage in that market would receive subsidies via the insurance exchanges, and [repeal] would eliminate those subsidies.” What’s more, “Premiums for employment-based coverage obtained through large employers would be slightly higher.” 3) Americans with pre-existing conditions will lose access to coverage. Republicans have said that they [would not replace](http://thinkprogress.org/health/2012/07/04/511054/mcconnell-im-not-convinced-congress-should-prohibit-insurers-from-discriminating-against-the-sick/) the Affordable Care Act’s federal rules prohibiting insurers from discriminating against people with pre-existing conditions. Instead, they would encourage states to form expensive high-risk pools to cover the sick or, alternatively, leave them to find their own coverage in the individual market — where many will likely go uninsured. 4) Medicare in disarray. Approximately 100 million Medicare claims are processed each month using a formula that was altered by the Affordable Care Act. Should the law be repealed, new rates could not be calculated under the old, pre-ACA formula until after a rulemaking process that can take months before is completed. The result would be that Medicare would not be able to pay doctors for what could be many months. 5) Deficits increase by billions. The CBO predicts that “as a result of changes in direct spending and revenues is likely to be an increase in the vicinity of [$230 billion](http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2011/01/06/137550/cbo-score-repeal/).” Repeal would also “increase federal deficits in the decade after 2019 by an amount that is in a broad range around one-half percent of GDP.”

**Affordable Care Act Key to the Economy – Job growth, job satisfaction and health care cost control**

**Gruber, 7-9-12** **- is a Professor of Economics at MIT** [Jonathan is a Professor of Economics at MIT. He was a technical consultant to the Obama Administration during the development of the ACA. Will the Affordable Care Act Kill Jobs? The New Republic, July 9, 2012 http://www.tnr.com/print/blog/plank/104791/gruber-care-act-job-killing]

Forget death panels. Lately critics of the Affordable Care Act have been promoting a different claim—that “Obamacare” is a job-killer. Specifically, they say, it will stifle the economy with regulations and taxes. But the economic literature doesn’t support this claim. If anything, it suggests the opposite: The Affordable Care Act will boost the economy. By now, most people who follow politics know that the law will result in more than 30 million additional Americans getting health insurance. But what few realize is that, by expanding insurance coverage, the law will also increase economic activity. These newly insured individuals will demand more medical care than when they were uninsured. And while it takes many years to train a family physician or nurse practitioner, it doesn’t take much time to train the assistants and technicians (and related support staff) who can fill much of this need. In many cases, these are precisely the sort of medium-skill jobs that our economy desperately needs—and that the health care sector has already been providing, even during the recession. More immediately, the increase in economic security for American families will also mean an increase in consumer spending. Many uninsured consumers are forced to set aside money in low interest liquid accounts to make sure they have enough to cover unexpected medical costs. With the security provided by health insurance, they can free that money up for consumption that is much more valuable to them. When the federal government expanded Medicaid in the 1990s, my own research has shown, the newly insured significantly increased their spending on consumer goods. More purchases of consumer goods will provide short-run stimulation to the economy and more hiring. But what about the financing—and all those “job-killing taxes”? The law does indeed apply new taxes, primarily on three sources. The first is on parts of the health care industry—medical devices, pharmaceuticals, and insurance. But these taxes are effectively asking those sectors to “kick back” some of the revenue increases that the law will provide, by creating so many new paying customers. On net, these sectors are major winners from health care reform. The second is an extension of the Medicare tax on the wealthiest Americans, those with incomes above $250,000 per year. There is now a large body of literature examining the impact of tax changes on the highest income taxpayers. This literature finds that those taxpayers will avoid some of those taxes by re-categorizing their incomes in ways that minimize taxes. But there is no evidence that they will actually work less hard, invest less, or do anything which reduces their “real contribution” to the economy. The third major tax provision is a “free rider penalty” of $2000 to $3000 (per employee) on medium and large businesses that fail to provide workers with affordable coverage, forcing those workers to get subsidized insurance via the new insurance exchanges. This will indeed impose a new financial burden on businesses that, unlike competitors, do not pay their fair share of health insurance costs. But the overall impact is likely to be very small. Only 2.6 percent of businesses will pay this assessment, and the revenue raised will amount to 1.4 percent of existing spending on health insurance in the U.S.—and only 0.1 percent of wages. The amount of stimulative spending that is put in place by the ACA is sixteen times as large as the revenues raised by this equity assessment. Opponents of the ACA have frequently cited a Congressional Budget Office projection that the ACA will lead to a small reduction in the labor force. But it’s the explanation for that reduction that matters. CBO believes the reduction will be largely voluntary, among workers holding onto jobs primarily to keep their health benefits—the wife who holds down a job to provide health insurance for her self-employed husband, rather than staying home to raise the kids; the 62-year-old who hates her job and would happily retire but for the fact that she would be uninsured until age 65. Economics research has shown clearly that when health insurance is available, both secondary earners and older workers will take advantage of this new opportunity by moving out of the labor force to opportunities which make them happier. This same research has shown that a major cost of our employment-based health insurance system is “job lock”—that is, individuals clinging to jobs, rather than switching employers or starting their own businesses, because they fear losing their existing health benefits. Extensive research shows that job lock reduces the mobility of those with health insurance by as much as 25 percent, reducing their ability to move to positions where they could be more productive and happier. The Affordable Care Act will address job lock by providing protection Americans don’t have right now: A promise of comprehensive coverage, at affordable prices, no matter what their source of employment. For the first time, Americans with pre-existing conditions or other barriers to the discriminatory individual insurance market will be free to pursue the job opportunities where they can be most productive and happiest. Of course, the long-term goal of the Affordable Care Act is to reduce spending on health care. And the best projections suggest that it will. Although the law will boost spending initially, the effect is likely to be modest. The official Medicare Actuary projects that, by 2019, the ACA will raise health spending by 1 percent, or 0.2 percent of GDP; this is less than one-sixth of one year’s growth in national health expenditures. Over time, however, the multiple initiatives in the ACA will kick in to help “bend the cost curve,” through increasing consumer incentives to shop for low-cost insurance, moving towards prospective payment methodologies that reward value rather than treatment intensity, and assessing which strategies are cost effective for managing illness. The reforms in the ACA represent the most ambitious initiatives to control health care costs that we have seen in federal legislation. If successful, these can ultimate provide the most important stimulus to job growth in this legislation—by freeing up resources for other, more efficient uses In sum, we know that the ACA will increase jobs in the medical sector in the short run, above and beyond any partial offsets from new excise taxes on that sector. We know that the ACA will improve the functioning of our labor market in the medium run, by allowing workers to move to the positions in which they are most productive and satisfied. We know that there will be little economic drag from taxes on the wealthy or the small equity payments imposed on employers. And there is a good chance that the ACA will greatly improve the economy in the long run by controlling the rate of health care cost increase. The choice between protecting our most vulnerable citizens and improving our economy is a false one—fully implementing the ACA will make both our citizens and our economy more secure.

Affordable Care Act key to Economy – Biggest economic benefit to California

**Haveman, 5/20/12 - Chief Economist** [Jon Haveman is Chief Economist at the Council’s Economic Institute, Affordable Care Act Creates Almost 100K Jobs, Boosts Economic Activity in California by $4.4 Billion, Enhanced Online News, May 20, 2012, http://eon.businesswire.com/news/eon/20120520005060/en]

The study, The Economic Impact of the Affordable Care Act on California. concludes that the federal health care law would create almost 100,000 new jobs across California and boost economic output by $4.4 billion. The biggest expected job gains occur in Southern California, with almost 58,000 new jobs, followed by the Sacramento Valley with almost 13,500 new jobs, the Bay Area with 7,600 jobs, San Diego County with almost 6,500 jobs and the remaining 10,000 jobs spread throughout other counties. “In the debate over the federal health care law, this study shows there has been more heat than light when it comes to understanding economic and jobs impacts,” said Jon Haveman, study co-author and chief economist for the Bay Area Council Economic Institute, the research arm of the Bay Area Council. “By focusing on expanding health insurance coverage, making our health care system more efficient and making our workforce healthier, we can realize important employment and economic gains.” Driving the employment gains is an overall rise in economic activity stemming from increased spending on healthcare and medical services and the secondary benefits of that money flowing to other parts of the economy. That increased spending will boost overall economic activity in the state by $4.4 billion. Again, the biggest gains will be in Southern California, where net economic activity increases by $3 billion. Sacramento County is the next largest beneficiary of increased spending, with net economic output rising by almost $608 million. Those figures take into account the dampening impact that provisions such as the employer mandate is expected to have on hiring and economic activity. The mandate, which is among the more hotly contested elements of the Affordable Care Act, requires large employers to provide their employees with health insurance or pay a fine. And yet, the study observes that the employer mandate is a “crucial tool” for the overall expansion of healthcare coverage that on net is a job creator in the state. “The Bay Area Council’s new economic impact report shows that making the insurance market fairer and more inclusive is an economic boon to the state,” said Julian Canete, President & CEO of the California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce (CAHCC). “The report demonstrates how the federal health care law will help communities such as California’s Latino-owned businesses and workforce by enhancing economic and health conditions to strengthen California’s economy.” By expanding health care coverage, the study found, the Affordable Care Act will also expand the overall labor force by better maintaining the health of the workforce and preventing workers from being sidelined because of health problems. Broader coverage will also reduce “job lock,” in which uncertainty about changing health insurance discourages workers from seeking better jobs. “The Affordable Care Act provides an important framework for expanding health care coverage in a way that can boost employment, increase overall economic activity and make people healthier,” said Dr. Micah Weinberg, study co-author and Senior Policy Advisor for the Bay Area Council. The study is careful to note that “the ultimate impact of health care reform, though—both in terms of its true economic implications and whether it achieves its substantive policy goals—depends heavily on implementation, which will require close partnership between the federal government, the states, and the private, charitable, and non-profit sectors.” “The Bay Area Council is playing a leadership role in the business community in working closely with state officials and other key policy makers in implementing the Affordable Care Act in California, keeping the focus on reducing health care costs and improving public health. These are the things that will help improve California’s business climate and keep us competitive in the global marketplace,” said Jim Wunderman, President and CEO of the Bay Area Council.

Bottom of Form

## ACA Good – Poverty

Affordable Care Act helps those in poverty – Free Insurance

Collins, 2010 – Ph.D. [Sara R. Collins Ph.D. is a Vice President of Affordable Health Insurance at The Commonwealth Fund. How the Affordable Care Act of 2010 Will Help Low and Moderate Income Families, Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity, June 14 2010, http://www.spotlightonpoverty.org/exclusivecommentary.aspx?id=ba21673c-b1ac-44b7-8f76-50e856cdb9b5]

The Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA) brings sweeping change to health insurance coverage in the United States, providing security to millions of working age people who are currently uninsured or underinsured or who may lose job-based health insurance in the future. The law also has at its heart a recognition of the needs of low- and moderate-income people who have been most affected by the nation’s inability to enact comprehensive health reform until this year. While most people in the U.S. have health insurance through an employer, the chance of having employer-based coverage declines dramatically with income. Nearly two-thirds (64.6 percent) of the 45.7 million uninsured people under age 65 are living in households with incomes of less than 200 percent of poverty, or about $44,100 for a family of four (Exhibit 1). In addition, of the estimated 25 million adults under age 65 who have such high out of pocket costs relative to their income that they are underinsured, more than half (55 percent) have incomes under 200 percent of poverty. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the ACA will cover some 32 million uninsured people over the next ten years, or about 94 percent of legal residents. About 23 million people will still lack health insurance, one third of whom will be undocumented residents who are not eligible for coverage under the law. As elements of the bill begin to be implemented, now is a good time to map out which provisions in the ACA that will help low- and moderate-income individuals and families gain access to affordable, comprehensive health insurance. Medicaid expansion. Beginning in 2014, the ACA expands eligibility for Medicaid for all legal residents to 133 percent of the federal poverty level, about $14,404 for a single adult or $29,327 for a family of four. This is a substantial change in the Medicaid program in its coverage of adults. Although several states have expanded eligibility for parents of dependent children, in most states income eligibility thresholds are well below the federal poverty level. And adults who do not have children are not currently eligible for Medicaid regardless of income in most states. Because almost half (46 percent) of people who are uninsured in the U.S. live in households with incomes under 133 percent of poverty, this provision will potentially have the greatest effect on increasing health insurance of all the new law’s provisions (Exhibit 1)..The Congressional Budget Office estimates that by 2019, enrollment in Medicaid will increase by 16 million people.

Affordable Care Act cures poverty – Coverage and protection of finances

Vissa, 2011 – Community Reinvestment Director [Preeti Vissa is a Community Reinvestment Director at The Greenlining Institute, Poverty Is a Pre-Existing Condition: Why the Affordable Care Act Matters, The Huffington Post, March 25, 2011, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/preeti-vissa/poverty-is-a-pre-existing-\_b\_839812.html]

Last week I wrote about asset poverty and the huge difference it makes to a family's economic security to have assets -- savings, home equity, etc. -- that they can tap into during tough times. As we mark the one-year anniversary of the Affordable Care Act, we should remember what a crucial role the health care reform law is starting to play in protecting people's financial safety net. That health and wealth are connected is thoroughly documented. For example, people in the highest income group can expect to live, on average, at least six and a half years longer than those in the lowest. Even those in the middle (families of four making $41,300 to $82,600 a year in 2007) will die, on average, two years sooner than those at the top. While most of the data on health and wealth is based on income -- not always an adequate measure of poverty, as I noted last week -- there is an unmistakable connection between health and one's ability to hold onto assets and maintain a financial safety net. A 2010 study by researchers from MIT, Dartmouth and Harvard found "large and substantively important correlations between poor health and asset accumulation." Looking at survey data from the National Bureau of Economic Research, the researchers found that from 1992 to 2008, those in the healthiest one-third "had accumulated, on average, more than 50 percent more assets than those in the bottom third of the health distribution." Without adequate health insurance, medical expenses can quickly devastate one's finances. A 2005 Harvard and Ohio University study found that a staggering 55 percent of bankruptcies were caused by medical debt. By 2007, that number had shot up to 62 percent, with the share of bankruptcies attributable to medical expenses rising by nearly 50 percent from 2001 to 2007. There's a similar connection between medical expenses and foreclosures. A 2008 study, for example, found that 49 percent of foreclosures were at least partly caused by medical issues, with over two-thirds of those who experienced foreclosure reporting at least one factor such as medical bills, lost work due to illness, or the need to care for a sick family member. That's why the Affordable Care Act is so crucial. While it won't solve all of the problems of our health care system, it will give American families real and substantial protection against having their homes and savings wiped out by medical expenses. Under the law, children can't be denied coverage due to pre-existing conditions, a provision that will expand to include adults in 2014. Seniors struggling with the "donut hole" that sticks them with a large bill for prescription drugs have already gotten some relief and will get more. Lifetime caps on coverage will go away. And 32 million people with no insurance today will have it once the law is fully implemented -- with several types of assistance to help pay for it, including tax credits for small employers who insure their workers. It's important to keep these real-world implications in mind as we mark health care reform's anniversary and sort through the propaganda from those who would repeal the law, many of whom still spout utter nonsense about a "government take-over of health care" and the entirely fictional "death panels." Asset poverty is a pre-existing condition, one that can affect both your health and the whole trajectory of your life. One of the best cures for it is a health care system that covers everyone at a manageable cost. The Affordable Care Act gets us most of the way there, and it's good for both our economic and physical health.

## ACA Good – Biotech Industry

**Affordable Care Act Helps BioTech field – Grants and Job growth**

Sullivan, 2010 – Political Consultant [ Thomas Sullivan is a Former political consultant who founded Rockpointe, Inc. a bio-medical education company in 1995, Therapeutic Discovery Credits Announced, Policy and Medicine, November 18, 2010, http://www.policymed.com/2010/11/therapeutic-discovery-credits-announced.html]

Last week, Secretary of the Treasury Tim Geithner and Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Kathleen Sebelius joined with NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins to announce the recipients of the $1 billion in new therapeutic discovery project credits and grants created by the Affordable Care Act. According to their press release, this program will help nearly 3,000 small biotechnology companies in nearly every state in the country produce new and cost-saving therapies, support good jobs and increase U.S. competitiveness. Secretary Geithner noted that “These grants will help make sure our companies, entrepreneurs and workers can continue to invest and innovate, which will strengthen our economy now and far into the future.” Companies will receive these grants through the Therapeutic Discovery Project Program. A total of 2,923 companies specializing in biotechnology and medical research in 47 states and the District of Columbia received awards under the therapeutic discovery project program created by the Affordable Care Act. In all, 4,606 applications from these nearly 3,000 companies were awarded funding. Secretary Sebelius added that the new program will improve the nation’s health care by giving grants and tax credits to support small biotech firms with big potential across the country. She noted that this funding will help companies “hire more staff, improve facilities and move forward with research projects that might otherwise have been put on hold. The credit covers up to 50 percent of the cost of qualifying biomedical research and is only available to firms with fewer than 250 employees. The credit is effective for investments made in 2009 and 2010. Firms can opt to receive a grant instead of a tax credit, so start-ups that are not yet profitable can benefit as well. NIH Director Dr. Collins noted that “These grants made possible by the Affordable Care Act will not only help to create jobs and bolster the economy but also bring us closer to the next generation of life-saving cures.” He further recognized that “The projects funded show significant potential to create new therapies that will address unmet medical needs and bolster the medical countermeasure supply we use to respond to health emergencies.” The therapeutic discovery project program is targeted to projects that “show significant potential to produce new therapies, address unmet medical needs, reduce the long-term growth of health care costs, or advance the goal of curing cancer within the next 30 years.” The allocation of the credit also reflects which projects show the greatest potential to create and sustain high-quality, high-paying jobs in the United States and to advance our competitiveness in the fields of life, biological, and medical sciences. Given that today’s biotechnology industry employs 1.3 million workers, and the industry continues to be a key growth engine for our economy, this program and the investment’s being made in these companies should be applauded. As Secretary Sebelius correctly noted, America and patients cannot “afford to see promising discoveries discarded or innovative businesses move overseas.”

