

# **Immigration Updates – TFA**

**Negative**

## 1nc UQ

**Immigration will pass now --- sequestration won't thump.**

**Latinos Post, 3-1**, p. [www.latinospost.com/articles/13353/20130301/immigration-reform-news-2013-progress-bipartisan-bill-house-mean-vote.htm](http://www.latinospost.com/articles/13353/20130301/immigration-reform-news-2013-progress-bipartisan-bill-house-mean-vote.htm)

**Even as the sequester cuts begin, there seems to be** some **progress on** the equally contentious issue of **immigration** reform. Senate **Republican backers of the bipartisan bill** that provides a pathway to citizenship for many of the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the country have **met with their counterparts in the House** of Representatives **to try to win support for the measure**. Senators John McCain and Jeff Flake of Arizona and Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina spoke with more conservative members of the House in an effort to sway them. While nothing is certain, **McCain seemed pleased after the meeting, which included several strident immigration opponents**. "Senator McCain was glad to have the opportunity to update key House members and get their advice and recommendations on this important effort," said Brian Rogers, McCain's communications director. "He looks forward to continuing these conversations as we move forward." **Recent developments in the House show a weakening of the voting bloc that may bode well for supporters of reform**. On Thursday, **the House allowed a vote on** the renewal of the **Violence Against Women Act, which passed even without much Republican support. Previously, the House leadership would never have let the vote move forward** if they weren't sure of victory. **As similar result occurred when the House voted to approve relief funding for** Hurricane **Sandy** victims. Only 49 Republicans supported the measure, but it still passed with overwhelming Democratic support. **The same thing may happen with immigration** reform. In the case of the Sandy vote, refusing to bring the bill to a vote would have been too politically toxic for the Republican leadership, as well as for representatives of hurricane stricken areas. Rep. Peter King of New York nearly led a coup within the House pushing the vote through, and he was still unable to win over many Republicans from other areas of the country, whose conservative base has no love for the mostly-liberal enclaves hit hardest by the storm. In the same way, **it may turn out that the Republican leadership cannot prevent an issue like immigration reform from coming to a vote, not after Republicans lost 71 percent of the Latino vote** in last year's presidential election, **and not when** some **influential conservatives support the measure. And if Republicans cannot prevent a vote, Democrats need only a few like-minded voices** from across the aisle to join them.

## 2nc UQ wall

**Immigration will pass now—Obama is reaching out directly to congress to forge a bipartisan deal but he can't "waste political momentum" or squander finite political capital on the plan – new political environment incentivizes cooperation that guarantees successful reform – that's 1NC Latinos Post evidence.**

**FRAMING ISSUE – PC is the only relevant question because it means he can overcome all of the opposition their uniqueness evidence cites**

**Will pass – momentum from both conservative and liberals**

Jennifer S. **Korn** (Executive Director of the Hispanic Leadership Network. Previously, she served in President George W. Bush's White House as Director of Hispanic Affairs) **3/4**

<http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/opinion/2013/03/04/new-momentum-for-immigration-reform-with-conservatives-leading-way/>

**There is reason to be** cautiously **optimistic about the road that lies ahead toward immigration reform.** After four years of inaction, **the president is now focused on repairing his legacy with the Hispanic community. On the other hand,** after the lessons learned from the 2012 presidential elections, **a broad group of conservatives have embraced the concept of a long-lasting fix to our broken immigration system.** ¶ Across the nation, conservative governors are not only paying attention, but coming out in full force for reform. ¶ **There is new momentum for immigration**

**reform** and conservatives are leading the way. This week, the Hispanic Leadership Network (HLN), a national organization that strives to engage Hispanics on center-right issues, launched an advocacy campaign in support of fixing our broken and antiquated immigration system. The campaign includes a six-figure ad buy on ABC, FOX, and Univision. ¶ The ad, entitled "Be Part of the Solution," features former Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez calling on Washington to pass immigration reform "that grows the economy and respects the rule of law." Last month, Secretary Gutierrez resigned his senior position at Citigroup Inc. to become chairman of a pro-immigration reform super PAC. He will not only be an invaluable ally in HLN's advocacy campaign, but a powerful force in his own right as the legislative process moves forward. ¶ HLN's paid media campaign is only one of a series of initiatives aimed at growing our members across the nation and activating them to play a key role in the grassroots movement behind a bipartisan deal to fix our broken immigration system once and for all. HLN's members support the work of the Senate, led by Senator Marco Rubio, to achieve a reform that addresses the main problems of our broken system — strengthening our southern border, overhauling our legal visa system, implementing a viable temporary worker program, and creating a fair but tough plan for earned legal status. ¶ Also this week, HLN Co-Chair Jeb Bush will jump-start the public debate beyond the halls of Congress with the official launch of "Immigration Wars." In the book, Governor Bush and constitutional lawyer Clint Bolick lay out a strategy to do away with all that is wrong with our current system and have a fresh, new start. "Immigration Wars" offers sensible advice to all conservatives. ¶ **In the last few weeks, we have** also **been encouraged by the news of** other **conservative governors who have added their voices to the chorus advocating for immigration reform.** Those include Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin and Governor Bill Haslam of Tennessee. In calling for reform, it became evident that these leaders understand that immigration reform is needed to further our economic development. ¶ **In Washington, the push to overhaul our immigration system has now been** **embraced by the top brass** of conservative congressional leaders, from Speaker John Boehner to former vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan. Across the nation, conservative governors are not only paying attention, but coming out in full force for reform. Even in the media, conservative commentators like Sean Hannity have jumped in the reform bandwagon. Lastly, and more importantly, poll after poll shows that there is an increasing appetite among conservative voters to see this issue resolved. ¶ **This momentum and new appreciation for the changing face of our electorate should give** conservatives in **Congress the impetus to do what is** morally right, economically wise, and **politically prudent.**

**Will pass now.**

**McClatchy, 3-3**, p. [www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/03/03/184328/commentary-gop-must-embrace-immigration.html](http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/03/03/184328/commentary-gop-must-embrace-immigration.html)

**The wake-up call Republicans received** last Election Day **has the party and some of its more popular and strident leaders engaged in an "extreme makeover."** It was as if that alarm clock Nov. 6 rang with a Spanish accent and spoke so loudly that **the GOP was forced to rethink its position on one of its major wedge issues** -- the one many local and national politicians had used effectively to unite the most extreme segments of the party base: **immigration**. For some, like Sens. John McCain and Lindsey Graham, it's been an about-face from harsh rhetoric of the past and an embracing of a comprehensive immigration policy that may lead to a path toward citizenship for millions of undocumented workers. For others, such as Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer and other state executives who followed her lead in cracking down on illegal immigrants, it has been more a silencing of the lions. They're not roaring much about the issue. A lawyer friend of mine, who lives in Tarrant County but is actively involved in Dallas County politics, insists that members of the Grand Old Party have changed their name to make it easier for their candidates to identify with Hispanics when soliciting those much-coveted but elusive votes. They have become the "Republicanos," he says: It rhymes with "Chicano" and "Mexicano." **Most of them have seen the light, realizing that if they are to have a fighting chance in future elections they must attract more Latino voters**, 71 percent of whom casts ballots for President Barack Obama in 2012. Although Republicanos are advocating a "kinder, gentler" party, Hispanics are looking for action instead of words and symbols. The GOP has been promoting two of its fast-rising, high-profile Latino members of the Senate, Marco Rubio from Florida and newly elected Texan Ted Cruz, a Tea Party darling who opposes the DREAM Act and a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants but has advised Republicanos to soften their rhetoric on the subject. **Rubio is part of the bipartisan "gang of eight"** (four Democrats and four Republicans) **in the Senate who have pledged to draft comprehensive immigration legislation**, a move the president has welcomed. Rubio has been a more reasonable voice on immigration and will have an important role as the issue goes forward. **The president, after upsetting Republicans by leaking portions of a proposed immigration plan that he would put forth if Congress didn't act, has tried to make amends by calling and meeting with some GOP leaders.** Republicanos, while working through this -- and I believe they will -- must understand that just putting forth Hispanic faces will not solve their "Latino problem," especially when those faces are Cuban, a group that has not suffered the same under our immigration policy as people from Mexico and Central America. And they haven't endured the same discrimination as "Hispanic" American citizens from Puerto Rico. The major difference in an administration plan and one supported by Republicans is the "path to citizenship." Republicans are ready to talk about guest worker programs and legal "residency," but not citizenship. That is because no matter how many barriers are set up to full citizenship -- back of the line, years' long waiting period, etc. -- if the now-illegal immigrants ever become citizens, it will mean they gain that most precious American right: the right to vote. The true Republicanos can't stand that thought, and they believe that's the president's ultimate motive in proposing comprehensive immigration reform. They should stop resisting it and embrace it, knowing that the demographics continue to signal a fast-growing Hispanic population. **The Republicanos surely realize that pushing the snooze button on that alarm clock will not stop time -- or the inevitable change that is on the way.**

## Immigration will pass now

### The Hill, 2-28-2013, Landscape shifts on immigration

A **bipartisan** group of **senators** on Monday **said the political landscape for immigration reform has changed, boosting their hopes for passing a bill.** **Recent elections have changed his party's view on immigration, said Sen. John McCain,** a Republican from Arizona who led an unsuccessful push to reform the nation's immigration laws in 2006 and 2007. McCain said his **party's leaders and strategists are convinced they need to agree to some measure of reform to boost the party's image among Hispanic voters,** who voted overwhelmingly for President Obama in November. "As I've stated before, elections, elections," said McCain, who along with four colleagues spoke out at a Monday afternoon Capitol Hill press conference about a set of bipartisan principles for reform they had released with three other senators a day earlier. "The Republican Party is losing the support of our Hispanic citizens, and we realize there are many issues in which we think we are in agreement with our Hispanic citizens, but this is a pre-eminent issue for those citizens," said McCain, his party's standard-bearer in the 2008 presidential election. "We cannot continue as a nation with 11 million people residing in the shadows, and we have to address the issue and it has to be done in a bipartisan fashion," McCain said. McCain's point was underscored by Sen. Marco Rubio's (R-Fla.) participation in the bipartisan Senate group. Rubio is seen as a leading contender for his party's presidential nomination in 2016, and his endorsement of the proposals gives the group some cover from conservative criticism. **The four principles unveiled late Sunday include granting temporary legal status and creating a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants, increasing visas for skilled workers, establishing an employer verification program and setting up a guest-worker program for jobs** that cannot be filled by American citizens. They stem from negotiations Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), chairman of the Judiciary immigration subcommittee, kick-started with Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) after the election. Sens. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) and Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) have endorsed it. "The public's attitude has changed in four years," said Schumer. "Now they much prefer a comprehensive solution including a path to citizenship as well as fixing the border and doing the things we talked about. "The public is yearning for real change now," he said. The White House on Monday welcomed the principles, with press secretary Jay Carney describing the group's endorsement of a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants as "a big deal." While Schumer and McCain said the landscape on immigration reform had shifted, signs of the difficult debate ahead appeared throughout the day. Shortly after their press conference, Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), a senior member of the Judiciary Committee, and Sen. David Vitter (R-La.) criticized the Senate group's proposal. Sessions compared the