## ACA Good – Pharma Industry

Affordable Care Act helps Pharmaceutical Industry – Discounts

Volsky, 2011 – Deputy Editor and Co-Author [ Igor Volsky is the Deputy Editor of ThinkProgress.org. Igor is co-author of Howard Dean’s Prescription for Real Healthcare Reform, Affordable Care Act Lowering Prescription Drug Costs For Seniors, ThinkProgress Health, Nov 28, 2011, http://thinkprogress.org/health/2011/11/28/376477/affordable-care-act-lowering-prescription-drug-costs-for-seniors/?mobile=nc]

Seniors — the demographic most skeptical about health care reform — are already benefiting from provisions in the Affordable Care Act, the Associate Press’ Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar reports, as the law gradually closes the doughnut hole in Medicare Part D. The coverage gap is the result of a political compromise in the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, which created a gap in prescription coverage for seniors who spend more than $2,840 on medications this year. Beneficiaries are responsible for the next $3,600 in drug costs until they reach about $6,440 in spending. The health law relies on money from the pharmaceutical industry to close the gap in coverage: The “doughnut hole,’’ an anxiety-inducing catch in an otherwise popular benefit, will shrink about 40 percent for those unlucky enough to land in it, according to new Medicare figures provided in response to a request from The Associated Press. [...] The average beneficiary who falls into the coverage gap would have spent $1,504 this year on prescriptions. But thanks to discounts and other provisions in President Barack Obama’s health care overhaul law, that cost fell to $901, according to Medicare’s Office of the Actuary, which handles economic estimates. A 50 percent discount that the law secured from pharmaceutical companies on brand name drugs yielded an average savings of $581. Medicare also picked up more of the cost of generic drugs, saving an additional $22. [...] This year, the law provides a 50 percent discount on brand name drugs and 7 percent break on generics. Next year the discount on generics rises to 14 percent. When the changes are fully phased in, beneficiaries will still be responsible for their annual deductible and 25 percent of the cost of their medications until they reach catastrophic coverage. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) estimates that almost 1.8 million seniors have taken advantage of the discounts in the doughnut hole, saving more than $660 million on prescription drugs.

## ACA Good – Disease

Affordable Care Act solves diabetes – Prevention and early detection

Knuti, 2010 - Communications Director [Erikka Knuti is a communications director at HIC, The Diabetes Epidemic: Another Reason Repeal Would Hurt America, America’s HealthCare, November 24, 2010, http://www.americasfairhealthcare.org/press-releases/entry/the-diabetes-epidemic-another-reason-repeal-would-hurt-america/]

New study shows wellness and prevention provisions of the Affordable Care Act are critically important to fighting diabetes Washington, D.C. — The Health Information Campaign (HIC) calls the new health care law critically important to reducing the spread of diabetes and curbing its cost to the nation's health care system. A report released yesterday revealed the devastating impact diabetes will have on our country if not addressed. The wellness and prevention provisions in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) provide access to early detection and intervention measures recommended in the report to reverse the nation's prognosis. "Diabetes doesn't have to be an epidemic if we don't let it. The Affordable Care Act gives millions of Americans new tools to help themselves and intervene in the course of this disease." said HIC President Andrew Grossman. "Repealing the health care law would leave us on course to see over half the country affected by a disease that in most cases is preventable." The UnitedHealth Group report, projected more than half of all Americans will have diabetes or be pre-diabetic by 2020 at a cost of $3.35 trillion to the U.S. health care system. Diabetes is the fastest growing disease in the United States, and the majority of cases can be prevented entirely. In all cases, effective management of the disease dramatically reduces patients' health care costs. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) promotes early detection, provides free screening for high-risk factors, and ensures access to treatment. However, the vast majority of diabetics do not realize how the new law will improve their access to care and help reduce their costs. According to a Harvard School of Public Health survey released Monday, only 14 percent of diabetics believe they'll be better off under the new law. Specifically, the law helps fight diabetes the following ways: Prevention: Creates a National Diabetes Prevention Program which provides funding for community-based prevention programs aimed at adults at high risk for diabetes. Wellness: Requires new health plans to offer obesity and dietary counseling. Obesity is the leading cause of diabetes. If treated effectively, the on-set of type-2 diabetes can be prevented entirely. Early Detection: Provides access to free screenings for high-risk indicators such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol. 67 million Americans are estimated to have pre-diabetes and 90 percent of them do not know it. Treating pre-diabetes can slow the development of type 2 diabetes. Reducing costs: Effective early intervention in the disease life-cycle will lower the cost of managing the disease. Based on data from UnitedHealth Group members, in 2009 the average annual cost of health care for a diabetic was $11,700. The cost jumped to $20,700 for a person with complications from the disease. Complications from diabetes included heart disease, kidney damage, nerve damage, blindness, and circulatory disease that can lead to amputation. Stable Care: Bans "lifetime limits" on benefits, which means diabetics don't have to worry about "maxing out" on their coverage or going bankrupt. And soon, diabetics will no longer be denied coverage because they have a pre-existing condition. Earlier this fall HIC launched "America's Fair Health Care" to provide resources and information about the law's implementation, and a national ad campaign to educate the public about the provisions of the new law taking effect. HIC is a non-partisan, non-profit organization whose mission is to educate the public about the Affordable Care Act.

Affordable Care Act key to HIV – Screening and treatments without costs

Office of Adolescent Health, June 2012 [Office of Adolescent Health, Teens and the HIV/AIDS Epidemic, Office of Adolescent Health, June 2012, http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/news/e-updates/june-2012.html]

The Affordable Care Act provides for many private insurance plans to offer HIV screening tests for at risk people at no additional cost to them—making it more likely they will get tested and, if necessary, get access to life-saving treatment more quickly.9 And starting this year, the law also requires many plans to provide coverage without cost- sharing of HIV and other STI counseling for all sexually active females.10

## AT: ACA Lowers Deficits

**Affordable Care Act won’t reduce deficits – their evidence assumes that Congress follows through on Other cost cutting policies. If they don’t, deficits Skyrocket**

**Beutler,** **4/3/12** [Brian, graduated from U.C. Berkeley in 2004 with degrees in physics and astrophysics, before moving to Washington, DC in 2005 to begin a career in journalism., Repealing ‘Obamacare’ Would Explode Debt, Says Government Auditor, Talking Post Memo.com, April 3 2012, <http://tpmdc.talkingpointsmemo.com/2012/04/repealing-obamacare-would-explode-debt-government-auditor.php>]

A new report by an independent government auditor concludes that implementing President Obama’s health care law as intended will make a significant dent in the long-term debt forecast.The report comes as Supreme Court justices weigh striking some of “Obamacare’s” central provisions — and perhaps the law in its entirety — and as the Republican Party remains committed to repealing the law if it seizes control of government in November.“[I]f the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) is implemented as intended it would have a major effect on the [fiscal] gap but would not eliminate it,” the Government Accountability Office wrote in a Monday report — a conclusion in line with its own past research and similar research conducted by other government and non-government analysts.GAO doesn’t isolate PPACA’s stand-alone contribution to long-term budget consolidation. But it does conclude that if key cost-control measures in the law, and other automatic cuts to Medicare spending baked into current law, are ignored, or overridden by Congress, the implications for the national debt are vast.If “Obamacare” is implemented as intended, and other measures, such as automatic payment cuts to Medicare physicians, take effect, “spending on Medicare and Medicaid grows from 5 percent of GDP in 2010 to over 7 percent by 2030.”By contrast, if Congress overrides those provisions, “[s]pending on health care grows much more rapidly under this more pessimistic set of assumptions,” according to the report. “Absent changes to these programs, spending on Medicare and Medicaid under the Alternative simulation grows to over 8 percent of GDP by 2030.”Congress has consistently passed temporary legislation to prevent Medicare doctors from experiencing a pay cut baked into current law. But the current patch expires on Jan. 1 — along with the Bush tax cuts and the payroll tax holiday — just as other automatic cuts to Medicare are set to take effect as a penalty for the Super Committee’s failure to pass deficit-cutting legislation.The confluence of these fiscal triggers suggests lawmakers will be forced to act quickly after the election to put the country’s budget on a more sustainable path. But if Republicans win big in November and move ahead with their plan to repeal the health care law, they’ll only make matters worse.

**Affordable Care Act won’t reduce deficits – immediate taxes will hurt long term growth and reduce wages which reduces tax revenue and increases interest rates – this increases debt**

**Campbell 2010 - visiting Fellow in Macroeconomics at Heritage Foundation** [Karen, Guinevere Nell is a Research Programmer and Paul Winfree is a Senior Policy Analyst, Simulations, Obamacare: Impact on the Economy, Heritage.org, September 22, 2010 <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/09/obamacare-impact-on-the-economy>]

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), the health care bill signed into law by President Obama in March, will overhaul the current health insurance system by enforcing mandates on individuals and businesses, expanding Medicaid, and introducing new taxes and fines to help pay for the increased “federal budgetary commitment to health care.” Contrary to a key intention of the legislation, the combination of mandates and taxes will not help to reduce the deficit. In fact, the PPACA will likely increase the deficit by an average $75 billion per year, and as a result, the nation’s publicly held debt will be $753 billion higher at the end of 2020. Such astronomical debt crowds out other productive investments and will lead to an estimated 670,000 lost job opportunities per year. Dynamic Analysis Confirms Fears It was the goal of health care reform to be deficit neutral—as scored by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO)—within the first 10 years of enactment. In order to achieve this goal, the new law immediately imposes a combination of new taxes on high-income individuals, medical devices, and pharmaceuticals and Medicare spending cuts. In addition, the PPACA delays subsidy payments to help make insurance affordable for those with lower incomes and Medicaid expansions to cover more of the uninsured. However, the static budget analysis is limited in that it does not account for how the policy combination of spending and taxes alters the macroeconomic performance of the economy and feeds back onto the budget. A dynamic simulation shows that the higher initial costs are not an investment that pays off with a higher return in later years. Indeed, these front-loaded costs slow economic growth with higher inflation and higher interest rates, which overwhelm the benefits the proposal hoped to gain in later years. The bill’s taxes, penalties, and fees on investors and businesses will decrease the amount of investment in the economy. This reduced investment will in turn lead to a decline in productivity, causing the economy to produce $706 billion less worth of goods and services. A smaller economic pie means that workers earn lower wages and salaries. Higher taxes on investment also put upward pressure on interest rates as investors seek to achieve their after-tax desired rate of return.[1]

## ACA Bad – Defecit

**Affordable Care Act increases deficits – simulations prove, their authors overestimate stimulus**

**Campbell 2010 - visiting Fellow in Macroeconomics at Heritage Foundation** [Karen, Guinevere Nell is a Research Programmer and Paul Winfree is a Senior Policy Analyst, Simulations, Obamacare: Impact on the Economy, Heritage.org, September 22, 2010 <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/09/obamacare-impact-on-the-economy>]

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**Affordable Care Act increases deficits because it increases health care spending**

**Campbell 2010 - visiting Fellow in Macroeconomics at Heritage Foundation** [Karen, Guinevere Nell is a Research Programmer and Paul Winfree is a Senior Policy Analyst, Simulations, Obamacare: Impact on the Economy, Heritage.org, September 22, 2010 <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/09/obamacare-impact-on-the-economy>]

Higher Premiums In its analysis of the PPACA, the CBO estimates that health insurance premiums for the non-group market will increase significantly, primarily because of a mandate requiring plans to provide a more generous level of coverage than most do now while virtually eliminating the option of catastrophic coverage. In addition, significantly more individuals will face these higher premiums after the creation of the insurance exchanges begins crowding out the employer-sponsored market and after the individual mandate begins prodding the currently uninsured into buying coverage.[2] The result will be an overall increase in the absolute amount of health spending on premiums (that is, private and public).The premium and medical spending increases put upward pressure on prices. Thus nominal spending (i.e., the actual dollars spent) that the government anticipates in subsides and payments for increased Medicaid enrollees will actually purchase a lower level of medical care. In turn, the government will have to spend more money to provide adequate insurance to individuals or further ration payments to medical providers. This unanticipated increase in spending further widens the deficit that contributes to the federal debt.

## ACA Bad – Econ

**Affordable Care Act kills the economy – increasing debt and taxes crowd out investment and kills medical jobs**

**Campbell 2010 - visiting Fellow in Macroeconomics at Heritage Foundation** [Karen, Guinevere Nell is a Research Programmer and Paul Winfree is a Senior Policy Analyst, Simulations, Obamacare: Impact on the Economy, Heritage.org, September 22, 2010 <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/09/obamacare-impact-on-the-economy>]

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**The Affordable Care Act devastates the economy – it raises taxes and health care costs**

**McMahon, 2012 – Republican candidate** (Linda, She is notable for her career developing the WWF and [WWE](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WWE) with her husband [Vince McMahon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vince_McMahon). The Affordable Care Act is Clearly Bad Medicine, CT News, 7/8/12, <http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/ctnj.php/archives/entry/oped_the_affordable_care_act_is_clearly_bad_medicine>, 7/9/12)

The Supreme Court’s decision to uphold the Affordable Care Act is deeply disappointing to all who believe we can reform health care without burdening our people and economy with higher taxes, increased spending, and more red tape. The law represents the largest tax increase in American history, aimed directly at small businesses and middle-class families. It will raise the costs of health care, and millions of Americans will lose the plans and doctors they have now. It will also be a job killer in an economy already struggling. That is why I will vote to repeal it and will work to replace it with common-sense reforms the American people want and our economy needs Everything we were told about this law turns out not to be so. We were told it would not raise taxes. In fact, it imposes 21 new or higher taxes. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that 75% of the new tax burden will fall on families making $250,000 or less. We were told the law would reduce the costs of health care. Actually, CBO concludes premiums will rise and health care will be more expensive. We were told the law would permit people to keep the plans and doctors they have, but in fact the law will reduce the number of people on company plans. Government will dictate which services are required and which may be rationed or no longer be available at all. As government assumes the role of physician-in-chief, the traditional ties between patients and doctors will be broken. The Affordable Care Act is clearly bad medicine, but its impact on the economy will be every bit as harmful. Many Connecticut small business owners tell me that rather than hire more workers, they are going to cut back. So what must we do? I am absolutely committed to the repeal of the law, but we must also deal with the uncertainties. Americans should not have to lie awake at night wondering what will happen if they or a loved one need medical care they cannot afford.

**Affordable Care Act kills the economy – decreases jobs and hurts small businesses**

**Campbell 2010 - visiting Fellow in Macroeconomics at Heritage Foundation** [Karen, Guinevere Nell is a Research Programmer and Paul Winfree is a Senior Policy Analyst, Simulations, Obamacare: Impact on the Economy, Heritage.org, September 22, 2010 <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/09/obamacare-impact-on-the-economy>]

The dynamic analysis shows that the new law will result in 670,000 net job losses, many of which would be in the health services industry. These losses represent both cutbacks in jobs and jobs that are simply never created as talented individuals choose to specialize in other industries that are not subject to the government’s payment squeezes. At the same time, newly enrolled and subsidized individuals on the government’s rolls will cause the demand for health services to increase. In turn, prices will rise even more than anticipated, and greater rationing will occur. Thus, this legislation will fail to meet its primary goal: to enable greater access to health care while “bending the cost curve downward.” Taxing the Job Creators The PPACA also increases the Medicare hospital insurance component of the payroll tax on wages and self-employment income in excess of $200,000 ($250,000 joint) by 0.9 percentage points—a provision that will raise around $18 billion per year. This “tax on the rich,” however, will actually affect small businesses as well as salary earners, because the hospital insurance tax applies to “flow-through income” of those small businesses that file taxes as individuals. In fact, almost $16 billion out the total $18 billion of revenue will come from filers with at least some flow-through income. Small businesses at all earning levels that file individually—even those already facing losses—will see a tax increase. In a time when firms are making hard decisions about layoffs, successful businesses could face tax increases of thousands of dollars. The overall average tax increase faced by small businesses filing individually would be about $600. Repeal Is Needed Mandates add rigidities to the economy, which in turn reduce the ability of the economy to make the needed adjustments to ever-changing economic conditions. These inflexibilities reduce economic growth by stifling the new innovations that a dynamic population demands, resulting in slower economic growth, longer periods of unemployment, and reduced opportunities for savings and investment used to build nest eggs for households. A combination of mandates and taxes will not reduce health care costs or ensure that all citizens have good access to health care. Instead, mandates will burden already struggling businesses with new costs and punish individuals for not having high-paying jobs. New taxes will burden small businesses as well as large ones and force many firms to make layoffs, further hurting workers. The best way to prevent further erosion of the economy is to repeal the new law.