latest framework to the 1986 immigration law that granted legal residency to millions of illegal immigrants with the pledge the nation's borders would be secured. "That was the promise that was made in 1986, when the bill did pass. But it did not fulfill its promise," Sessions said. "So once again, I think that we're in a situation where the promise will be made, that people will be given immediate regularized status and they won't be given full rights of citizenship until certain laws are enforced and don't worry about it," he added. "But questions do need to be asked, and we will ask those questions." Vitter said he is also skeptical of the bipartisan principles presented Monday by McCain, Schumer, Rubio, Durbin and Menendez. "What heightens my concern is that we have history as a guide and history suggests this brand of so-called comprehensive immigration reform, this promise of enforcement as long as we have an amnesty, all those things put together is a recipe for failure," Vitter said. The sponsors have only agreed to a set of principles and still have to draft legislation, which will require hours of painstaking negotiation. The group hopes to draft a bill by March 1 and send it to the Judiciary Committee for hearings. Schumer has discussed the group's principles with Senate Judiciary Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), who will be key to moving it through the panel. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), who relied on a strong turnout of Hispanic voters to win tough re-election race in 2010, praised the framework and promised to play an active role in the debate. "I applaud [the bipartisan group of eight] Senators for setting partisanship aside to tackle a crucial issue facing our nation. This is a positive first step," he said. "I pledge that I will do everything in my power as Majority Leader to get a bill across the finish line." Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (Ky.) urged Reid to move immigration reform through the Judiciary Committee and not bring it straight to the floor. "This effort is too important to be written in a back room and sent to the floor with a take-it-or-leave-it approach," he said. Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) offered a less enthusiastic response than Reid. He said the House would review the Senate's work but stopped short of calling for comprehensive immigration reform. Rep. Lamar Smith (R-Texas), the former chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, panned the Senate proposal as amnesty and warned that it would encourage more illegal immigration. But other **past opponents of comprehensive immigration reform expressed a willingness to reconsider the issue**. Sen. Chuck **Grassley** (Iowa), the ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee, who voted against immigration reform bills in 2006 and 2007, **praised his colleagues for trying to find a long-term solution**.

### **Will pass --- compromise coming.**

**The Hill, 2-28-2013**, Cantor declines to endorse Rubio's immigration framework, p.

<http://thehill.com/video/house/281081-cantor-declines-to-endorse-rubios-immigration-framework>

**Rubio, who is part of a bipartisan Senate group that last week unveiled an immigration-reform blueprint, is leading efforts to sell the bill to the GOP's conservative wing. The Senate proposal entails increased security measures at the border and an exhaustive path to citizenship that doesn't allow illegal**

**immigrants to leap-frog** those who have already applied to come to the U.S. legally. GOP leaders, including Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio), have said they hope to act on immigration reform, but rank-and-file House Republicans are skeptical of proposals to grant citizenship, which they see as "amnesty." **A number of House lawmakers have also been working on immigration reform, with Boehner saying the bipartisan group "basically [has] an agreement"** after more than three years of secret talks. Cantor's comments come on a day in which he'll deliver a major policy address at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), where he hopes to put a kinder face on Republican policies and fully explain how those policies benefit citizens.

### **Will pass but Obama's direct push key to ensure effective negotiations – recent events prove**

**Liasson 2/20** – NPR national political correspondent (Mara, being interviewed by Steve Inskeep, "Where Does Overhauling Immigration Stand?", <http://www.wmra.org/post/where-does-overhauling-immigration-stand>,

STEVE INSKEEP, HOST: **Bipartisan groups and lawmakers are working together on** another issue: **Immigration**.

Yesterday, **the president spoke with several senators involved in negotiations** on that issue. But, at the same time, some senators criticized the White House for drafting its own plan for changing immigration laws. We're going to talk through this subject with NPR national political correspondent Mara Liasson. She's on the line. Mara, good morning. MARA LIASSON, BYLINE: Good morning, Steve.

INSKEEP: So is this becoming a partisan issue once again? LIASSON: Well, I think **immigration** reform, which was supposed to be **one of those rare issues that did have some bipartisan momentum behind it, still does**. But you can see **how difficult and sensitive this issue is**. Yesterday **the president**, for the first time, **had direct talks with three** of the four Republican **senators in that bipartisan gang of eight** in the Senate that's working on immigration reform. **He**

**wanted to get the talks back on track**. He managed to talk to Senators Graham, McCain and Rubio. Senator Flake was traveling so he didn't reach him. And this follows some pretty harsh reactions from Republicans to a draft White House proposal that USA Today obtained over the weekend. This wasn't an actual leak. I think it was a true scoop, and **this was the proposal that the**

**White House has been working on for some time, that they've always said that they would be ready to introduce if the bipartisan effort fails**. INSKEEP: Okay. So Republicans didn't seem to like this draft proposal. What was different in the White House's plan from what Republican and Democratic senators had been discussing? LIASSON: Well, there was a couple

things that were different. It's not contingent on border security, which is one of the key planks in the bipartisan Senate plan.¶ INSKEEP: Oh, saying that you can't do a path for citizenship (unintelligible).¶ LIASSON: Until you certify the border is secure.¶ INSKEEP: Right, right, right.¶ LIASSON: There's no guesswork or program. The length of time that it would take to become - for illegal immigrants to become citizens is eight years, longer than some pro-immigration groups may want, shorter than Republicans want. But those are the **flash points** in the immigration reform debate. They all **need to be worked out** and **there's nothing that the White House has suggested is non-negotiable** in this draft.¶ INSKEEP: Okay. So there's a lot of details here. The details can affect millions of lives. Let's remember that we're talking about an estimated 11 million people who are believed to be in the United States illegally, without documentation. The question is how, if at all, to legalize their status. You think, Mara, that the White House did not intend to slip out this draft into public debate, but there it is. So does that help or hurt the process?¶ LIASSON: Well, that's a good question. To hear some Republicans explain it, anything with the president's name on it hurts, but that doesn't really make sense because I don't think Republicans are going to vote for or against immigration reform based on whether the president supports it. **This is an issue that has momentum** because it's in the political interests of both sides to support it.¶ And then there's the notion that some Republicans believe that **the president** wants and issue not a bill. But I don't see any evidence for that. He **has tread very carefully on this issue. He hasn't demonized Republicans on immigration reform** as he has been more than willing to do on other issues like sequestration, as we just heard in Scott's piece. I think **the president does want to sign a bill, but he also has to prove to his own base that he is willing to move forward with his own plan if Congress is unable to come up with a bipartisan immigration reform proposal.**¶ He hasn't put a hard and fast deadline on it, but he has mentioned March as a time when he expects something to happen in the Senate.¶ INSKEEP: OK. So if he has to prove that to his own base, his fellow Democrats, does the release of this White House plan actually help things a little bit then?¶ LIASSON: Well, **it could help push things forward** in a perverse way, **because it provides some cover for Republicans**, particularly Marco **Rubio**, who's been a leader on this issue. He **was** very **critical** of the White House draft. He said it would be dead on arrival if they sent that up in legislative form to the Hill. **It allows him to position himself in maybe a more politically comfortable position, opposing the president's plan and saying he supports this bipartisan congressional package instead of the, you know, far left White House proposal** on immigration reform.¶ So you could make the argument that **this actually could help the process.**

## Momentum ensures quick, bipartisan deal – the plan will spoil the cake!

**Berman 2/22** (Russell, "Bipartisan House immigration group reports 'incredible progress'", <http://thehill.com/homenews/house/284409-house-immigration-group-reports-incredible-progress>, **A bipartisan House group is making "really good progress" on immigration** reform legislation despite missing a target date for an agreement, a top Republican participant said.¶ **I am now more sure than ever that we're going to have a bipartisan bill,**" a longtime advocate of comprehensive reform, Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.), said in an interview. **"We're making incredible progress."**¶ Diaz-Balart is a member of a House group that includes more than a half dozen liberal and conservative lawmakers who have been working for years behind closed doors on an immigration overhaul. As talks accelerated in recent months, people involved in the effort said the group had hoped to announce an agreement around President Obama's State of the Union address.¶ That date came and went, and now aides say that while **the talks are ongoing**, participants are not setting a deadline or target date for releasing legislation.¶ "There is no timetable. There is no target. There is no expiration date," a House Democratic aide said.¶ Diaz-Balart said that **the group hoped to unveil a bill soon** but, as would be expected with any sensitive effort of this magnitude, lawmakers do not want to go public prematurely. Members are also wary of setting target dates out of the fear that if they are missed, it will send a signal that talks have stalled.¶ Diaz Balart would not discuss details of the group's deliberations but said there are "still a couple of sticking points."¶ A light legislative schedule in Washington has slowed face-to-face meetings of the group in recent weeks, but **the hope is that the pace will quicken** when the House is in session more frequently in March.¶ Lawmakers know the rollout of an immigration bill can be nearly as important as the substance and are trying to draw lessons from the failed push to overhaul the immigration system in 2006 and 2007.¶ One major takeaway, according to one veteran of that era, is that once **a bill** is introduced, it **has to move quickly, because delay will allow critics to chip away at the proposal and unnerve the fragile coalition holding it together** in Congress.¶ **The longer there is** between the time you unveil the proposal and the time you vote on the proposal, **the greater the likelihood that it will wind up not making it all the way through to passage,**" said a former senior Bush administration official deeply involved in that effort. **"Once you've got this thing baked, you've got to**

**get it out** of the oven and into the refrigerator and start eating it pretty **quickly**. Because if you let it sit on the table — **I'm going to beat the metaphor to death** — **the ants will start eating the cake up.**"

While a bipartisan coalition of eight senators released a set of agreed-upon principles in advance of legislation, **the House group is working on legislative language in hopes of presenting a completed bill**. Members of the Senate group have said they **are hoping to unveil legislation in March**.

## Bipartisan bill resolves citizenship and border security issues

**Foley 2/21** (Elise, "Bob Goodlatte: Immigration Reform Doesn't Need Path To Citizenship", [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/21/bob-goodlatte-immigration\\_n\\_2734024.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/21/bob-goodlatte-immigration_n_2734024.html),

But **Democrats see a pathway as an absolute necessity**, as do groups advocating for comprehensive immigration reform.