**Affordable Care Act kills economy – it increases interest rates which destroys consumer spending**

**Campbell 2010 - visiting Fellow in Macroeconomics at Heritage Foundation** [Karen, Guinevere Nell is a Research Programmer and Paul Winfree is a Senior Policy Analyst, Simulations, Obamacare: Impact on the Economy, Heritage.org, September 22, 2010 <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/09/obamacare-impact-on-the-economy>]

Dynamic Analysis Confirms Fears However, the static budget analysis is limited in that it does not account for how the policy combination of spending and taxes alters the macroeconomic performance of the economy and feeds back onto the budget. A dynamic simulation shows that the higher initial costs are not an investment that pays off with a higher return in later years. Indeed, these front-loaded costs slow economic growth with higher inflation and higher interest rates, which overwhelm the benefits the proposal hoped to gain in later years.The bill’s taxes, penalties, and fees on investors and businesses will decrease the amount of investment in the economy. This reduced investment will in turn lead to a decline in productivity, causing the economy to produce $706 billion less worth of goods and services. A smaller economic pie means that workers earn lower wages and salaries. Higher taxes on investment also put upward pressure on interest rates as investors seek to achieve their after-tax desired rate of return.[1] Lower wages reduce the amount of taxable income that could otherwise have been achieved. This will both increase the deficit and grow the total debt—which in turn puts upward pressure on interest rates and crowds out some savings that could have gone to new productive business investments. Higher interest rates mean that more American tax dollars will go toward paying the interest on the federal debt rather than paying down the principal. Simulations using dynamic analysis estimate that the government would spend an average $23 billion more per year on interest rate payments over the 2010–2020 year window than it would without the PPACA. Once the government begins paying for health insurance for individuals through subsidies and bringing people into the government insurance programs in the latter half of the decade, this growing debt will balloon. By the end of the 10 years, debt held by the public will be $753 billion higher than it otherwise would have been.

**Affordable Care Act kills the economy – it kills small businesses and job growth**

**The Capitol Column, 2012** (Staff, White House Issues veto threat on health care repeal, 7/9/12, <http://www.capitolcolumn.com/news/white-house-issues-veto-threat-on-health-care-repeal/>, 7/9/12)

“The health care law, which carries an astronomical price tag and a mess of regulations, taxes and fees, fosters a climate of uncertainty and instability throughout our economy.  According to the US Chamber of Commerce, 74 percent of small businesses say this law makes it more difficult to hire new employees.  A big part of the problem came to light recently when the United States Supreme Court ruled that the mandate at the heart of this law is actually a massive tax,” said New York Congresswoman Ann Marie Buerkle who delivered the weekly Republican address on Saturday. “If a town hall meeting I held earlier in the week is any indication, this vote can’t come soon enough.  The president may think this matter is settled, but for the hardworking taxpayers and small business owners in my district, anxiety over his health care law is only growing more and more palpable.” Despite the Republican backlash that was caused by the SCOTUS decision to uphold the Affordable Care Act, Mr. Obama has remained firm in his support of the law and has repeatedly stated in campaign speeches since the ruling that the law is “here to stay.” Democrats and the president believe that the law gives access to affordable health insurance for millions of uninsured Americans, while Republicans argue that the law unfairly forces an individual mandate on taxpayers and will ultimately increase health care costs for all. President Obama has repeatedly expressed support for the measure, saying Republicans remain out of touch with middle class voters, whom the President notes support his effort to lower health care costs. The White House veto threat was met with criticism from top Republicans. On Monday House Speaker John Boehner kept up with his criticism of the health care law, taking to his Twitter account to voice his frustration. “#Obamacare ‘making it more difficult’ to hire ‘at a time when we need job growth,’ tweeted Mr. Boehner, along with an article from The Fiscal Times slamming the health care law.

# Jackson Vanik

## Jackson Vanik Will Pass

**Jackson Vanik Repeal even linked with Magnitsky will pass – bipart support and WTO**

**Needham 7/18** –Staff Writer for The Hill (Vicki, The Hill is a Newspaper especially for politics, Senate Finance Poised to approve Russia trade bill, 7/18/12, 7/21/12, http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/238651-senate-finance-poised-to-approve-russia-trade-bill)

Senators were poised Wednesday to clear the first hurdle to extend permanent normal trade relations to Russia, but plenty of uncertainty remains.  The Senate Finance Committee is expected to easily approve a measure combining a repeal of Jackson-Vanik, an obsolete Cold War-era provision, along with a human-rights measure that would punish Russian officials involved in the death of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who died in prison. "By enacting PNTR together with the Magnitsky bill, we are replacing Jackson-Vanik with legislation that addresses the corruption and accountability issues that Russia confronts today," Senate Finance Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) said.  The show of bipartisan support — Baucus and ranking member Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) hammered out the compromise — could boost the bill's chances of getting through Congress before lawmakers leave for a month-long August recess. Russia is on track to join the World Trade Organization next month. All that is left for its accession is for President Vladimir Putin to sign the package, which passed through Russia's upper chamber on Wednesday. Once Putin signs, the clock begins ticking, and Russia will become a member of the WTO within 30 days.

**Jackson Vanik and Magnitsky will pass – essential to benefits of Russia’s entrance of WTO**

**Pifer 6/29** - former ambassador to Ukraine (Steven , Steven Pifer is director of the Brookings Arms Control Initiative and a senior fellow in the Center on the United States and Europe. A former ambassador to Ukraine, Pifer’s career as a foreign service officer centered on Europe, the former Soviet Union and arms control. Pifer also had postings in London, Moscow, Geneva and Warsaw, as well as on the National Security Council. At Brookings, Pifer focuses on arms control, Ukraine and Russia issues., Brookings fellow Steven Pifer: Burying the Magnitsky bill’s message, The Hill, <http://thehill.com/blogs/global-affairs/guest-commentary/235549-brookings-fellow-steven-pifer-burying-the-magnitsky-bills-message>, 6/29/12, 7/28/12)

Congress appears ready to take long-overdue action to graduate Russia from the provisions of the Jackson-Vanik amendment. At the same time, both the Senate and House seem intent on coupling that with passage of the Magnitsky human-rights bill, which would sanction Russian officials involved in the 2009 death of Sergei Magnitsky in a Moscow prison. Unfortunately, by linking these measures, Congress will obscure the message that it seeks to send the Russian government. The two measures should be decoupled. Congress passed the Jackson-Vanik amendment in 1974, denying permanent normal trade relations status to the Soviet Union and other countries that restricted emigration of religious minorities. Congress adopted the legislation primarily to press the Soviet government to allow Soviet Jews the freedom to emigrate, something that the Moscow authorities routinely denied. This changed after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia opened the gates in the early 1990s, and Moscow allowed virtually any Russian Jew to depart. Hundreds of thousands did, mainly for Israel and the United States. While Russia has slid badly backwards on democracy issues since Vladimir Putin first became president in 2000, emigration remains unrestricted. The Clinton administration found Russia to be in compliance with the Jackson-Vanik amendment in 1994. By the end of the 1990s, Russia merited full graduation. The George W. Bush administration made half-hearted efforts to push Congress to adopt the appropriate legislation in 2002 and 2003, but an ill-timed Russian ban on chicken imports and White House reluctance to engage the president directly with the congressional leadership undercut those attempts. Congress now has little choice but to act. When Russia enters the World Trade Organization this summer, continued application of Jackson-Vanik would mean that the United States is not according permanent normal trade relations status to Russia. As a result, U.S. companies exporting to Russia would not be able to benefit from World Trade Organization tariffs or dispute-resolution mechanisms. Essentially, Jackson-Vanik would then become a sanction on American business.

**Will pass—bipartisan support, Russian WTO entry, and August Recess**

**The Hill 7/22** [“Optimism grows Russia trade bill will pass before August recess,” Web, 7/22/12, http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/239335-optimism-grows-that-congress-can-pass-russia-trade-bill-before-august-recess, 7/29/12]

Optimism is rising among lawmakers and trade advocates that Congress can pass a Russian trade bill before the August recess. The bill to normalize trade relations with Moscow, which appeared hopelessly stalled before a Senate Finance Committee markup, found new life after winning unanimous support among panel members following an agreement crafted by Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and top Republican Orrin Hatch of Utah.

While actions last week — moving the joint trade and human rights bill through Senate Finance and locking in a bipartisan deal in the House — provide greater hope that Congress can get a bill to President Obama's desk before Russia joins the World Trade Organization next month, lawmakers are running short on time.

"I remain confident this will get done by the August recess," Christopher Wenk, head of international policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce told The Hill on Friday. "The Chamber won’t let Congress leave town without getting it done."The broad support in the Senate Finance Committee for a bill that combines the repeal of the 37-year-old Jackson-Vanik provision to grant permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) with a measure that punishes Russian officials involved in the death of whistleblower lawyer Sergei Magnitsky seemed to simultaneously surprise trade watchers and pave the way for a final resolution.

**Will pass—Repeal is key to the US businesses and competitiveness**

**The Hill 7/22** [“Optimism grows Russia trade bill will pass before August recess,” Web, 7/22/12, http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/239335-optimism-grows-that-congress-can-pass-russia-trade-bill-before-august-recess, 7/29/12]

House passage of merged legislation will require quick action in the Senate and must get a commitment from Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) for a vote. He would only say this week that he is looking very closely at the bill. For the past several weeks, business groups such as the U.S. Chamber and Business Roundtable have ramped up their efforts to move the bill before Russia ends its 18-year quest to join the WTO.

“Clearly there is tremendous opportunity to increase U.S. exports to Russia, which in turn, will boost the U.S. economy and drive job growth,” said Doug Oberhelman, chairman and chief executive of Caterpillar, and chairman of BRT’s International Engagement Committee. “Without PNTR, all 155 WTO members — except the United States — will be eligible to receive the full benefits of Russia’s market-opening concessions,” Oberhelman said. Annual U.S. exports to Russia total about $9 billion per year, and are expected double within five years if Congress normalizes trade relations. "Unlike a free trade agreement, the United States will not provide any market access benefits, lower any U.S. tariffs, or make other changes to its trade laws as a result of Russia’s WTO accession," Baucus said. U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk said he is looking "forward to working with Congress to put a final bill on the president’s desk as soon as possible.”The White House, along with Camp and other House Republicans, had pushed for a clean PNTR bill, but the momentum has been shifting toward including a human-rights component.

## Won’t Pass

**Camp will block Jackson Vanik – he wants it separated from Magnitsky**

**Rogin 7/18** – Staff Writer for Foreign Policy (An Online Newspaper for Foreign Policy, Josh, 7/18/12, 7/28/12, Russia trade and human rights legislation advances, but time running short, The Cable Foreign Policy, http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/07/18/russia\_trade\_and\_human\_rights\_legislation\_advances\_but\_time\_running\_short)

The next step is for the package to be passed in the House, because PNTR is a revenue-related bill and all revenue bills have to originate in the House. Several congressional staffers told The Cable that Ways and Means committee Chairman Dave Camp (R-MI) is now the biggest obstacle to moving forward quickly because he wants to separate the PNTR bill from the Magnistky bill. "This has to be done by August recess," one senior senate staffer told The Cable. "It's all coming down to Camp. Camp is taking this line of being a trade purist and wanting a clean bill. The Senate is ready to do this -- the question is whether the House get its ducks in a row." Camp said in a statement Wednesday that he welcomed "the news that the Finance Committee was able to pass bipartisan Russia PNTR legislation today and will carefully study the bill once legislative text is available." Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), the head of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, has also said she wants to separate the PNTR bill from the Magnitsky bill, but for a different reason. She supports the Magnitsky bill doesn't support PNTR status for Russia. President Barack Obama spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin Wednesday morning, but not about the WTO or human rights, according to a White House statement. "President Obama called Russian President Putin today to discuss the developing situation in Syria," the statement said. "The two presidents noted the growing violence in Syria and agreed on the need to support a political transition as soon as possible that achieves our shared goal of ending the violence and avoiding a further deterioration of the situation."

**Won’t pass—too many moving pieces and too little time**

**The Hill 7/22** [“Optimism grows Russia trade bill will pass before August recess,” Web, 7/22/12, http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/239335-optimism-grows-that-congress-can-pass-russia-trade-bill-before-august-recess, 7/29/12]

Although the chances for the bill to clear Congress are looking up, and the measure represents a bright spot amid the legislative logjam in Congress, there are no guarantees, supporters caution. "Based on what I’ve been hearing, I wouldn’t say that they’re [lawmakers] confident about getting it done before the August recess," said Ed Gerwin, a senior fellow for trade and global economic policy at Third Way. While progress was made this week, there also are "a lot of moving pieces that would still have to break the right way" for the bill to move in time, Gerwin said. Baucus said he was "hopeful" the bill could be done before the summer break and that was before House Ways and Means lawmakers jointly introduced legislation on Thursday mirroring the Senate's repeal of the Jackson-Vanik provision. The panel doesn't have jurisdiction over the human rights legislation and will most likely attach the Magnitsky bill in the House Rules Committee. The House will have to move the bill first because the repeal of Jackson-Vanik includes revenue raisers such as tariffs, aides said.

## Won’t Pass August Recess

**Jackson Vanik won’t pass before august recess**

**Barkley and Boles** – Staff Writers for the Wall Street Journal (Tom Barkley, Corey Boles, Wall Street Journal, Russia Trade Bill Set to Advance in U.S. Senate, But Passage by August Recess Uncertain, 7/17/12, AD: 7/30/12, http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20120717-716996.html)

A Senate panel appears headed to back Wednesday the lifting of trade restrictions on Russia, but the White House faces an uphill battle in its effort to win congressional approval before its long-time geopolitical rival joins the World Trade Organization as expected next month. Several senators and private-sector supporters of legislation to approve permanent, normal trade relations with Russia said the bill is likely to clear its first major hurdle, by winning the backing of the Senate Finance Committee. But a number of senators cast doubt on whether Congress can pass the bill before lawmakers leave town in early August for recess, raising the risk that U.S. companies will be put at a competitive disadvantage in trying to win Russian business. Rising tensions with Russia over Syria, Iran and human rights issues are complicating passage, with senators of both parties looking to attach measures to the trade bill to punish Russian human-rights violators. "I'm very concerned about the human rights abuses and the bad behavior of Russia," said Sen. John Cornyn (R., Texas.)

## Top of the Docket

**Jackson Vanik’s On the Top Of the Docket**

**Needham 7/25** - Staff Writer for The Hill (Vicki, The Hill is a Newspaper especially for politics, Business groups keep up pressure to pass Russia trade bill , 7/25/12, Access Date: 7/28/12, http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/240115-business-groups-keep-up-pressure-on-to-pass-russia-trade-bill)

Business groups are optimistic that Congress can clear legislation to normalize trade relations with Russia by next week, but intend to keep up the pressure until it's done. The Business Roundtable and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce said Wednesday that repealing Jackson-Vanik and extending permanent normal trade relations to Moscow would provide a boost to the sagging economy. The bill is feeding off the momentum from the Senate Finance Committee, which unanimously approved a measure last week that combines the repeal language with the human-rights legislation that would punish Russian officials involved in the death of whistleblower Sergei Magnitsky, a lawyer who died in prison after reporting government corruption. Bill Miller, senior vice president of government affairs of BRT, called last week's 24-0 vote "unprecedented" and is hoping that the House Ways and Means Committee will approve its bipartisan bill on Thursday and send it to the floor early next week. "It looks like we are very close to getting Russia PNTR done," Milller told reporters. Passage in the House would give the Senate a chance to clear the bill for President Obama's signature before Russia joins the World Trade Organization on Aug. 22. He said the issue has been derailed too many times in the past and that it will hurt U.S. businesses if it is pushed off until September or the lame-duck session that is expected after the election. "We can actually get something done for U.S. companies that want to do business in the ninth-largest economy in the world," he said. Business groups agree that without PNTR, U.S. firms are increasingly disadvantaged going forward. David Thomas, vice president for trade, BRT, said inaction would be like sending a team to the Olympics but standing on the sidelines while the other countries participate. "We find ourselves within striking distance and our campaign continues to get final action next week," he said. U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk told the U.S.-Russia Business Council on Tuesday that failing to pass a measure "could jeopardize well-paying jobs here at home."

## AT: Top of the Docket

This argument is a blatant lie you will not win it

## Jackson Vanik – PC Key

**Political capital is key for Jackson Vanik—Obama needs to make an effort**

**The Hill 7/26** [“House, Senate leaders urge fast action on Russia trade,” Web, 7/26/12, http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/1005-trade/240565-house-senate-leaders-urge-fast-action-on-russia-trade, 7/29/12]

Yet House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) cast doubt on Thursday that the House would hold a vote next week because the White House hasn't made enough of an effort to get the bill passed. "We have a pretty busy week next week, and as I said last week, if the president really thinks this is an important issue and we have to deal with it, maybe he ought to be out there making the case for it. I haven’t seen that as yet," he told reporters on Thursday. The House is scheduled to be in session from Tuesday through Friday next week and the Russia bill, so far, isn't on the agenda. Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-Texas) told The Hill earlier that the White House has picked up engagement and has been pressing for passage. Still, after the markup Thursday morning, Camp championed the unanimous vote in the Senate Finance Committee last week and an overwhelmingly supportive voice vote in his committee as reasons to quickly resolve differences. "There is no reason to delay."