**None of them think it should be automatic** -- **draft legislation from the White House would require waits of about 13 years**. The Washington Post reported -- but they argue that keeping undocumented immigrants from becoming citizens would create a permanent underclass of people unable to affect their children's education and other important issues. **A bill from the Senate "gang of eight" would also include a pathway to citizenship**. Although the group has yet to introduce legislation, **the framework released last month calls for provisional status for undocumented immigrants, followed by green cards once certain border provisions are met**. **The hope is that by tying green cards to border security** -- which would allow undocumented immigrants to eventually become citizens -- **the senators can avoid claims that the bill would amount to "amnesty."**

## Will pass – cooperation key to resolve remaining hurdles – no thumpers

**Roarty 2/21** (Alex, politics writer for National Journal, <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/02/theres-reason-to-be-optimistic-about-congress-seriously/273393/>,

What eventually passes and what doesn't will come down to the individual pieces of legislation. Observers believe that **immigration reform, already being crafted by a bipartisan group** of eight senators in the upper chamber, **has the greatest chance for passage**, because of the high stakes involved for the GOP. **But many caution that success will still hinge on the yet-to-be determined details**. Murkier still are the chances of passing gun-violence measures -- particularly banning assault rifles or high-capacity magazines, and strengthening background checks -- not to mention a grand bargain on deficit reduction. **What, exactly, would qualify as successful bipartisanship this year? Certainly, passing comprehensive measures on immigration, guns, and deficit reduction will need a shocking, even historic level of cooperation among the bickering parties**. But perhaps **congressional approval of even one of those issues**, while turning down the volume of usual partisan rancor, **might qualify as a success**, at least relative to recent sessions. Especially if lower-profile but still important items, such as the farm bill, can pass quietly into law without much wrangling between the parties. That might be all anyone can reasonably hope for on Capitol Hill. **It won't be Clinton and Gingrich redux, but even a faint echo of that period would stand out these days. "I'm not looking for heaven on earth,"** Glickman said. **"But I am more optimistic."**

## Reject their pessimism---prospects for passage are strong

**Trinko 2/19** (Katrina is a writer for the National Review. "Rubio Still Optimistic about Bipartisan Immigration Reform," 2013, <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/341070/rubio-still-optimistic-about-bipartisan-immigration-reform-katrina-trinko>, CMR)

**Despite the flurry of negative press coverage suggesting that immigration reform is in jeopardy**, the **Rubio team remains optimistic that bipartisan legislation can pass**. **While Senate Republicans who aren't part of the immigration Senate gang have been**

fairly quiet on the topic of immigration, Rubio's team stresses that **the legislation** -- which won't be released until March -- **is not dead**. **"Private conversations have been very positive,"** says Rubio press secretary Alex Conant of other Republican senators. **People are** understandably **waiting to see the**



**legislation before they commit one way or the other.”** But the White House immigration plan that was leaked this weekend didn't help. "To the extent we're trying to build a coalition of conservatives who will support this plan, conservatives are going to be less likely to want to support it if they think President Obama's just going to pull the rug out from underneath us on it," says Conant.

## Obama's direct involvement ensure success of congressional efforts

**Weissenstein 2/22** (Michael, "McCain, Obama to meet on immigration Tuesday",

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/02/22/3248442/mccain-guardedly-optimistic-on.html#storylink=cpy>,

U.S. Sen. John **McCain said** Friday that **he and other lawmakers working on an immigration overhaul will meet with** President Barack **Obama** on Tuesday to discuss the effort to revamp the system.¶ **McCain**, a member of a bipartisan group of eight senators working on a bill, said there is still significant disagreement with the president, but he **is optimistic about producing legislation** that includes a path to legalization for illegal immigrants.¶ The White House could not immediately confirm the Tuesday meeting.¶ **The president** of the United States **has supported our efforts**. In fact we will be meeting with the president on Tuesday," McCain said during a visit to Mexico.¶ He did not say how many senators would attend the meeting.¶ McCain told reporters after meeting with Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto that many details must be worked out between Obama and senators trying to produce legislation.¶ **Asked about** the prospects for **reaching a deal**, he said: **"I am guardedly optimistic that we could by the end of the next month.**" There's still a number of agreements that need to be made before I can assure you that we will have a resolution."¶ While they differ on some key details, **both Obama and the Senate are contemplating legislation that would provide a pathway to citizenship** for most of the 11 million illegal immigrants already in the U.S., **tighten border security, crack down on businesses that employ illegal workers and strengthen the legal immigration** system.¶ McCain ticked off those aspects and added that he also envisions the legislation including a process for foreign agricultural and low-skilled laborers to work in the United States, a provision for highly educated workers to remain in the U.S., better identification cards for migrants and a special path for migrants brought to the U.S. as children.¶ "On some of those we have specific agreement, in other areas we agree in principle, but we have not resolved the details," he said. **"We are making progress**, but we are still not at a point where we can say we will succeed."¶ **The meeting marks Obama's most direct involvement to date in negotiations** by the bipartisan group of senators working to craft comprehensive immigration reform legislation. Wary of making it harder for Republicans to support an eventual bill by embracing it too closely, Obama has instead kept his distance.¶ The White House is prepping its own bill, but says it's just a backup in case congressional talks fail.¶ **"It is, by far, the president's preference that the Senate process move forward that the bipartisan group of eight have success, and that they produce a bill that wins the support of Democrats and Republicans in Senate,"** White House spokesman Jay Carney said this week.¶ The risks for Obama in getting too close to the process were on full display earlier in the week when details of Obama's draft bill were leaked, prompting concerns among some in Congress that the competing bill would make it harder for senators to strike a bipartisan deal. Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, a key Republican member of the group, said Obama's plan had "injected additional partisanship into an already difficult process."¶ But **Senate aides said** privately that **bipartisan negotiations were in a good place and they did not feel as though the disclosure of details in Obama's draft bill had disrupted their process.**

## Will pass but sustained bipartisanship is key – aggressive moves by Obama shatter compromise

**Olugbemiga 2/19** – graduate student in George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management (Ayobami, "Mr. President, your silence on immigration reform will be golden",

<http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/elections-fastbreak/2013/feb/19/mr-president-your-silence-immigration-reform-will-/>,

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 19, 2013 — Sometimes the political environment requires a president to act and act quickly, perhaps even unilaterally. There are other times when the moment calls for the president to use his bully pulpit to lead and call on Congress to act.¶

However, in some unique circumstances when **Congress is already trying to act**, a president should practice silence.¶ With that in mind, President Obama should take a backseat to the "Gang of 8" on immigration reform.¶ **The Gang of 8** is a group of eight senators who **came together to provide a bipartisan solution for immigration reform.**¶ The four Democrats are: Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Robert Menendez (R-NJ), Chuck Schumer (R-NY), and Michael Bennet (R-CO).¶ The four Republicans are: Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), John McCain (R-AZ), and Lindsey Graham (R-SC).¶ **In a rare moment of bipartisanship in Congress, these eight senators unveiled their framework for immigration reform** at a press conference in January. **Their**

**plan calls for expanding visas for high-tech workers, creating an employment verification system** that will prevent the hiring of undocumented workers, **tightening security along the Mexican border, and providing a pathway to citizenship** for undocumented immigrants. ¶ Their press conference on Capitol Hill came a day before President Obama's immigration speech. ¶ Their strategy to deliberately preempt the president is noteworthy because the indirect message was: Get out of the way Mr. President, we will lead on this issue. ¶ Senators are men and women of pride like everyone else. They want to prove to the American public that they are competent. They do not like that their institution has only a 14 percent approval rating. Many of them are tired of watching President Obama scold them. "You know, Malia and Sasha generally finish their homework a day ahead of time. They don't wait until the night before. They're not pulling all-nighters. They're 13 and 10. You know, Congress can do the same thing..." President Obama said at a press conference on the debt ceiling in 2011. ¶ Members of Congress generally do not like to see their president condescendingly suggest that his 10 and 13 year old daughters have more discipline than they do. So whenever they can, they will try to advance an agenda before he does, which is what the Gang of 8 is doing on immigration reform. ¶ Meanwhile, instead of focusing on constructive ways to help them reach a solution, the Obama administration was busy preparing an alternative immigration reform proposal, as if the White House proposal will magically become law if the Gang of 8 fails. ¶ The backup proposal was leaked and obtained by USA Today. ¶ President Obama's Chief of staff Denis McDonough defended the plan: "We'll be prepared in the event that the bipartisan talks going on the Hill — which by the way we're aggressively supporting — if those do not work out, then we'll have an option we're ready to put out there," McDonough said Sunday on NBC's "Meet The Press." ¶ Having a backup plan is always wise, but President Obama's attempt to re-insert himself into the immigration reform debate seems self-serving. He wants sole ownership of the immigration issue. He needs it for his legacy. He would like to dominate the conversation with his big speeches and TV appearances so he can take full credit when the job is done, and remind the public that he is still in charge — the big boss calling the shots and running the show. It is a positioning strategy, and presidents often need to position themselves as leaders. ¶ But at this critical juncture, **the best form of leadership Obama can offer** the Gang of 8, **is** silence. He can **work the phones and offer to help but he should not be patronizing or overbearing. Doing so will intensify partisanship and make deal-making more difficult.** ¶ If members of Congress had not taken the initiative to reform the immigration system, then it would have been incumbent on the president to lead. But **the Senate is already moving on the issue. The Gang of 8 is already making progress. Their blueprint is not much different from what President Obama is talking about. They are slowly building trust, and the prospect of a bipartisan package looks promising.** ¶ If President Obama wants to take full credit for immigration reform, he can do so after the signing ceremony. But what the Gang of 8 need from him right now is his silent encouragement. ¶ So, please, Mr. President, get out of the way and let the "Gang of 8" finish the job.

## Obama's out-reach ensures passage

**Parker 2/19** (Ashley, "Obama Works the Phones to Calm Tensions on Immigration Plan", <http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/19/obama-works-the-phones-to-calm-tensions-on-immigration-plan/>,