## Jackson Vanik Tanks Relations

**Jackson Vanik with Magnitsky tanks relations**

**Goodenough 7/24** – Editor for CNS News (Patrick, Russia Sends New Warning on U.S. Human Rights ‘Interference’ As It Prepares to Join WTO, 7/24/12, AD: 7/29/12, http://cnsnews.com/news/article/russia-sends-new-warning-us-human-rights-interference-it-prepares-join-wto)

As Russia’s 18-year quest to join the World Trade Organization nears its goal, the Kremlin is stepping up its opposition to a congressional plan to attach a human rights component to legislation designed to enable American companies to benefit from the WTO accession. Lawmakers hope to pass the bill and send it to the president’s desk for signing before the August recess begins at the end of next week. The move’s urgency was underscored Monday when Moscow formally notified the WTO that it had ratified its membership agreement and was therefore set to join on August 22. If Washington fails to grant Russia permanent normal trade relations (PNTR), U.S. firms will be left out in the cold while foreign competitors begin profiting immediately from the WTO accession of the world’s ninth-largest market. The House Ways and Means Committee is due this week to mark up a bill authorizing President Obama to establish PNTR and removing Russia from the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment, a Cold War-era provision that linked trade to free emigration for Jews and other religious minorities. But, to Moscow’s fury and against the advice of the Obama administration, lawmakers seek to attach to it a bill that would sanction officials from Russia and other countries who are accused of violations against human rights advocates and anti-corruption activists. Named for Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian whistleblower who died in custody in 2009, the legislation would establish a public list of rights violators who would be denied U.S. visas and have their U.S.-based assets frozen. The House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations committees both approved versions of the Magnitsky bill last month. The Senate Finance Committee last Wednesday unanimously passed bipartisan PNTR legislation combined with the Magnitsky measure. Introducing PNTR legislation in the House the following day, House Ways and Means Committee chairman Dave Camp (R-Mich.) and ranking member Sander Levin (D-Mich.) both voiced support for attaching the Magnitsky legislation to the PNTR bill before it is considered by the House. **Moscow has been lobbying energetically against the Magnitsky bill, and Russian lawmakers have threatened retaliation should it become law.** On Monday, Russian ambassador to the U.S. Sergey Kislyak weighed in again, warning in a column for The Hill – publicized by the Russian foreign ministry – that **it would “create new irritants” in the bilateral relationship. “**No interference in our internal affairs is going to be allowed (imagine someone trying to do the same to the American legal system),” he wrote. “**As a result of the Magnitsky proposal, relations between Russia and the United States might be burdened with additional difficulties. And it looks like the whole history of adopting PNTR might end on a sad note.”** During the Senate Finance Committee markup, Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) offered an amendment that would have delayed the PNTR bill taking effect until the president had certified that Russia had stopped transferring weapons to the Syrian government. It was not taken up. Cornyn earlier introduced a bipartisan resolution condemning Moscow for providing weapons to the Assad regime. Critics of the Kremlin’s policies have voiced reluctance to lift Jackson-Vanik without putting in place alternative human rights provisions. “The extension of Permanent Normal Trade Relations status and the repeal of the Jackson-Vanik amendment for Russia must be accompanied by passage of the Magnitsky Act,” Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) said last month. “As we take steps to liberalize U.S. trade with Russia, as we should, we must also maintain our long-standing support for human rights and the fight against corruption in Russia.” In the House, House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.) earlier this year accused the administration of handling Russian President Vladimir Putin “one concession after another and getting virtually nothing in return.” She expressed the hope that “Congress will not grant one more concession to Russia without first holding Moscow accountable for actions that run contrary to U.S. national security interests and to such foreign policy priorities as the promotion of human rights and democracy.” Freedom House president David Kramer told Ros-Lehtinen’s committee during a hearing in March that lifting Jackson-Vanik while having nothing to put in its place “would be perceived by the Kremlin as weakness on our part, a symbolic award to a Russian government undeserving of any such measures, and would undermine the very people in Russia whom we want to support.” The Obama administration has consistently favored PNTR legislation clean of human rights provisions, noting that the State Department had issued visa bans for Russian officials linked to the Magnitsky case in mid-2011.

# Cybersecurity

## Will Pass

**Will pass—the only problem is that changes need to be made, which are being dealt with now, and many backers of the bill**

**The Hill 7/26** [“GOP senators indicate they will move forward with the cybersecurity bill,” Web, 7/26/12, http://thehill.com/blogs/hillicon-valley/technology/240527-gop-senators-indicate-they-will-agree-to-move-forward-with-cybersecurity-bill, 7/29/12]

Republican senators are indicating that they will move forward with Sen. Joe Lieberman’s (I-Conn.) cybersecurity bill but aren’t committing to supporting its passage without changes. Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas) and Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.) said they plan to vote to move Lieberman's bill forward as long as amendments will be brought up when the bill is considered. A key procedural vote that will determine whether the bill moves to the floor is scheduled for Friday but may get pushed up to Thursday. Speaking on the Senate floor, Hutchison said the Republican backers of a competing cybersecurity measure, the Secure It Act, will vote to move the Lieberman's bill forward as long as there will be an open amendment process. She said the backers of Secure It Act plan to offer their bill as an amendment in the nature of a substitute. "I don't think anyone in our group wants to hold up dealing with cybersecurity. We know that America's systems could be under threat and some have been hacked into already," she said. "As long as we have an amendment process and are not shut out of this, we will vote to move forward to the bill." Lieberman and the co-sponsors of his bill have been huddling this week with backers of Secure It Act and other members involved in compromise efforts on cybersecurity. The senators met on Wednesday and held another meeting Thursday morning. When leaving the Thursday meeting, Kyl (R-Ariz.) said that he would vote in favor of the bill moving forward, assuming "that Reid keeps open the process that he has designated so far and I have no reason to believe that he won't." Kyl spearheaded a compromise effort with Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) to find a middle ground between Lieberman's bill and the Secure It Act. "The conversations are very productive, but obviously there's a lot of work to do and not very much time to do it," Kyl said. "I'm personally looking forward to getting on the bill and seeing how far we can go." Reid has said he is open to having amendments on the bill and hopes to vote on them next week. Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine), the lone Republican co-sponsor of Lieberman's bill, said she remained "optimistic" that the bill will get enough votes to move to debate and said the talks among members will continue. "We had a very good turnout of senators who are committed to helping to work through a bill. We don't have any decisions to announce, but we're having good discussions and those will continue," she said when leaving the Thursday meeting. "I remain optimistic that we will have more than 60 votes for the cloture, whether that goes today or tomorrow I don't know."

**Will pass—the modified bill now has Republican support and importance of cybersecurity outweighs potential doubt**

**Hoover 7/27** [Kent, Washington Bureau Chief for the Phoenix Business Journal, “Senate cybersecurity legislation modified to win Republican support,” Web, 7/27/12, http://www.bizjournals.com/phoenix/news/2012/07/27/senate-cybersecurity-legislation.html?page=2, 7/29/12]

Supporters of cybersecurity legislation think they’ve got a shot of getting it passed by the Senate, now that they’ve modified it to get more Republican support. Instead of directing the Department of Homeland Security to mandate new cybersecurity standards for critical infrastructure, the new version of the bill calls for a public-private partnership to establish voluntary standards. The bill “offers the reward of some immunity from liability to those who meet those standards,” said Sen. Joseph Lieberman, ID-Conn., who chairs the Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee. “In other words, we are going to try carrots instead of sticks as we begin to improve our cyber defenses.” Republicans and many business groups had objected to mandatory cybersecurity standards, contending that would increase regulatory burdens on businesses. Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, the ranking Republican on Lieberman’s committee, said the change to voluntary standards with incentives should win over enough Republicans in order to get the 60 votes needed to proceed with the bill. Lieberman said the bill now lacks some provisions he would have liked, but given the urgent need to protect the U.S. government and American businesses from a massive cyberattack, he was willing to compromise in order to get the legislation passed. “We did not want to lose the chance to pass a cybersecurity bill this year,” Lieberman said. The danger of cyberattacks is “clear, present and growing,” he said. Cyberattacks already are costing U.S businesses billions of dollars through theft and the down time needed to repair compromised computer systems, he said. Supporters hope the Senate will pass the bill before Congress’ August recess, and then work with the House to work out the differences between the two chambers’ bills.

**Will pass—everyone’s on board**

**Pakistan Observer 7/29** [“US senators revive cybersecurity bill,” Web, 7/29/12, http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=166252, 7/29/12]

Washington—A group of US senators has revived stalled cybersecurity legislation by offering compromises to address civil liberties concerns, an effort quickly endorsed by President Barack Obama. The new bill drew some support from Republican lawmakers amid a drive to pass legislation before the summer recess, but prospects for passage were unclear. Lawmakers said they hope to bring the measure to the Senate floor in the upcoming week. The bill aims to identify so-called “critical infrastructure,” including electric power and utility computer networks, and provide oversight to ensure these are secure from attacks. The revised measure removed some parts of a bill passed in April in the House of Representatives that provoked controversy. It calls for a National Cybersecurity Council to assess vulnerabilities and would create a voluntary system of reporting attacks that could be damaging to the nation. In announcing the compromise, Senator Jay Rockefeller called it “a critical first step in our country’s response” to cybersecurity.“We are moving forward in the spirit of compromise with an incentives-based voluntary approach because it is a crucial matter of public safety and national security that we do something now to ensure our most critical infrastructure is protected from cyber attacks.”—AFP

**Will pass before the August recess—bipartisan support**

**The Hill 7/25** [“OVERNIGHT TECH: Lieberman confident as Senate moves to cybersecurity, Web, 7/25/12, http://thehill.com/blogs/hillicon-valley/technology/240173-overnight-tech-lieberman-confident-as-senate-moves-to-cybersecurity, 7/29/12]

The Lede: Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) expressed confidence on Wednesday that his cybersecurity bill will clear a crucial procedural vote expected later this week. He said he is "increasingly hopeful" that the Senate will pass a strong cybersecurity bill before it breaks for its August recess. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) scheduled a procedural vote that could determine the fate of the legislation in the upper chamber. While the vote is technically set up for Friday, an aide for Reid said Republicans will likely yield back time for the vote to take place on Thursday. Speaking from the Senate floor, Lieberman said a meeting on Wednesday morning with skeptics of the bills, including Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas) and Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), was a "significant break through." Other participants in the meeting included Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.) and other members who have been involved in discussions on a compromise framework for the critical infrastructure provisions in Lieberman's bill. The two sides plan to talk again Thursday morning, according to Lieberman. "I'm very confident that we're going to get 60 votes on the motion to proceed, and now we've got the key players in the Senate sitting at the table talking," Lieberman told reporters. "Our staffs are doing some work under our direction overnight. We're going to meet tomorrow morning [and] we're going to keep meeting until we get it done."

## Won’t Pass

**Won’t pass—even the revised bill lacks support from the White House or from Republicans**

**Eggerton 7/26** [John, writer at Broadcasting & Cable, “White House Backs Cybersecurity Bill, With Tweaks,” Web, 7/26/12, http://www.broadcastingcable.com/article/487806-White\_House\_Backs\_Cybersecurity\_Bill\_With\_Tweaks.php, 7/29/12]

As the Senate continued to work on a compromise on moving a cybersecurity bill to the floor for amendment, debate and a vote, the Obama Administration issued its strong support for S. 3414, while offering a couple of amendments of its own. The Cybersecurity Act of 2012 is being championed by independent Joe Lieberman and four cosponsors including the ranking member of the Homeland Security Bureau, Susan Collins of Maine. But the other Republican ranking members on relevant committees are not on board." The Administration strongly supports Senate passage of S. 3414, the Cybersecurity Act of 2012," said OMB in a statement. "While lacking some of the key provisions of earlier bills, the revised legislation will provide important tools to strengthen the Nation's response to cybersecurity risks. The legislation also reflects many of the priorities included in the Administration's legislative proposal."The White House signaled it would not take kindly to amendments weakening any of the bill's privacy protections. "The Administration particularly appreciates the bill's strong protections for privacy and civil liberties and would not support amendments that weaken these protections. The Administration agrees that it is essential that the collection, use, and disclosure of such information remain closely tied to the purposes of detecting and mitigating cybersecurity threats, while still allowing law enforcement to investigate and prosecute serious crimes. All entities -- public and private -- must be accountable for how they handle such data." Senators on both sides suggested midday Thursday they were still talking and negotiating, with the primarily Democratic backers of the bill saying they had made concessions, including making cybersecurity guidelines voluntary, and the opposition saying they were voluntary in name only. But the White House said it would not support amendments "(1) reducing the Federal Government's existing roles and responsibilities in coordinating and endorsing the outcome-based cybersecurity practices; (2) weakening the statutory authorities of the Department of Homeland Security to accomplish its critical infrastructure protection mission; or (3) substantially expanding the narrowly-tailored liability protections for private sector entities." Republicans argue that private industry needs broad liability protections from antitrust concerns over competitive issues arising from sharing info with the government or each other. The White House argues that "overly broad" industry immunity "would undermine the very trust that the bill seeks to strengthen." The White House does not support everything in the bill. OMB said it had concerns about provisions "purporting to prescribe the Executive branch's responsibilities in coordinating with foreign governments and conducting diplomatic negotiations." OMB said that should be changed to make it clear that the President "has exclusive constitutional authority to conduct diplomacy." It also seeks clarification on "protection of intelligence sources and methods, as well as information sharing and policy coordination."

## Top of the Docket

**Cybersecurity Top of the Docket – Obama, House, and Senate Push**

**Poremba 7/27** – Sue Marquette Poremba is a staff writer for NBC News Online in the security section, 7/27/12, (“What Congress Cybersecurity Bill mean for you”, accessed at http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/48351359/ns/technology\_and\_science-security/#.UBWz-7QkKIB, accessed on 7/29/12)

**President Barack Obama is currently pushing for cybersecurity legislation and has made it one of his priorities for 2012.** In a [July 19 opinion piece](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444330904577535492693044650.html)published in The Wall Street Journal, the president wrote, "It doesn't take much to imagine the consequences of a successful cyber attack. In a future conflict, an adversary unable to match our military supremacy on the battlefield might seek to exploit our computer vulnerabilities here at home. "This is the future we have to avoid," he wrote. "That's why my administration has made cybersecurity a priority, including proposing legislation to strengthen our nation's digital defenses. It's why Congress must pass comprehensive [cybersecurity](http://www.securitynewsdaily.com/438-white-house-america-needs-a-new-cybersecurity-force.html)legislation." Congress hasn't ignored the call. Members of both the House and Senate have introduced a number of bills in recent months, most of which are being hashed out in committees. As of this writing in late July, one piece of legislation, **the Cybersecurity Act of 2012, is expected to be brought up for debate on the Senate floor in a matter of days.**

**Cybersecurity is at the top of the docket**

**Peterson, 7/20** - Tech Editor at The Daily Caller Past: Social Media Editor at Meet Mrs. B, Scribe Investigative Reporter at The Heritage Foundation, MMA Contributor at Bleacher Report, Reporter/Nation, Heritage Foundation CAIR Workshop, Leadership Institute, Hillsdale College Summary Tech Editor for The Daily Caller. Peterson is a DC-based technology and investigative reporter, covering the intersection of...

 (Josh, [“Obama scares the hell out of everybody with cybersecurity op-ed](http://dailycaller.com/2012/07/20/obama-scares-the-hell-out-of-everybody-with-cybersecurity-op-ed/)”, 07/20/2012, The Daily Caller,[http://dailycaller.com/2012/07/20/obama-scares-the-hell-out-of-everybody-with-cybersecurity-op-ed/#ixzz222OWMLEt)//GP](http://dailycaller.com/2012/07/20/obama-scares-the-hell-out-of-everybody-with-cybersecurity-op-ed/" \l "ixzz222OWMLEt)//GP" \t "_blank)

**The president threw his weight behind the Cybersecurity Act of 2012**, which is sponsored by Independent Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman and Maine Republican Sen. Susan Collins, and favored by Democratic Sen. Majority Leader Harry Reid. After it was introduced in February, the bill was [opposed](http://dailycaller.com/2012/02/06/democrats-to-continue-internet-coup-with-new-cyber-bill/) by Senate Republicans and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for giving the Department of Homeland Security the ability to assess and set the security standards for power companies, utilities and other companies considered part of the nation’s critical infrastructure. In order for the bill to make it through the Senate, however, Reid will need the support of his Republican colleagues. Lieberman and several of his colleagues [reintroduced](http://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2012/07/senate-introduces-revised-version-of-the-cybersecurity-act-of-2012/) a revised version of the bill on Thursday that is **designed to meet Republican concerns** — particularly that government and the private sector should share threat information in order to bolster defenses against incoming attacks. The revision also attempts to appease critics of the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act — a bill that won favor in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives for its emphasis on information-sharing between the federal government and the private sector. Critics of the bill feared that such information-sharing provisions would violate civil liberties and privacy. The revisions seek to address those concerns as well. While lawmakers push to pass legislation before November, **the bill could see a floor vote as early as next week to make it in time before the August recess.**“So far, no one has managed to seriously damage or disrupt our critical infrastructure networks,” Obama wrote. “But foreign governments, criminal syndicates and lone individuals are probing our financial, energy and public safety systems every day.”

**Obama pushing cybersecurity - top of the docket**

**Smith 7/24** - cyber-security reporter at The Huffington Post (Gerry, Previously, he was a Metro reporter at the Chicago Tribune. Gerry has a master's degree from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, New Cybersecurity Bill Still Leaves Country Vulnerable To Attack, Experts Say, 7/24/12, AD: 7/29/12, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/23/cybersecurity-bill\_n\_1695185.html)

A Senate cybersecurity bill introduced last week removes a key provision from earlier legislation that would require companies to protect their computer systems, an omission that still leaves the nation at risk of a cyber attack, experts warn. On Thursday, a group of five senators re-introduced the cybersecurity legislation. An earlier version of the bill required companies who run the power grid, gas pipelines, water supply systems and other critical infrastructure to meet a certain level of security or face penalties. But Republicans opposed the initial bill, claiming it was unfair for the government to force companies to make costly security improvements. So the bill's sponsors said they compromised. The new version of the bill says companies can volunteer to have their security practices inspected by the government and can recommend their own security improvements, which would be voluntary. The Senate is expected to consider the bill later this week. But experts say the compromise means the bill does little to protect the nation from hackers. Without the government enforcing cybersecurity, companies are unlikely to strengthen their networks on their own, they say. The new bill "basically depends on the industry to make a good faith effort to improve security, and up until now they haven't done anything," said Joe Weiss, a security expert on critical infrastructure. "The question is, 'Why would you expect all of a sudden for that to change?'" James Lewis, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said, "The problem is the bill doesn’t give the government any new capabilities. You don’t need this bill. Nothing really changes." The bill's sponsors -- who said they removed regulations from the legislation to get Republican support -- expressed their preference for the previous bill, but emphasized that they believe the newest version would still be effective. "This compromise will significantly strengthen the cybersecurity of the nation's most critical infrastructure and with it our national and economic security," Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) said in a statement after the revised bill was introduced. On Thursday, President Barack Obama pushed for the bill's passage in an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal. He said the bill was needed because hackers "are probing our financial, energy and public safety systems every day." For months, the Obama administration has been pushing for new authority to enforce security standards in critical infrastructure. In March, Gen. Keith Alexander, head of the National Security Agency, told Congress the government needed that authority because critical infrastructure operators weren't taking even basic security steps, like updating software. Many experts believe the nation's vital computer networks are vulnerable to an attack that could lead to the collapse of the banking system, sustained blackouts or even mass casualties. Some have made comparisons to the lack of airport security before the Sept. 11 attacks. The threat appears to be growing. Last year, hackers broke into computer systems running critical infrastructure nearly 200 times, compared with 41 times the year before, according to a report last month from the U.S. Industrial Control System Cyber Emergency Response Team. Earlier this year, House Republicans also removed language from a cybersecurity bill that would have forced companies to meet baseline security standards. That bill passed in April. Lewis, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Senate Democrats likely acceded to Republicans' demands because time was running out during an election year. "They wrote the bill that was going to get the votes," Lewis said. "And in doing that they left out the most important part."

## AT: Top of the Docket

**Cybersecurity isn’t on the top of the docket – tax cut extensions first**

**Martinez and Sasso, 7/23-** Jennifer Martinez, Brenden Sasso are both staff writers for The Hill 7/23/12, (“This Week in Tech: Senators Push for Cybersecurity as time runs out”, accessed at <http://thehill.com/blogs/hillicon-valley/technology/239439-this-week-in-tech-senators-push-for-cybersecurity-as-time-runs-out>, accessed on 7/29/12)

The first item on the Senate's docket next week is tax cut extensions. But a spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) said he likely will move to proceed with the cybersecurity bill once the upper chamber wraps up the tax bill, which could come as early as Wednesday or Thursday. A procedural vote to move forward on Lieberman’s legislation is expected to occur on the following Monday, though no timing has been finalized.

## Deterrence Doesn’t Solve Cyber Attack

**Deterrence doesn’t solve cyber attackers- no credible threat and irrational actors**

Defense News 12 (Written Mar. 24, 2012; “U.S. Military Goes on Cyber Offensive”; Accessed July 30, 2012; http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120324/DEFREG02/303240001/U-S-Military-Goes-Cyber-Offensive)

While deterrence has served as a crucial policy for national security in a variety of domains, most notably nuclear, some experts inside and outside of the military question the likelihood of success if the concept is applied to cyber. “For deterrence to work, adversaries are expected to think and act rationally,” said Air Force Gen. William Shelton, commander of Air Force Space Command, speaking at the CyberFutures conference March 22. “There’s no guarantee that these players can be regarded as rational actors.” Shelton said that because of the difficulties in attribution, the U.S. would have a hard time proving it could find and harm attackers, diminishing the impact of touting offensive capabilities. “How do we put our own capabilities on display to show what could happen to our adversaries if they took unacceptable action against us in cyber space?” he said. “But without disclosure of a credible threat, our deterrent capacity is pretty weak.” Showing capabilities is a problem, said Jeff Moulton, a researcher at the Georgia Tech Research Institute, because of the ability of adversaries to adjust. “Once you use that arrow in that quiver, once you use that exploit, once you use that particular tactic, you’re showing your hand,” he said. “Cyber attacks, cyber exploits are disposable assets. You use them once and they’re pretty much gone, because once you do it people are very quick, they’ll figure it out, and they’ll learn how to block it for next time.”

## Cyber Attacks Destroys K2 Navy

**Cyberattacks devastate the navy- leaves ships stranded**

Aol Defense 12 (Written January 10, 2012; “Navy Warships Brace For Cyber Attacks”; Accessed July 30, 2012; http://defense.aol.com/2012/01/10/navy-warships-brace-for-cyber-attacks/)

Cyberwarfare remains the preeminent threat to U.S. naval forces around the world, Vice Adm. Richard Hunt, commander of naval surface forces, said today. The Navy, along with the rest of the Pentagon and U.S. government, are constantly pursuing ways to fortify government networks from cyberattacks. Many of these attacks are allegedly launched by China or their allies across the globe. Aside from protecting its key networks, Navy leaders are also looking at ways to keep the fleet combat ready in the wake of a cyberattack. Hunt stressed maintaining the readiness and resilience of Navy warships, even if critical communication networks are clipped due to a cyberattack. One strategy Hunt and other Navy leaders are exploring is extending how long a ship can sustain itself at sea without resupply. If a cyberattack cripples a ship's navigation and communications systems, it is essentialy on its own. A ship's crew can survive and fight without resupply or support for only a finite amount of time. Since there is no guarantee when that isolated ship will be able to reestablish comms with the rest of the fleet, service leaders want to stretch how long that vessel can fend for itself in contested waters, Hunt explained. "We need to find a way to work around that," he added.

**Cyberattacks destroy the navy- bases depend on the electrical grid**

**Ewing 10 -**(Written Sep 23, 2010; “Cyber boss says base utilities are vulnerable”; By Phillip Ewing – staff writer; Accessed July 30, 2012; http://www.navytimes.com/news/2010/09/navy-cyber-hearing-vulnerabilities-092310w/)

Naval bases are “very vulnerable” to computer attacks that could target the power plants or water works that serve them, the Navy’s top cyber boss acknowledged Thursday, vowing that Pentagon and fleet officials are coming up with a solution. Vice Adm. Barry McCullough, head of the Navy’s network-focused 10th Fleet, made the concession in an appearance before a House Armed Services Committee panel that met to hear how the military services are preparing for the oft-discussed new era of “cyber warfare.” He was responding to a question from Rep. James Langevin, D-R.I., who said that the U.S. electrical grid itself was generally vulnerable to cyber attacks. “These systems you discuss are very vulnerable to attack,” McCullough said. So far, Navy commanders have begin to ask Navy Installations Command to pick out critical points in base support networks. “Do we have a plan for an alternative power source, water source?” McCullough said. “A lot of this is single-source into a base, and if you take that away, while you have some limited backup power generation, it’s very limited for things such as water, sewer and so forth.” McCullough said he and his counterparts — he appeared with the top cyber commanders of the other three military services — were aware of the vulnerabilities, and he said they work with the Department of Homeland Security “to get at the root issue, and we’re working in that direction.” As Pentagon commanders determine which of their myriad agencies is responsible for defending which computer networks, Langevin said he didn’t want them to lose sight of the reality that they could be hurt by attacks outside of their purview. He cited a 2007 example in which engineers at the Idaho National Laboratory demonstrated they could use a computer attack to destroy an electrical generator in a power plant. “I hope we can pay particular attention to this,” Langevin said. “One of the vulnerabilities to critical infrastructure is the threat to the electric grid. So many of our bases depend on local power systems, many of them off-base, and if they’re not secure, then clearly our bases are not going to be secure.”

# Farm Bill

## Will Pass

**Farm Bill Will Pass – Drought Proves, Bipart Support**

**Thompson 7/20** –Boyce Thompson is the editorial director for AG Web powered by Farm Journal, July 20, 2012 (“Deepening Drought improves Chance Farm bill Will Pass”, accessed at http://www.agweb.com/article/deepening\_drought\_improves\_chances\_farm\_bill\_will\_pass/, accessed on 7/29/12)

**The worst drought in a generation dramatically improves the chances that Congress will pass a farm bill this year** that preserves some form of price supports. The last major farm bill, passed in 2008, expires on Sept. 30. The Senate passed a farm bill three weeks ago, and the House Agriculture Committee passed its version last week. However, a vote in the full House hasn’t been scheduled. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in a press conference yesterday put the pressure on Congress to resolve its differences and pass a bill that would give the administration "more tools" to address the deepening drought crisis. The administration has declared drought disasters in one-third of the counties in the country, making them eligible for low-interest loans and other assistance. **A bipartisan group of more than 60 lawmakers in the House have signed a letter urging the House leadership to bring the farm bill to the floor** for a vote. The authors, Reps. Kristi Noem (R-S.D.) and Peter Welch (D-Vt.), wrote that the country needs strong policies in place "so that producers can continue to provide an abundant, affordable and safe food supply."

**Farm Bill Will Pass, brink now – It is unlike recent partisan legislations, bipart support, senate and house both like and all that is needed is an agreement**

**Malloy 21/12 –**Mike Malloy is a staff writer for Ames Tribune, July 21, 2012 (“Farm Bill has Solid Chance to Get Passed”, accessed at http://www.amestrib.com/sections/news/politics/farm-bill-has-solid-chance-get-passed.html, accessed on 7/29/12)

There is hope that Congress, for many Americans the epicenter of government gridlock, will pass major legislation with bipartisan support a few months before a presidential election. Unlike recent partisan showdowns, such as those over debt and health care, **Congress is poised to approve a new farm bill before the current one expires Sept. 30.** The two bills under Consideration reduce the federal government’s spending on agriculture over the next 10 years. The hay, though, isn’t yet in the barn. The differences in spending cuts and the election-year optics of passing a near-trillion-dollar spending bill, remain obstacles. The Senate passed a new farm bill in June that would reduce spending by $23.6 billion from 2013 to 2022. That cut, though, was a small piece of the $969 billion bill. The bill was approved 64-35, with 16 Republicans joining 46 Democrats and two independents in the majority. Of the 35 opposed, 30 were Republicans. Iowa’s senators — Democrat Tom Harkin and Republican Charles Grassley — voted yes. Last Thursday, the House Agricultural Committee passed its version of the farm bill, 35-11, which would result in a net cut of $35.1 billion over the next 10 years, the Congressional Budget Office estimates. Iowa representatives Steve King, a Republican, and Democrat Leonard Boswell voted in favor. Of those opposed, four were Republicans and seven were Democrats.

## Won’t Pass

**Won’t pass and would result in federal debt**

**Schow  7/25 –**Ashe Schow is the Heritage Action’s Deputy Communications Director, and a writer about things in congress and DC, July 25, 2012 (“Letter, Farm Bill Will Not Solve Drought”, accessed at  <http://heritageaction.com/2012/07/letter-farm-bill-will-not-solve-drought/>, accessed on 7/29/12)

Because of this, a coalition of conservative organizations, including Heritage Action, sent a letter to House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) urging him not to pass the trillion dollar farm bill due to pressure from the drought: “We write urging you to resist special interest calls to use the current drought to lock taxpayers into a trillion dollars worth of bad agriculture policy. As you accurately noted recently, passing a new Farm Bill filled with special interest entitlements is not needed to address the drought facing many of our nation’s farmers. “The challenging, yet predictable, drought conditions across much of the country must not be misused to expand an overly-generous federal role in agriculture. Agriculture already has a more than adequate safety net in the gold-plated federal crop insurance program in which taxpayers pick up, on average, 62% of the premium costs for crop insurance. These policies allow businesses to guarantee up to 85% of their expected revenue. Crop insurance cost taxpayers more than $11 billion last year. With more than half of the country in moderate to severe drought, taxpayer costs for this generous program will easily be double, triple, or more in 2012. “Agriculture is an inherently risky business, and as you said in your July 19th press conference, most producers already have subsidized federal crop insurance policies. Those that do not enroll in the highly subsidized program have a multitude of private sector options available for managing risk, including hedging, forwarding, diversification, contracting, and many other unsubsidized options. Taxpayers cannot afford to bail out producers who chose not to purchase subsidized crop insurance or to avail themselves of the many private sector options for managing their normal business risk.Taxpayers simply cannot afford to bear all the risks for any business sector, including agriculture. “The Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act (FARRM) passed by the House Agriculture Committee is not needed to address the current drought conditions. In fact, nearly 80% of the bill’s $957 billion price tag is not even directed at producers, but on social welfare spending programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Regardless of whether a Farm Bill is passed, crop insurance will continue to quickly compensate producers for the bulk of their losses. The bill should have been used as an opportunity to save taxpayers billions while reducing the manipulative role of the federal government in the business decisions of a vital sector of the American economy. Instead, the Committee bill obligates nearly 60% more than the last Farm Bill, creates three new taxpayer-paid “shallow loss” programs, and does nothing to rein in, and in fact expands, taxpayer-subsidized crop insurance. “Farm businesses are riding on several years of record farm income unlike other sectors in the economy. Net farm income is at $98 billion, nearly doubling between 2001 and 2011. Like all business cycles, farm incomes rise and fall as favorable growing years are periodically followed by poor years. Most farm businesses will not only be compensated by crop insurance for losses caused by the drought, but can also dip into savings wisely built up over years of record income. With concerns about tight commodity supplies, crop prices, especially for corn and soybeans, have risen to record highs and it is with these record prices that crop insurance losses will be calculated. In fact, some producers may see record profits when crop insurance indemnities are calculated. “Even with the drought, America’s agricultural economy remains strong. This strength and the glaring weakness of the federal budget – $15 trillion in debt and trillion dollar deficits for the next decade – make it even more essential that Washington’s role in agricultural policy be reduced. Now is the time to roll back wasteful and market distorting taxpayer subsidies. FARRM does the exact opposite. “Using the current drought as a pretext to bail out yet another sector of the U.S. economy while expanding the federal government’s role in the business decisions of agricultural enterprises is something taxpayers and our free-market economy cannot afford “Again, we urge you to resist special interest calls to misuse the current drought to lock taxpayers into a trillion dollars worth of bad agriculture policy.”

**Won’t pass – Republicans will delay**

**GFT 7/29** – The Great Falls Tribune (7/29/12, Online Newspaper, AD: 7/29/12, Blunt: Quick consensus on farm bill is unlikely, http://www.news-leader.com/article/20120729/NEWS01/307290052/roy-blunt-farm-bill-missouri?odyssey=mod%7Cnewswell%7Ctext%7CSpecial+Reports%7Cp)

What, precisely, John Boehner is thinking, we don't know. But we do have a message from the heartland for the Republican speaker of the House: His actions, which are delaying the House's consideration of the farm bill, are an example of why Americans want to throw both parties out of power. The House Agriculture Committee passed a bipartisan renewal of the farm bill earlier this month. But Boehner has not scheduled a time to bring the bill before the full House. Our phone call to the committee Wednesday confirmed that the measure remains in limbo. The Washington Post reports that the speaker doesn't want to slate a vote because the bill may create Election Day problems for some members of the GOP-led House. Some rural legislators don't want to be seen as curtailing subsidies to farmers, which the bill calls for; other lawmakers don't want to vote before November on a major spending bill. Never mind that some Republicans previously tried to limit subsidies in general, including to farmers. Or that the bill actually cuts $35 billion in spending, including direct payments to agricultural producers. Or that the Senate already has passed its farm bill, which is not sharply different from the House version. The speaker is playing politics. Shame on him, especially since he recently acknowledged that many farmers and ranchers are currently gutting it out because of merciless droughts. While this piece of legislation can't get them out of their bind tomorrow, they need to get some idea about what Washington has in store for their future.

**Won’t Pass –the House leaders delayed**

**Nixon 7/26** - Domestic Correspondent at The New York Times (Ron, The Caucus is the Politics and Government Section of the New York Times, Major Bill Delayed, House Works on Short-Term Farm Measure, 7/26/12, AD: 7/26/12, http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/07/26/house-works-on-a-short-term-farm-bill/)

Members of the Senate, which passed its version of the farm bill in May, have been waiting on the House to vote on the bill, and they say they are opposed to extending the current farm bill. Senators said an extension would delay the changes they approved in cutting farm subsidies and food stamps and improving crop insurance. Both the House and the Senate farm bills eliminate the $5 billion-a-year subsidies paid to cotton, grain and soybean growers whether they plant crops or not. House leaders have delayed the farm bill in hopes of averting a fight between Republicans over a proposal for steep cuts in food stamps and over the potential cost of the bill, which totals $996 billion over the next 10 years. The House bill would cut $16.5 billion from the food stamp program. The Senate bill would cut $4.5 billion. “If the House intends to send us a bill that will be used to negotiate the farm bill during August, I am open to that approach,” Senator Debbie Stabenow, the Michigan Democrat who leads the Agriculture Committee, said in a statement. “However, a short-term extension is bad for farmers and our agricultural economy.” “If Congress does what Congress always does and kicks the can down the road with a short-term extension, there will be no reform, direct payments will continue, we’ll lose the opportunity for major deficit reduction and we’ll deliver a real blow to our economic recovery,” Ms. Stabenow said.

**Won’t Pass – Peterson and Cantor will block it**

**Rogers 7/26** – Staff Writer for Politico (David, covered Congress for better than 30 years, is a graduate of Hamilton College and Harvard, 7/26/12, AD: 7/29/12, Farm bill causes all-out scramble, http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0712/78959.html)

Boxed into a corner on the farm bill, House Republicans scrambled Wednesday to find a path forward before sending lawmakers home in August to face drought-stricken producers — just months before the November elections. House Agriculture Committee staff met with their GOP leadership counterparts Wednesday morning, and there were animated conversations on the House floor later between Chairman Frank Lucas (R-Okla.) and Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.), who has been a obstacle to farm legislation. The focus now is on a one-year extension of the current subsidies together with immediate disaster aid for livestock and specialty crop producers impacted by the severe weather. But the cost and practicality of this approach are in serious question, and Lucas can’t count on the support of his ranking Democrat and strong partner on the farm bill, Rep. Collin Peterson of Minnesota. “I think of an extension as the worst idea that I have heard. And I will oppose it,” Peterson said. “I don’t see it gets us any place other than get them out of this corner that they’ve painted themselves into. That’s what this is about.”