After a Presidents' Day weekend whodunit of who leaked what and why — not to mention a he-said, she-said back-and-forth on the Sunday shows and in news releases — President **Obama took to the phones** Tuesday afternoon **to quell** rising **tensions with Senate Republicans** after a draft of a White House immigration plan was somehow leaked to the news media. ¶ On Tuesday afternoon, Mr. **Obama spoke with** the Republican Senators Lindsey **Graham** of South Carolina, John **McCain** of Arizona **and** Marco **Rubio** of Florida — three of the four Republican members of a Senate bipartisan group of eight **seeking to create a legislative compromise** on overhauling the nation's immigration system — to discuss what the White House called "their shared commitment to bipartisan, common-sense immigration reform." The fourth Republican member of the group, Senator Jeff Flake of Arizona, was traveling, but the White House said Mr. Obama hoped to talk to him in the near future. ¶ Mr. **Obama's calls represented** at least a **tacit acknowledgment** that **the White House had been laggard in its political outreach** to the Senate Republicans who are part of the bipartisan group, and that it was beginning to pay a political price. ¶ "During the calls, which build on conversations that have taken place at the staff level, **the president reiterated** that **he remains supportive of the effort under way in Congress**, and that he hopes that they can produce a bill as soon as possible that reflects shared core principles on reform," the White House said in a statement. The statement also reiterated that the president "is prepared to submit his own legislation if Congress fails to act." ¶ A leaked draft of the White House immigration plan, which includes an eight-year pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants — with none of the border security triggers that most Republicans favor — set off a round of angry Republican recriminations last weekend. Mr. Rubio called the president's plan "half-baked and seriously flawed," as well as "dead on arrival." (The White House reiterated on Tuesday that the leak "was not an intentional release.") ¶ On Tuesday morning, Mr. Rubio's spokesman, Alex Conant, sent out an e-mail in which he rebuked the White House for not reaching out to Senate Republicans before creating its own immigration bill. ¶ "Senator Rubio's office has never discussed immigration policy with anyone in the White House," he wrote. "If the Obama administration is serious about drafting and passing its own immigration reform, why wouldn't they seek input from any Republicans whose support they'll need?" ¶ Jay Carney, the White House press secretary, denied Mr. Conant's assertion when asked about it at his daily news briefing, saying only, "We have been in contact with everybody involved in this effort on Capitol Hill." A senior administration official also said that Mr. Rubio was mistaken — his staff has been in five meetings involving staff members from the bipartisan group and administration officials. ¶ Asked about Mr. Carney's claim, Mr. Conant responded in an e-mail: "We've never received a call or e-mail from Cecilia Muñoz or anyone else at the White House asking for our input as

they draft their bill. The President did call Senator Rubio this afternoon — that was the first time the two of them had ever discussed immigration policy.” (Ms. Muñoz, the director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, is overseeing the president’s immigration push.)¶ However, Mr. **Obama’s outreach seemed to have calmed tempers on the Hill** — at least **for now**.¶ “Senator **Graham had a short, cordial phone conversation with President Obama**,” Kevin Bishop, a spokesman for Mr. Graham, said in an e-mail statement. “They discussed the need for immigration reform and why it is important we fix our broken immigration system.”¶ Mr. **Rubio’s office released a conciliatory e-mail**. “Senator **Rubio** appreciated receiving President Obama’s phone call to discuss immigration reform late tonight in Jerusalem,” the statement read. “The senator told the president that he **feels good about the ongoing negotiations in the Senate, and is hopeful the final product is something that can pass the Senate with strong bipartisan support.**”

## Recent compromise proves momentum

**CSM 2/21** (Behind-the-scenes deal pushes immigration reform closer to reality,

<http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/2013/0221/Behind-the-scenes-deal-pushes-immigration-reform-closer-to-reality/%28page%29/2>,

**A compromise agreement announced Thursday between the nation’s largest labor union and the top advocate for American business underscores the enormous momentum now behind immigration reform.**¶ The agreement touches on what was seen to be potentially one of the biggest stumbling blocks in the immigration reform debate —

namely, how the country should handle the flow of low-skilled, temporary foreign workers.¶ **In finding middle ground, the AFL-CIO and the US Chamber of Commerce** — two powerful organizations often at loggerheads — **have taken a “strong step forward”** in resolving the issue, says Ali Noorani, executive director of the National Immigration Forum. Moreover, they have added to the impression that **important stakeholders — seeing immigration reform as increasingly likely — are**

**putting aside public posturing in order to hammer out solutions**.¶ “This particular slice of the pie is the most important piece: What does our immigration system look like moving forward?” Mr. Noorani says. “Every day, [the Chamber and the AFL-CIO] are going to continue to put more meat on these bones.... For them to agree, even on the bones, means that they’ve been engaged in a really serious negotiation.”¶ **Praise for the deal came from both sides of the aisle** — House majority leader Eric Cantor (R) of Virginia and Sen. Charles Schumer (D) of New York. **“We are very hopeful that an agreement can be reached on a specific proposal in the next few weeks,”** said Senator **Schumer, a member of the bipartisan Senate**