**Won’t pass – Blunt will block it**

**Gulledge 7/29** – Staff Writer for News Leader (Michael, 7/29/12, News Leader, an online news site, Blunt: Quick consensus on farm bill is unlikely, <http://www.news-leader.com/article/20120729/NEWS01/307290052/roy-blunt-farm-bill-missouri?odyssey=mod%7Cnewswell%7Ctext%7CSpecial+Reports%7Cp>, AD: 7/29/12)

It is unlikely the House and Senate will come together quickly to pass a farm bill, U.S. Sen. Roy Blunt said Friday. “Before the August break, I’d be really surprised,” Blunt said after a speech at the summer informational meeting of the Dairy Farmers of America. The event was held at the University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center in Springfield. Blunt, a Springfield Republican, said three options remained — including passing a new farm bill, extending the current farm bill, or going back to 1940s farm policies, which he called the worst option. Currently, the House and the Senate have versions of the farm bill. The Senate passed its version, which Blunt supported along with Democratic Sen. Claire McCaskill, and the House has a proposal. The House bill favors southern crops such as cotton, rice and peanuts, and the Senate bill tends to favor corn and soybean farmers. “I hope the House can improve it a little bit,” Blunt said. Blunt’s main opposition revolves around nutrition programs, formally known as food stamps. “I think there’s still too much being spent on nutrition programs,” Blunt said. He would like to see the process reformed in the final bill. He also said he hopes for a farm bill that goes for four to six years. Disaster relief is also a concern. Blunt said that if the House can find a way to work with disaster relief by the end of July, there would be time in August to possibly reach a compromise. The liquidation of cattle also is a concern for Blunt, who warned that large sell-offs now would bring a decrease in the price of beef in the short term, but a long-term increase in cost. Some farm disaster aid programs have already lapsed.

## Won’t Pass August Recess

## Top of the Docket

**Farm Bill Will Pass and Top of the Docket – Bipart Support, Peter Welch, Drought Will Push, and Before the August Recess**

**CNBC 7/26**-CNBC will an internal citation of Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT), July 26, 2012 (“Will Drought Drive Congress To Pass Farm Bill”, accessed at http://video.cnbc.com/gallery/?video=3000105282#eyJ2aWQiOiIzMDAwMTA1MjgyIiwiZW5jVmlkIjoiWm1mVkkwSFlBS2FieitOTDNYUGoxZz09IiwidlRhYiI6ImluZm8iLCJ2UGFnZSI6MSwiZ05hdiI6WyLCoExhdGVzdCBWaWRlbyJdLCJnU2VjdCI6IkFMTCIsImdQYWdlIjoiMSIsInN5bSI6IiIsInNlYXJjaCI6IiJ9, accessed on 7/29/12)

There is a bipartisan effort among members of congress urging house leaders to bring the farm bill to a floor vote before congress departs for a five week august recess. The bill includes disaster assistance to farmers struggling. Democratic senator Peter Welch from Vermont is leading the farm bill. Great to have you with us. Thank you. To the average person they see corn price, bean prices, etc., reach record highs. They’re wondering how farmers are suffering. Well, they're suffering very much. There are really two issues here. One is the drought, and that is severe and brutal. The farm bill would be helpful. There is disaster assistance that would be available. But the second is that we need a farm bill for a five-year plan that would finally start reforming this direct payment system where we've been sending money to people for doing nothing. The senate passed a bill that got rid of those direct payments. The house agriculture committee on a very strong bipartisan vote passed a bill to get rid of those payments and now what's happening in congress is we're using politically the drought as an excuse not to pass a farm bill. That’s wrong. We should bring this farm bill to the floor. We should vote on it and we should -- we should let people bring in their amendments and act on it. Congressman, it's also in many people's view a deeply flawed bill. On the one hand you've got $16 billion in cuts to nutrition and conservation programs. Some chefs have been writing letters, high profile chefs writing letters about that. You have $36 billion on new farm subsidies without reform of the federal crop insurance program, which is a huge issue for many people. Isn’t the danger that you use this crisis to push through bad legislation? Well, actually, that is a danger. The two points that you made are totally valid points, and the bill is flawed. But the process has to work. There are improvements in the farm bill in that we've reduced the payments, but there are many who argue and actually I agree that we could reduce them more. There are many who argue that the food stamp cuts are way too high. I actually agree with that. But my position is this, America needs a farm bill. Congress has to act. We should bring this to the floor and let both sides present their amendments and we may end up saving food stamps and we may end up providing more savings. Then go into conference with the senate. But to do nothing is an unacceptable option and it seems to be the preferred option for congress. We’ve got a job to do. The fact that it's a hard job is not an excuse to not do it. Yeah, but it might help if you separated out the two processes. So you hammered out a better bill because you agree it's not a great bill. In the meantime, you have some form of emergency relief for the drought stricken areas as I think might be suggested in bein's office. I don't think that's what's being suggested. If it were, that would be a reasonable approach. Basically I think what's happening is that there is an inability on the republican side, Mr. Boehner’s office, to get this bill to the floor. They don't know that they can pass it. They have a lot of division within their own caucus. Then the drought becomes an alternative. Do something on the drought, extend the current bill for a year. Incidentally, the current bill would extend and continue these direct payments to everybody on both sides of the aisle knows have to be ended. Literally doing nothing means that we maintain a very bad status quo. That’s not a good option. All right. Congressman, we're going to leave it there. Thanks for your time. We do appreciate it. Congressman it.

## AT: Top of the Docket - Won’t Pass

**Won’t Pass – GOP doesn’t want a fight before elections**

**Sherman 7/12** – Staff Writer covering Congress for Politico (Jake, He majored in journalism at George Washington University in D.C. but more accurately got a degree at The GW Hatchet, where he was the men’s basketball beat writer before becoming sports editor and, subsequently, editor-in-chief, GOP leaders may squash farm bill, Politico, 7/12/12, Access Date: 7/28/12, http://www.politico.com/reporters/JakeSherman.html)

The House Agriculture Committee has given birth to a 600-page farm bill that Republican leaders seem to want nothing to do with. And just months from Election Day, it could prove to be a headache for House GOP leadership. The bipartisan bill, which united Democrats, hardened conservatives, farmers and food stamp reformers in committee, is unlikely to see a floor vote, more than a half-dozen sources said. Publicly, Speaker John Boehner has been coy about bringing the farm bill to the floor — it would be messy, aides say, pitting regional and ideological interests against one another other in an election year. Officially, Boehner said “no decisions have been made” about if and when to bring it to the floor. Behind the scenes, the plan is far clearer. The committee’s product won’t see the light of day. Instead, Republicans are likely to try to extend the current farm policy that they’ve consistently decried as broken. And they won’t even do it this month, GOP aides say — they’ll likely wait until September. The reality is that GOP leaders are worried about a messy floor fight over divisive regional policies months before voters head to the ballot boxes. Odd couples could abound: The far left and far right would likely vote against the bill on the floor, the former thinking the bill cuts too much from food stamps, the latter insisting cuts aren’t deep enough. There’s also division over how much the government should be subsidizing the farm industry and whether it should control commodity prices. Arguing complex farm policy on the House floor in this political climate gives many Republican members pause.

## Farm Bill Bad

**The Farm Bill destroys family farmers, communities, and the environment**

**NSAC – 7/6** ­– National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (7/6/12, NSAC: Farm bill draft bad for family farmers, AD: 7/29/12, http://insurancenewsnet.com/article.aspx?id=349390#.UBWVvbRiqPO)

“NSAC is pleased that the farm bill process has started in the House and with some of the specific provisions in the bill, but we are overall very disappointed with the draft starting point,” said Ferd Hoefner, NSAC Policy Director. “This is an anti-reform bill -- bad for family farmers, rural communities, and the environment. It will need to be reworked very substantially to gain the support of our coalition of farm and rural groups as the process moves forward.” Under the draft bill, federal crop insurance subsidies would balloon to an unprecedented average of $10 billion per year -- with no subsidy caps, no targeting, no income limits, and not even minimal conservation requirements. “At a time when our nation faces record deficits, the draft bill is fiscally irresponsible, providing unlimited premium subsidies to the nation’s largest farms and wealthiest landowners.” said Hoefner. The draft bill would increase the commodity payment limit by 250 percent above the already generous Senate-passed levels, and unlike the Senate-passed bill, would leave wide-open the current loopholes that allow mega-farms and absentee landowners to collect farm payments. “Subsidy loopholes that enable waste, fraud, and abuse in commodity programs are alive and well in this bill,” noted Hoefner. The draft bill significantly limits the tools that farmers have at their disposal to deal with soil and water improvements in the face of increasingly unpredictable weather and production conditions. “A modern, fiscally responsible farm safety net would not just pay farmers for a loss but help them to prevent it in the future,” said Hoefner. “By cutting acreage for the Conservation Stewardship Program by a whopping 30 percent, the draft House bill is telling farmers to ‘go it alone’ if they want to be proactive about smart land management.” While the draft bill includes a Sodsaver provision to protect native grasslands, the provision is regional -- not national -- in scope. “The Committee has ignored the call by sportsmen, conservationists, and farmers for a national Sodsaver provision,” said Hoefner. “The bill includes a piecemeal Sodsaver provision that would cause administrative headaches and farmer anger over arbitrary lines and inequities.” The draft bill cuts in half the funding for USDA’s keystone programs for beginning farmers and minority farmers, and cuts funding for rural economic development by 88 percent when compared to the average funding levels of the past three farm bills. “Creating jobs in rural America and ensuring the success of the next generation of farmers are national priorities for American agriculture,” said Hoefner, “but the draft House bill punts on funding for these priorities, leaving rural communities and beginning farmers in the lurch.”

## Short Term Farm Bill Bad

**Short term extension kills agricultural economy**

**Wasson and Berman 7/26** – Reporters for the Hill (Erik Wasson and Russell Berman, Wasson: Reporter at Inside U.S. Trade Reporter at The Cambodia Daily Editorial Assistant at Scribner / Simon and Schuster, Graduated from, Columbia University - Graduate School of Journalism Amherst College, Berman: an American professor of German Studies and Comparative Literature. He is the Walter A. Haas Professor in the Humanities at Stanford University.[2] He is also a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution.[3] He is the director of Stanford's Introduction to the Humanities program, Momentum builds for short-term farm bill, The Hill, http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/budget/240521-farm-bill-still-in-limbo)

Momentum began to build on Thursday for a House vote on a short-term extension of the farm bill next week, with key Democrats opening the door to supporting it. House Republicans have until now been unable to decide whether to try to pass a five-year reform bill, back a one-year extension of current programs or pass a pared-down bill that deals with drought assistance. Leadership this week floated a one-year bill, and House Agriculture Committee Chairman Frank Lucas (R-Okla.) has been whipping support for it. House leaders say that given opposition from fiscal conservatives and liberals, the votes are not there for a five-year bill. Rep. Collin Peterson (Minn.), the ranking Democrat on the Agriculture panel, has opposed a short-term extension but on Thursday opened the door a crack. He said he could support an extension if it quickly led to a conference committee with the Senate on a full bill. Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) then made her move Thursday, officially backing up that suggestion. “If the House intends to send us a bill that will be used to negotiate the Farm Bill during August, I am open to that approach,” she said in a statement. However, she emphasized that “a short-term extension is bad for farmers and our agricultural economy.” “If Congress does what Congress always does and kicks the can down the road with a short-term extension, there will be no reform, direct payments will continue, we'll lose the opportunity for major deficit reduction and we’ll deliver a real blow to our economic recovery,” she said.

## Farm Bill Doesn’t Solve

**The trillion dollar farm bill does nothing to help solve the drought if anything it makes it worse– won’t make it rain, or make crops grow, and handouts to farmers will hurt taxpayers**

**Schow 7/25 –** Ashe Schow is the Heritage Action’s Deputy Communications Director, and a writer about things in congress and DC, July 25, 2012 (“Letter, Farm Bill Will Not Solve Drought”, accessed at http://heritageaction.com/2012/07/letter-farm-bill-will-not-solve-drought/, accessed on 7/29/12)

You maybe have heard reports that there is a severe drought affecting American farmers right now. Perhaps you live in an area experiencing the drought. I have news for you: passing the trillion dollar farm bill won’t make it rain. Passing the trillion dollar farm bill won’t make the crops grow. And passing the trillion dollar farm bill will hurt taxpayers by providing overly generous handouts to farmers that are affected. In fact, 85% of farmers already have crop insurance, which is subsidized by the government. This new farm bill would just ensure they make a profit equal to 85% of their average earnings – even if the crop isn’t produced. And 80% of the farm bill doesn’t even have to do with farming! It pays for food stamps. How’s that going to help farmers affected by the drought?

# Tax Cuts

## Won’t Pass August Recess

**Tax Cuts won’t pass before august recess**

**White 7/30** – Writer for Politico (Ben, is Wall Street correspondent for POLITICO and author of the “Morning Money” column covering the nexus of finance and public policy, Top story: What will the Fed do? - Break up the banks, GOP edition - Corporate profits streak over? - Tariffs approved on China/Vietnam, Politico, http://www.politico.com/morningmoney/0712/morningmoney698.html?hp=l6\_b1)

Huge, massive, critical (and whatever other superlative you want to use) week for economic data and events. FOMC meets Tuesday and Wednesday with the announcement Wednesday at 2:15 p.m. Consensus is no new easing but perhaps an extension of low rate guidance well into 2015 ... Other critical numbers is the July jobs report out on Friday. Will it be another disappointment and blow to the Obama campaign? Few signals that it will be a blockbuster. But a dip in jobless claims suggests it could be slightly better than last month’s 80K. Consensus is 100K and no change in the 8.2% unemployment rate. Philly Fed predicted a negative number but other data do not confirm that gloomy signal ... President Obama campaigns in Ohio on Wednesday and Florida and Virginia on Thursday ... Obama is in NYC for a fundraiser this evening at the NoMad hotel ... Congress enters its final week before the August summer recess. Republicans in the House expected to pass their bill to extend all the Bush tax cuts to counter Democrats in the Senate who passed the Obama-favored extension only for those earnings under $250K ... Neither proposal is going anywhere ... Both chambers could approve a six-month CR to fund the government through next year and take the possibility of a government shut-down on Oct. 1, which neither party wants, off the table …

# Thumpers

## Jackson Vanik Thumper

**Obama spending his political capital on Jackson Vanik**

**Palmer 7/26** – Staff Writer for WKZO (WKZO is a national radio and news station, Doug is Secretary at Shoreline Chamber of Commerce, President at Shoreline Dollars For Scholars, House panel approves bill to upgrade Russia trade ties, 7/26/12, AD: 7/29/12, http://wkzo.com/news/articles/2012/jul/26/house-panel-approves-bill-to-upgrade-russia-trade-ties/)

A key congressional committee on Thursday voted overwhelmingly to lift a Cold War-era restriction on trade with Russia, but the top congressional Republican said President Barack Obama must do more to get the bill passed into law. The White House and business groups want lawmakers to approve the legislation before leaving next week for a month-long recess so U.S. companies can share in the full benefits of Russia's entry in the World Trade Organization on August 22. But House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner appeared to throw cold water on the idea of final congressional approval next week, despite the bipartisan vote in the House Ways and Means Committee in favor of the trade legislation. "If the president really thinks this is an important issue that we have to deal with, then maybe he ought to be out there making the case for it. I haven't seen that as yet," Boehner told reporters. The White House has said passage of the bill is its top trade priority. But the measure faces opposition from labor unions, an important Democratic constituency ahead of the November 6 presidential and congressional elections. "The President is committed to working with Congress to seek passage of this bill that will enable him to extend Permanent Normal Trade Relations to Russia and allow American businesses, ranchers, farmers, and workers to receive the full benefit of Russia's WTO commitments," White House spokeswoman Caitlin Hayden said.

## AT: Jackson Vanik Thumper

**Jackson Vanik and Magnitsky will pass – political capital not key**

**Pifer 6/29** - former ambassador to Ukraine (Steven , Steven Pifer is director of the Brookings Arms Control Initiative and a senior fellow in the Center on the United States and Europe. A former ambassador to Ukraine, Pifer’s career as a foreign service officer centered on Europe, the former Soviet Union and arms control. Pifer also had postings in London, Moscow, Geneva and Warsaw, as well as on the National Security Council. At Brookings, Pifer focuses on arms control, Ukraine and Russia issues., Brookings fellow Steven Pifer: Burying the Magnitsky bill’s message, The Hill, <http://thehill.com/blogs/global-affairs/guest-commentary/235549-brookings-fellow-steven-pifer-burying-the-magnitsky-bills-message>, 6/29/12, 7/28/12)

Congress appears ready to take long-overdue action to graduate Russia from the provisions of the Jackson-Vanik amendment. At the same time, both the Senate and House seem intent on coupling that with passage of the Magnitsky human-rights bill, which would sanction Russian officials involved in the 2009 death of Sergei Magnitsky in a Moscow prison. Unfortunately, by linking these measures, Congress will obscure the message that it seeks to send the Russian government. The two measures should be decoupled. Congress passed the Jackson-Vanik amendment in 1974, denying permanent normal trade relations status to the Soviet Union and other countries that restricted emigration of religious minorities. Congress adopted the legislation primarily to press the Soviet government to allow Soviet Jews the freedom to emigrate, something that the Moscow authorities routinely denied. This changed after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia opened the gates in the early 1990s, and Moscow allowed virtually any Russian Jew to depart. Hundreds of thousands did, mainly for Israel and the United States. While Russia has slid badly backwards on democracy issues since Vladimir Putin first became president in 2000, emigration remains unrestricted. The Clinton administration found Russia to be in compliance with the Jackson-Vanik amendment in 1994. By the end of the 1990s, Russia merited full graduation. The George W. Bush administration made half-hearted efforts to push Congress to adopt the appropriate legislation in 2002 and 2003, but an ill-timed Russian ban on chicken imports and White House reluctance to engage the president directly with the congressional leadership undercut those attempts. Congress now has little choice but to act. When Russia enters the World Trade Organization this summer, continued application of Jackson-Vanik would mean that the United States is not according permanent normal trade relations status to Russia. As a result, U.S. companies exporting to Russia would not be able to benefit from World Trade Organization tariffs or dispute-resolution mechanisms. Essentially, Jackson-Vanik would then become a sanction on American business.

## Cybersecurity Thumper

**Obama using political capital for cybersecurity**

**Poremba 7/27** – Staff Writer for NBC (Sue Marquette Premba, Writer for Security News Daily and NBC News, What Congress' cybersecurity bills mean for you, 7/27/12, AD: 7/29/12, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/48351359/ns/technology\_and\_science-security/#.UBWkHLRiqPM)

President Barack Obama is currently pushing for cybersecurity legislation and has made it one of his priorities for 2012. In a July 19 opinion piece published in The Wall Street Journal, the president wrote, "It doesn't take much to imagine the consequences of a successful cyber attack. In a future conflict, an adversary unable to match our military supremacy on the battlefield might seek to exploit our computer vulnerabilities here at home. "This is the future we have to avoid," he wrote. "That's why my administration has made cybersecurity a priority, including proposing legislation to strengthen our nation's digital defenses. It's why Congress must pass comprehensive cybersecurity legislation." Congress hasn't ignored the call. Members of both the House and Senate have introduced a number of bills in recent months, most of which are being hashed out in committees. As of this writing in late July, one piece of legislation, the Cybersecurity Act of 2012, is expected to be brought up for debate on the Senate floor in a matter of days.

**Obama pushing cybersecurity**  
**Peterson, 7/20** - Tech Editor at The Daily Caller Past: Social Media Editor at Meet Mrs. B, Scribe Investigative Reporter at The Heritage Foundation, MMA Contributor at Bleacher Report, Reporter/Nation, Heritage Foundation CAIR Workshop, Leadership Institute, Hillsdale College Summary Tech Editor for The Daily Caller. Peterson is a DC-based technology and investigative reporter, covering the intersection of...

(Josh, [“Obama scares the hell out of everybody with cybersecurity op-ed](http://dailycaller.com/2012/07/20/obama-scares-the-hell-out-of-everybody-with-cybersecurity-op-ed/)”, 07/20/2012, The Daily Caller, http://dailycaller.com/2012/07/20/obama-scares-the-hell-out-of-everybody-with-cybersecurity-op-ed/#ixzz222OWMLEt)//GP

**The president threw his weight behind the Cybersecurity Act of 2012**, which is sponsored by Independent Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman and Maine Republican Sen. Susan Collins, and favored by Democratic Sen. Majority Leader Harry Reid. After it was introduced in February, the bill was [opposed](http://dailycaller.com/2012/02/06/democrats-to-continue-internet-coup-with-new-cyber-bill/) by Senate Republicans and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for giving the Department of Homeland Security the ability to assess and set the security standards for power companies, utilities and other companies considered part of the nation’s critical infrastructure. In order for the bill to make it through the Senate, however, Reid will need the support of his Republican colleagues. Lieberman and several of his colleagues [reintroduced](http://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2012/07/senate-introduces-revised-version-of-the-cybersecurity-act-of-2012/) a revised version of the bill on Thursday that is designed to meet Republican concerns — particularly that government and the private sector should share threat information in order to bolster defenses against incoming attacks. The revision also attempts to appease critics of the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act — a bill that won favor in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives for its emphasis on information-sharing between the federal government and the private sector. Critics of the bill feared that such information-sharing provisions would violate civil liberties and privacy. The revisions seek to address those concerns as well. While lawmakers push to pass legislation before November, the bill could see a floor vote as early as next week to make it in time before the August recess. “So far, no one has managed to seriously damage or disrupt our critical infrastructure networks,” Obama wrote. “But foreign governments, criminal syndicates and lone individuals are probing our financial, energy and public safety systems every day.”

**Obama pushing cybersecurity and is top of the docket**

**Smith 7/24** - cyber-security reporter at The Huffington Post (Gerry, Previously, he was a Metro reporter at the Chicago Tribune. Gerry has a master's degree from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, New Cybersecurity Bill Still Leaves Country Vulnerable To Attack, Experts Say, 7/24/12, AD: 7/29/12, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/23/cybersecurity-bill\_n\_1695185.html)

A Senate cybersecurity bill introduced last week removes a key provision from earlier legislation that would require companies to protect their computer systems, an omission that still leaves the nation at risk of a cyber attack, experts warn. On Thursday, a group of five senators re-introduced the cybersecurity legislation. An earlier version of the bill required companies who run the power grid, gas pipelines, water supply systems and other critical infrastructure to meet a certain level of security or face penalties. But Republicans opposed the initial bill, claiming it was unfair for the government to force companies to make costly security improvements. So the bill's sponsors said they compromised. The new version of the bill says companies can volunteer to have their security practices inspected by the government and can recommend their own security improvements, which would be voluntary. The Senate is expected to consider the bill later this week. But experts say the compromise means the bill does little to protect the nation from hackers. Without the government enforcing cybersecurity, companies are unlikely to strengthen their networks on their own, they say. The new bill "basically depends on the industry to make a good faith effort to improve security, and up until now they haven't done anything," said Joe Weiss, a security expert on critical infrastructure. "The question is, 'Why would you expect all of a sudden for that to change?'" James Lewis, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said, "The problem is the bill doesn’t give the government any new capabilities. You don’t need this bill. Nothing really changes." The bill's sponsors -- who said they removed regulations from the legislation to get Republican support -- expressed their preference for the previous bill, but emphasized that they believe the newest version would still be effective. "This compromise will significantly strengthen the cybersecurity of the nation's most critical infrastructure and with it our national and economic security," Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) said in a statement after the revised bill was introduced. On Thursday, President Barack Obama pushed for the bill's passage in an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal. He said the bill was needed because hackers "are probing our financial, energy and public safety systems every day." For months, the Obama administration has been pushing for new authority to enforce security standards in critical infrastructure. In March, Gen. Keith Alexander, head of the National Security Agency, told Congress the government needed that authority because critical infrastructure operators weren't taking even basic security steps, like updating software. Many experts believe the nation's vital computer networks are vulnerable to an attack that could lead to the collapse of the banking system, sustained blackouts or even mass casualties. Some have made comparisons to the lack of airport security before the Sept. 11 attacks. The threat appears to be growing. Last year, hackers broke into computer systems running critical infrastructure nearly 200 times, compared with 41 times the year before, according to a report last month from the U.S. Industrial Control System Cyber Emergency Response Team. Earlier this year, House Republicans also removed language from a cybersecurity bill that would have forced companies to meet baseline security standards. That bill passed in April. Lewis, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Senate Democrats likely acceded to Republicans' demands because time was running out during an election year. "They wrote the bill that was going to get the votes," Lewis said. "And in doing that they left out the most important part."

## AT: Cybersecurity Thumper

**Will pass – compromise measures have been taken for the GOP to come on board – political capital not key**

**Fitzpatrick, 7/26** - a Reporter at Mashable's New York headquarters, where he covers the intersection of politics, international affairs, social media and technology. He initially joined Mashable as a Community Intern in October of 2011. (Alex, “[Cybersecurity Bill Inches Closer to Passing](http://mashable.com/2012/07/26/cybersecurity-bill-senate/)”, Mashable, 7/26/12, <http://mashable.com/2012/07/26/cybersecurity-bill-senate/>)//GP

The Lieberman-Collins cybersecurity bill moved one step closer to passing Thursday afternoon. The Senate voted in favor of a motion to proceed 84-11 after a lengthy and contentious debate. The bill now faces additional changes before being brought up for a full vote. The Cybersecurity Act, or CSA, is the Senate’s attempt to address cybersecurity reform. Senate leadership considers such reform a priority for the current term that ends in January. As written, the CSA would set up an optional program where businesses deemed critical to the national infrastructure (such as power grids) would be asked to meet cybersecurity standards set by a group of government agencies. It would also establish a protocol for government agencies and businesses to share cybersecurity threat information with one another. The bill originally called for government-mandated cybersecurity standards for key infrastructure with no opt-out. Senate Rebublicans considered that to be an example of excessive regulation. The opt-in compromise was **the key factor** in reducing Republican opposition.

## Farm Bill Thumper

**Obama pushing farm bill**

**Wallbank 6/7** – Reporter for Bloomberg (Derek, Reporter on Congress for Bloomberg, 6/7/12, AD: 7/29/12, Obama Backs Senate Farm Bill Ending Direct Payments To Growers, Bloomberg is a newspaper, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-06-07/obama-backs-senate-farm-bill-ending-direct-payments-to-growers.html)

The Obama administration today said it supports passage of the farm bill being considered by the Senate, legislation that would overhaul U.S. agriculture policy by ending direct payments to growers. “With authorization for farm- and food-related programs set to expire this year, it is critical that the Congress pass legislation that provides certainty for rural America and includes needed reforms and savings,” President Barack Obama’s Office of Management and Budget said in a policy statement. Under the bill approved by the Senate Agriculture Committee in April, direct payments -- made regardless of crop prices -- would be replaced with an expanded insurance initiative called the “shallow-loss” program. The change would provide the bulk of savings in the bill, which the Congressional Budget Office estimates at $23.6 billion over 10 years. The Senate cleared a procedural hurdle on the measure this morning, advancing the bill on a 90-8 vote. Dozens of amendments have already been filed to the measure.

## AT: Farm Bill Thumper

**Farm bill extension will pass – bipart support**

**The Hill 7-19** (http://thehill.com/homenews/house/238927-house-republicans-pressure-gop-leaders-for-farm-bill-vote. Mike Lillis - 07/19/12. “GOP pressures Boehner on farm bill.” The Hill.)

More than three dozen House Republicans — including a member of the GOP leadership — have joined Democrats to press Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) to bring the farm bill to the floor this month. Behind Reps. Kristi Noem (R-S.D.) and Peter Welch (D-Vt.), the bipartisan group of lawmakers says reauthorizing the bill, which expires Sept. 30, is necessary to ensure the nation's farmers "can continue to provide an abundant, affordable and safe food supply." They're also emphasizing the importance of food stamps in the down economy and arguing the bill’s farm subsidies will stimulate the economy. "Agriculture supports nearly 16 million jobs nationwide and over 45 million people are helped each year by the nutrition programs in the farm bill," the lawmakers wrote to Boehner, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.), House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer (Md.). "We have a tremendous opportunity to set the course of farm and nutrition policy for another five years while continuing to maintain and support these jobs nationwide." The letter was signed by 24 Democrats and 38 Republicans, including Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-Wash.), who is a member of GOP leadership as vice chairwoman of the House Republican Conference. McMorris Rodgers was recently named presumptive GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney’s liaison to the House. Of the 38 Republicans on the letter, 16 are freshman members who were elected in the wave election of 2010. Their support is notable because opposition from that bloc of lawmakers has often made GOP leaders reluctant to bring legislation to the floor. In a rare show of bipartisanship, the Senate last month approved its version of the farm bill, and the House Agriculture Committee passed a separate proposal with a strong 35-11 vote last week. But, in a scenario reminiscent of the transportation bill debate, House GOP leaders are wary of bringing the bill to the floor for fear that more conservative members will revolt over the spending levels. A wild card in the debate is Boehner's historic distaste for farm subsidies. The Ohio Republican voted against the 2002 and 2008 farm bills, saying the subsidies distort free markets. Boehner's office deflected questions about the farm bill on Thursday, noting that Cantor's office sets the House schedule. "We appreciate the hard work of the chairman and the Ag Committee and will be discussing the committee's product with our members in the weeks ahead," Cantor's office told The Hill. Meanwhile, rural House members are warning that time is of the essence. "The message from our constituents and rural America is clear: we need a farm bill now," the lawmakers wrote. "We ask that you make this legislation a priority of the House as it is critically important to rural and urban Americans alike."

## Tax Cuts Thumper

**Obama’s pushing for tax cuts – helps him in the elections**

**Contorno 7/13** - Staff Writer of Virginia Politics for The Examiner (Steve, The Examiner is a Washington DC Newspaper, Obama pushes tax plan, Romney critical of 'attacks', <http://washingtonexaminer.com/obama-pushes-tax-plan-romney-critical-of-attacks/article/2502088>, 7/13/12, AD: 7/29/12)

President Obama capitalized Friday on his ongoing fight with Congress over expiring tax cuts to light a fire under Virginia voters here who were so critical to his 2008 election fight and who he needs once again to win this November. Speaking in Hampton for the second time in less than a year, Obama insisted Virginia voters are facing competing visions for the next four years and painted his Republican opponent, Mitt Romney, as a wealthy man who planned to create jobs by cutting taxes for the rich. He called for Congress to extend the Bush-era tax cuts to anyone making less than $250,000. “This is the same House of Representatives that have now voted 33 times to repeal health care even though they know they can't pass it,” Obama told 1,500 people packed into a high school gymnasium, his second of three official stops Friday during a two-day swing through the battleground state. “They could take one vote to make sure your taxes don’t go up, and they haven't done that yet.”

## AT: Tax Cuts Thumper

**Will pass – bipart support – political capital not key**

**Washington Post 7/9** [ Washington Post, Ezra Klein, “On tax cuts, Obama decides to fight”, July 9th, 2012, Washingtonpost.com, accessed 7/12/12]

The Obama administration has faced a difficult choice: Does it put off the fiscal crisis looming at the end of the year by capitulating to Republican demands to extend all the Bush tax cuts until 2013 — a move that would infuriate the Democratic base and muddle the campaign’s message? Or does it stand and fight on fiscal policy, even if that means increasing the chance that markets panic in the most crucial months for the president’s reelection bid? On Monday, President Obama chose door No. 2, proposing a one-year extension of the Bush tax cuts for families making less than $250,000 and, through his press secretary Jay Carney, promising to veto any effort to “extend tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.” It’s a strategic decision that could have a tremendous effect on the economy — and thus on the president’s chances in the fall. Technically, we won’t hit the fiscal cliff — Washington’s preferred term for the near-simultaneous triggering of more than $600 billion tax increases and spending cuts, as well as the predicted point at which we once again hit the debt ceiling — until after the election. But the effects could be felt long before. The 2011 debt ceiling debate provides an illustrative example. Early in the year, the recovery seemed to be proceeding smoothly. In February, the economy added 220,000 jobs. In March, it added 246,000 jobs. And in April, 251,000 jobs. But as summer approached, and as markets shuddered over the Republican threat to breach the debt ceiling, the economy sputtered. Between May and August, the nation never added more than 100,000 jobs a month. And then, in September, the month after the debt ceiling was resolved, the economy sped back up and added more than 200,000 jobs. Payrolls weren’t the only evidence that the debt ceiling fight interrupted the recovery. “High-frequency data on consumer confidence from the research company Gallup, based on surveys of 500 Americans daily, provide a good picture of the debt-ceiling debate’s impact,” observed economists Betsey Stevenson and Justin Wolfers in a column for Bloomberg View. “Confidence began falling right around May 11, when [House Speaker John] Boehner first announced he would not support increasing the debt limit. It went into freefall as the political stalemate worsened through July. Over the entire episode, confidence declined more than it did following the collapse of Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. in 2008. After July 31, when the deal to break the impasse was announced, consumer confidence stabilized and began a long, slow climb that brought it back to its starting point almost a year later.” The uncertainty over the debt ceiling may not have been solely responsible for the slowdown in job creation and the drop in consumer confidence. But it surely contributed. The 2013 fiscal cliff has the potential to be much worse than the 2011 debt ceiling fight, if only because it also includes hundreds of billions in tax increases and spending cuts. The Congressional Budget Office projects that permitting those tax increases and spending cuts to take effect would throw the U.S. economy back into recession — and that’s before factoring in the uncertainty over the debt ceiling. All this is going to make businesses and investors very nervous. If they begin to expect a possible economic crisis in early 2013, they will start pulling back this year in order to cushion themselves. That could mean layoffs rising and investment falling in September and October — the most important months for Obama’s campaign. In theory, the Obama administration could head this off by agreeing with Republicans to extend current policy into 2013. **Republicans would have** **some incentive to play ball**, as **they also lost popularity after the debt ceiling fight.** Also, their presidential candidate, **Mitt Romney, is facing substantial fire over his tax returns,** which have highlighted the ways in which wealthy Americans can reduce their tax liability, and his tax policies, which further cut rates on rich Americans. If Obama signed his name onto the upper-income tax cuts in the months before the election, it would effectively take tax rates on the rich off the table in the election, as **both parties will agree on the issue,** at least through 2013. But with its announcement today, the Obama campaign signaled that that’s not going to happen. And that means no clarity for the market on how — or whether — the fiscal cliff will be resolved until after November. Some economists think the economy can weather the uncertainty — at least through to the election. ”It’s July now, and early November is soon,” says Wolfers, a visiting professor at Princeton. “While I can see the fiscal cliff having an effect on financial markets and on confidence fairly quickly, it’s hard to see that effect having much of an effect on the real economy prior to the election. Given that, if all you cared about were electoral math, it would make sense to go for the populist policy choice now.” Others question whether simply putting off the hard decisions would actually calm the markets. “Few believe there will be any kind of progress on this or any other major fiscal issue prior to the election, [so] standing his ground through the election should do no economic harm,” says Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody’s. “Most important, addressing the fiscal cliff (including the Bush-era tax cuts), extending the Treasury debt ceiling and laying out a credible path to fiscal sustainability should be done together. Addressing them one at a time will create more uncertainty, greater political brinksmanship, and ultimately a much worse outcome for the nation’s fiscal outlook and the economy.” The administration’s view is that it is trying to defuse the economic uncertainty by simply moving forward on the policies that everyone supports. “We all say **we agree that we should extend the tax cuts for 98 percent of the American people,**” Obama said. “Everybody says that. The Republicans say they don’t want to raise taxes on the middle class. I don’t want to raise taxes on the middle class. So we should all agree to extend the tax cuts for the middle class.”

# No DA – Partisanship too high

## Partisanship High Now

**Partisanship is High- both parties won’t agree on anything**

**Cillizza 6/04**- (“Partisanship doesn’t seem worse. It is worse.” The Washington Post, 6-04-2012, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/post/partisanship-doesnt-seem-worse-it-is-worse/2012/06/04/gJQAJIuzDV_blog.html>)

In 1999, the average percentage point difference between Republicans and Democrats on 48 values question in Pew polling was 11 percent. (In 1997, it was just a nine-percent difference.) By 2012, that difference had soared to 18 points. Here’s that data in chart form (and HUGE thanks to the Pew people for making these great charts embeddable!): What’s even more remarkable than that rapid growth in partisanship is the fact that there has been almost no noticeable change in other major demographic categories on Pew’s values question. White/black, men/women, religious/not religious — no matter where you fall in these demographic categories the difference between how you and your opposite broadly conceptualize values has not changed markedly since Pew started polling on this in 1987. Here’s all that data in a chart: Put simply: The country is growing rapidly more partisan even as our other traditional fault lines — race, gender, education — remain roughly the same size they have always been. And while it’s become old hat to attribute this growing partisan divide to the bases of both parties solidifying and forcing those who don’t see things through their ideological lens out, the Pew poll finds that the rise of partisanship extends to independents as well. “Even when the definition of the party bases is extended to include these leaning independents, the values gap has doubled between 1987 and 2012,”according to a memo released by Pew describing the findings. While people who identify with the two parties disagree on virtually everything, it’s on the so-called “social safety net” where they are at their furthest apart. Just 40 percent of self-identified Republicans agree with the idea that the government should “take care of people who can’t take care of themselves” — a marked decline from the 62 percent of GOPers who said the same in 1987. This stat will provide fuel to the fire for those who ascribe to the idea that Republicans have moved further to the right than Democrats have moved to the left and, therefore, are more responsible for heightened partisanship. But, Pew concludes that simply laying the blame at the feet of Republicans isn’t right either, noting, in particular, a rising secularism among self-identified Democrats. In the past decade the number of Democrats who say they have never doubted the existence of God has dropped 11 points and it’s an even more precipitous dropoff (17 points) among white Democrats. What does all of this partisanship forebode for the next five months of the 2012 campaign? Nothing good — unless you like nasty and vitriolic campaigns. One final chart from Pew shows just how apart those supporting President Obama and former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney really are. Check this out: So, essentially, the two parties agree on almost nothing — suggesting that no matter how the 2012 election comes out, the idea that the country will have decided on a new direction that most (if certainly not all) people can rally behind is a falsehood. Politicians in both parties are waiting for voters to tell them what they want on Nov. 6. But these numbers from Pew suggest the very real possibility that voters — depending on their party affiliation — want such opposite things for their government that the two sides may simply not be able to reconcile around any sort of broad solution. And that is a very scary prospect indeed.

# MISC

## California HSR Missing Senate Vote

**California High Speed Rail needs key vote in Senate**

**Reisman 7/5**- SF Examiner Staff Writer (Will, “ California high-speed rail funds face key vote in state Senate, The SF Examiner, July 5, 2012, http://www.sfexaminer.com/local/2012/07/state-senate-vote-could-make-or-break-rail-plan)

The state Senate will vote today on releasing $2.7 billion in funds for California’s high-speed rail project, a decision that will likely define the fate of the $68 billion undertaking. The California High-Speed Rail Authority and Gov. Jerry Brown’s plan to start construction on the project in the Central Valley has drawn criticism from some state senators, who said the money would be better spent in developed areas such as Los Angeles and San Francisco. For construction to start on the project next year, the Senate has to approve $2.7 billion in bond funds for the plan, and several informal polls of the legislators have found that the measure lacks the votes to pass. Dan Richard, chairman of the rail authority, told news outlets Thursday that if the measure fails in the Senate, the project is doomed. He said the federal government has made it clear that it will pull $3.3 billion in funding for the project if state lawmakers don’t back the plan. Without the federal support, the project would face massive funding obstacles. If the funding plan isn’t approved, the high-speed rail network won’t be the only project in jeopardy. The package before the Senate includes hundreds of millions of dollars for local transportation projects, including plans to fund Muni’s Central Subway, the electrification of Caltrain and the purchase of new trains for BART. The funds for local transportation projects were included largely to gain the support of state senators skeptical of the plan. On Thursday, the state Assembly approved the release of the bond funds.

## Supreme Court Helps No Candidate

**The Supreme Court ruling didn’t help either candidate – it mobilized bases, but didn’t sway independents**

**Beaumont, 2012 – veteran chronicler of presidential politics and the Iowa Caucuses** (Thomas, Des Moines correspondent for The Associated Press, Obama, Romney use health care ruling to rally core backers, Jackson Sun, 7/7/12, <http://www.jacksonsun.com/viewart/> 20120708/NEWS/120707008/Obama-Romney-use-health-care-ruling-rally-core-backers-, 7/9/12)

DES MOINES, Iowa — President Barack Obama and Mitt Romney both are using the Supreme Court decision upholding the federal health care insurance requirement, loved by liberals and hated by conservatives, to rally core supporters in the most competitive states in the presidential race. Yet **while each side may be benefiting from groundswells of volunteers and money, the ruling seems unlikely to sway the legions of undecided voters** who are focused heavily on the economy — not on the health care debate that has raged in this country for years.

## Hatch = Tax Reforms

**Hatch will strike a deal on tax reforms**

**Black 7/23 – Staff Writer for the Washington Post** (Aaron, Blakecovers national politics at the Washington Post, where he writes regularly for the Fix, the Post’s top political blog. A Minnesota native and summa cum laude graduate of the University of Minnesota, Aaron has also written about politics for the Minneapolis Star-Tribune and The Hill newspaper, Orrin Hatch and why elections have consequences, 7/23/12, 7/23/12, The Washington Post, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/post/orrin-hatch-and-why-elections-have-consequences/2012/07/23/gJQAybgc4W\_blog.html?wprss=rss\_the-fix)

Is the old Orrin Hatch back? The Utah Republican Senator, who survived a tea party challenge last month by focusing on his conservatism and voting in lockstep with his party’s ideological right wing over the last two years, appears to be shifting back into deal-maker mode, according to an AP report Monday. But Hatch’s spokeswoman is disputing the story. Regardless, though, the situation proves that old political adage: Elections have consequences. Hatch told the AP in a story published Monday that, if he is chairman of the Senate Finance Committee next year, he would be looking to strike a bargain on re-writing the nation’s tax code, and he acknowledged that concessions will be necessary. “Neither side is going to get everything they want,” Hatch told AP. “But it is important that we move ahead, and that we do the art of the doable to pull this country out of the fiscal morass it’s in. And I think we can.” The AP story says Hatch, in the words of the reporter, promises to “practice the art of compromise over the take-my-marbles-and-leave mentality that has tied up Congress in recent years” and contrasts it with his 2012 campaign, which stressed his uncompromising conservative principles. Hatch’s office this morning is crying foul, saying the report took things too far and that nobody believes the country’s problems can get solved without some compromise — particularly in a Senate where 60 out of 100 votes are needed to pass basically anything. “It’s a little frustrating, because Senator Hatch never – not once – said anything that would’ve lead anyone to come to the conclusion this story came to. Not once. Frankly, there was far too much editorializing in the copy,” said Hatch spokeswoman Antonia Ferrier. She added: “The insinuation that the only reason he’s conservative is because he was running is offensive and stands in sharp contrast with his record. You don’t get a 90 percent lifetime [American Conservative Union] rating for nothing.” But Hatch’s words are likely to raise eyebrows in the tea party and fiscally conservative community. This is, after after all, a powerful potential Senate chairman whom some on the right have viewed with suspicion in recent years. As the AP story notes, Hatch has a 100 percent vote rating with the ACU over the last two years, but prior to that was seen as more of a deal-maker. (His longtime friendship with the late Massachusetts Sen. Ted Kennedy was a point of irritation for many conservatives.) In truth, Hatch has never really been seen as a moderate, but merely being insufficiently conservative was enough to take down his Utah colleague, former senator Robert Bennett at the 2010 state party convention. And, emphasizing compromise wasn’t exactly how Hatch overcame his primary fight with former state senator Dan Liljenquist. Suffice it to say: If Hatch had made the same remarks he made in the AP story during the primary season, it might have given Liljenquist more momentum than the challenger was ever able to muster. For now, the right isn’t getting too worked up, though. The Club for Growth, which toyed with opposing Hatch this year but never got overly involved, hasn’t commented on what Hatch said. And the Tea Party Express, whose backing of Hatch rubbed some on the right the wrong way, is standing by its man. “There is this great misconception that the tea party opposes compromise,” said group founder Sal Russo. “For example, we supported the lame duck bill that extending the Bush tax cuts even though we thought some of the spending was atrocious. You have to be able to count your votes and set achievable goals.” Make no mistake, though: Hatch has a major role to play in future negotiations on budget and tax issues. And the Club for Growth and the tea party will be watching. Unfortunately for them, Hatch isn’t up for reelection again until 2018 now. So even if the 78-year old has designs on an eighth term in the Senate, it’s going to be a long time before he would pay a price for the compromises of 2012 or 2013.

## Rail Projects Key

**Winning on current railway projects is key to keep creating new rail projects**

**Laing 7/9**- (Keith, “Railway projects boost Obama transit push,” The Hill, July 07, 2012, <http://thehill.com/business-a-lobbying/236863-wins-for-railway-projects-boost-obama-transit-push>)

Supporters of President Obama’s push to build more railways in the United States are hoping that a pair of high-profile approvals will help get the president’s beleaguered rail effort back on track. After a string of setbacks for Obama-backed rail proposals since the 2010 elections, lawmakers in California and local officials in Northern Virginia last week gave the green light to controversial railways identified by the Obama administration as critical transportation projects. The railways — a high-speed line in California and an extension of Metrorail in the Washington suburbs — were approved after months of contentious debate in the jurisdictions where the trains will operate. Both projects have received money from the Obama administration but looked touch-and-go before they were ultimately approved last week. Rail supporters said they’re feeling the wind at their backs. “It’s kind of like baseball. You have a big win, you feel good and it gives you a spark to keep winning,” said Art Guzetti, the vice president of policy at the American Public Transportation Association. “Everyone feels good. You feel like you got past the test and now you can move forward to building the projects.” Guzetti noted that despite the focus on Republican governors in states such as Florida, Wisconsin and Ohio who turned down high-speed rail money, more than 30 states are moving ahead with rail proposals. He said the victories in California and Virginia could help change the impression that states are turning away en masse from rail projects. “Big news out of California. Good news out of Loudoun County [Va.]. And Friday you had the president signing the transportation bill,” Guzetti said. “You put all that together and you had a pretty good week.” Early last week, it was uncertain whether the California high-speed railway or the Metrorail extension to Dulles International Airport would ever see the light of day. When President Obama awarded $8 billion from the 2009 stimulus package to states that were proposing to build high-speed railways, California received more than $3 billion, more than any other state. The Obama administration separately gave $900 million to the Metrorail project, which is already under construction and is one of the largest transportation projects in the nation. Republicans in Congress and in Virginia and California have questioned the viability of the projects, however. The House approved an amendment earlier this year to prevent any of the money in a surface transportation bill from going to the California railway. At the same time, Republicans in Loudoun County, where the new Metro line will culminate, threatened to opt out of the Dulles airport extension over labor rules for construction of the second half of the project. Smart Growth America Leadership Institute President Parris Glendening said there were definitely reasons for rail supporters to cheer the approvals. But most of them stem from the fact that the decisions were not being made by Congress, he said. “Unfortunately, I’m not at all confident the tide is changing at the national level,” said Glendening, a former governor of Maryland. “They seem to have [drawn] hard lines and become more polarized in their positions against … significant investments in rail.” By contrast, he said, local governments tend to view rail projects through a less partisan lens than conservative activists who have referred to President Obama’s rail proposals as “ObamaRail,” a pejorative that plays off the “ObamaCare” nickname for the president’s healthcare law. “I think there is a fairly significant tide going on at the local level,” Glendening said. “Local officials have their ear closer to the ground and they see that the public is generally supportive of rail. Since 2001, there have been 300 [rail] referenda that involve some kind of a tax increase, and 77 percent of them have been approved.” Glendening is familiar with fights involving local Washington, D.C., area jurisdictions and Metrorail construction. As Prince George’s County chief executive in the late 1980s, he negotiated settlements to legal battles that held up construction of the system’s Green Line in suburban Maryland for years. He said on Monday that Virginia’s current governor, Republican Bob McDonnell, should be applauded for lobbying for construction of the Metro system’s extension to Dulles Airport. McDonnell, a rumored possible vice presidential pick for Mitt Romney, pushed the all-Republican Loudoun County Board of Supervisors to vote for the rail line after the labor language surrounding the construction of the project was changed to his liking. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood also lauded the approval of the rail projects last week at the end of a busy week in transportation. “A pretty good week: sesquicentennial of Pacific Railway Act, #4thOfJuly, @whitehouse #transpobill signing, CA high speed#rail,” LaHood said in a late Friday evening tweet after the final votes in California. LaHood has doggedly made the case for the president’s rail initiatives in the face of staunch opposition from Republicans with whom he used to serve in Congress. He said in a statement last week that he hoped the California vote was a harbinger of rail approvals to come. “No economy can grow faster than its transportation network allows,” he said. “Californians have always embraced bold visions and delivered public projects that chart the way for the rest of the nation; [Friday’s] vote continues that tradition of leadership.” But contrasting the votes in California and Northern Virginia with the contentious negotiations in Congress over the recently approved surface transportation bill, Glendening said on Monday, “[W]e had to fight like crazy just to keep the transit situation neutral.”

## K2 Kaine Winning (Virginia)

**Obama is election is key to making Kaine win**

**Lewis 6/23**- (Bob, “Obama Emerging As Key Figure In Virginia Senate Race,” The Huffington Post, June 23, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/23/obama-virginia-senate-race\_n\_1621363.html)

RICHMOND, Va. -- The dominant figure in a Virginia Senate race that could determine the direction of Congress next year is President Barack Obama even though both candidates are former governors well-known to voters. Republican George Allen is trying to redeem his political career and win back the Senate seat he lost six years ago in a chaotic, slur-stained campaign against Democrat Jim Webb. His simple strategy: If Obama falls, Democrat Tim Kaine falls with him. Kaine was Obama's hand-picked chairman of the Democratic National Committee for two years. Their fates in November are linked in a state that both parties consider critical to winning the White House and controlling the Senate. That makes Virginia the perfect spending target for big-spending political groups on each party's side, a chance to bag two opponents at once using the same dollars. As go Obama and Republican Mitt Romney in the president race, so go Kane and Allen. Allen denies Kaine even the Virginia courtesy of addressing those who've held their office as "governor," calling him instead "Chairman Kaine," a derisive reference to his two years as head of the Democratic Party, one of them during his final year as governor. An Allen billboard in rural areas is even blunter: "Obama's senator, not Virginia's." "Look, for a quarter of his term as governor, he took on the most partisan job in our country," Allen said in a telephone interview. "He was President Obama's hand-picked chairman, and he's been an advocate for all the significant agenda items of the Obama administration." Kaine has never tried to disown Obama, though they disagree on several issues. He chafes at assertions by Allen and others that the two are joined at the hip. "It is not surprising that George is doing that," Kaine said in a telephone interview. "The last thing George wants to do is talk about the fact that he was a U.S. senator and he has a record as a U.S. senator and what that record was." Obama's drop in popularity over his health care law, stimulus package and clean-air initiatives despised by Virginia's coal industry have made the link to the president tougher for Kaine. "Everyone has a fantasy," said Virginia-based Republican strategist Christopher J. LaCivita. "Tim Kaine's fantasy is not to be associated with Barack Obama." Tying Kaine to Obama is a good Republican strategy unless Romney flops in Virginia, said Steve Jarding of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Polling by Quinnipiac University in early June showed Obama with a 5 percentage point lead over Romney in Virginia and Kaine and Allen deadlocked. "If Obama loses big, there's probably no way Kaine can win, and vice versa – if Obama wins big, there's probably no way George Allen can win," said Jarding, a Democratic consultant. Kaine's and Obama's hopes hinge largely on big turnouts by women and minorities. One-fifth of Virginia's electorate is black, and among that group, 9 out of 10 voted for Obama in 2008. Democrats hold an advantage among female voters, according to a Quinnipiac University poll of Virginia in June. Obama led Romney by 16 percentage points among women, and Kaine led Allen by 6 points.