**group working on an immigration compromise**, in a statement.¶ The principles of the agreement call for creating an independent commission that would study the labor market and propose tweaks to the number of lower-skilled workers admitted to the country. Currently, the number of temporary workers allowed into the country is set predominantly by quotas that continue at stable rates from year to year no matter the economic condition in the US.¶ Want your top political issues explained? Get customized DC Decoder updates.¶ The problem with the current system, all sides agree, is that it leaves worker shortages when the economy is surging and allows too many workers to enter the country when economic activity slackens. The AFL-CIO and the US Chamber of Commerce addressed this in their joint statement on Thursday.¶ “Our challenge is to create a mechanism that responds to the needs of business in a market-driven way, while also fully protecting the wages and working conditions of U.S. and immigrant workers,” it read.¶ While important details remain to be worked out, the Chamber and AFL-CIO said Thursday that the goal was achievable.¶ “The power of today’s technology enables us to use that knowledge to craft a workable demand-driven process fed by data that will inform how America addresses future labor shortages,” the two groups said in the statement.¶ Interestingly, the general concept of a commission to propose changes to visa numbers is one whose intellectual foundation lies within the labor movement. It is the brainchild of Ray Marshall, a secretary of Labor under President Carter and a co-founder of the liberal Economic Policy Institute (EPI).¶ But Chamber and AFL-CIO leaders, who attested to a productive working relationship during frequent meetings during the last several months, both broadly endorsed the concept Thursday.¶ “We recognize that there is no simple solution to this issue,” the statement says. “We agree that a professional bureau in a federal executive agency, with political independence analogous to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, should be established to inform Congress and the public about these issues.” ¶ In 2011, the US admitted more than 2 million temporary workers, a figure that swells to more than 3 million when the workers’ families are included, according to the Department of Homeland Security. Roughly half of those, ranging from seasonal agricultural workers to nurses to electrical engineers, could be governed by a new flexible-visa regime.¶ But deciding which low skilled workers would have an opportunity to obtain permanent residency or, eventually, citizenship, will be a key debate. The groups also have not come to an accord on high-skilled workers.¶ Liberal groups were supportive of the agreement.¶ “We salute the notion of using real world data about labor markets and demographics to determine the future flow of employment-based immigrants and temporary foreign workers,” said Ross Eisenbrey, a vice president and economist at EPI, in an e-mailed statement. “This is an important step forward for achieving comprehensive immigration reform.”¶ Critics say that fine-tuning such a system is beyond the reach of any government agency.¶ “It is over-ambitious, but it’s more than that,” Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, told the Monitor earlier this month. “It’s based on an idea that we can manage government by experts. It just doesn’t work. Everybody who has tried it everywhere crashes and burns.”¶ The AFL-CIO and Chamber statement does not explicitly put the commission in control of visa levels, offering that such a body would be able to “advise” on such issues. The ideal system would “automatically” adjust to

economic changes, according to the principles released Thursday. ¶ **“We are now in the middle – not the end – of this process,”** the groups’ statement concludes, **“and we pledge to continue to work together and with our allies and our representatives on Capitol Hill to finalize a solution** that is in the interest of this country we all love.”

## Will pass – momentum and bipartisanship emerging

**CSM 2/12** <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2013/0212/Immigration-reform-Congress-Obama-and-public-are-not-so-far-apart>

**In spite of some disagreement** among lawmakers on the best path forward, **momentum for US immigration reform continues to grow** – **and is moving in one clear direction.** A bipartisan group of senators unveiled a framework for reform a few weeks ago, and shortly thereafter President **Obama announced his** own policy **push on immigration**, which he is expected to touch upon again in his State of the Union address Tuesday. In the House, a range of ideas are being floated, but **a bipartisan bill is expected to emerge soon.** ¶ Both the Senate and White House proposals are remarkable for what they share, particularly with respect to providing a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants in this country. And despite some important differences, they are even more remarkable for establishing a united front on what kinds of solutions are seen as reasonable and politically viable in the coming debate over immigration reform. ¶ In short, the two plans, particularly the Senate proposal, show how **policymakers aren’t as far apart on policy as politics might have us believe. And they chart a way to bring lawmakers together** – particularly on the pivotal issue of citizenship.

## Immigration will pass---sustained momentum’s key

**Cohen 2/8** Micah is a writer for NYT’s 538 blog. “Signs of a Shift on Immigration Among G.O.P. Rank-and-File,” 2013, <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/08/signs-of-a-shift-on-immigration-among-g-o-p-rank-and-file/>

With notable speed after the Nov. 6 presidential election, **a number of Republican politicians and opinions makers** – from House Speaker John A. Boehner to the talk show host Sean Hannity – **altered their positions on immigration and expressed a new openness to comprehensive reform.** ¶ Since then, **the push to overhaul the nation’s immigration system appears to have sustained momentum.** ¶ A new ABC News/Washington Post poll found a jump in public approval of President Obama’s handling of immigration, and most recent polls have found **a majority of Americans support** providing immigrants who have come here **illegally a pathway to United States citizenship.** ¶ So, **has the shift on immigration** among some – but not all – Republican legislators, strategists and media personalities **filtered down to rank-and-file Republicans?** ¶ The polling **evidence** – with a few significant caveats – **says “possibly, yes.”** There are signs of an uptick in

## Republican support for a pathway to citizenship

ip, or at least a conditional pathway to citizenship. ¶ First, the caveats. Tracking opinions on immigration policy over time is tricky because each pollster asks different questions with different options, making for apples-to-oranges comparisons. In addition, when narrowing the focus to self-identified Republicans and Republican leaners, small sample sizes and large margin of sampling errors become a problem. A typical national survey includes about 1,000 respondents, making the subsample of Republicans pretty small, usually around 200 to 300. ¶ But keeping those disclaimers in mind, the most recent polls on immigration suggest an increase in the percentage of Republicans who favor immigration reform that includes a route to United States citizenship. ¶ On average, the share of Republicans who favor providing undocumented immigrants with a path to citizenship is 48 percent among the six national polls released so far in 2013 and included in the PollingReport.com database. (The release of a CNN poll conducted Jan. 14-15 did not provide a breakdown by political party and is not included in the average). ¶ Among the six previous polls that asked about a pathway to citizenship and released results by party identification, an average of only 38 percent of Republicans favored providing a path to citizenship. ¶ Question wording has an effect here. Two of the polls that found the highest level of Republican support emphasized the requirements illegal immigrants might have to meet to become citizens. Conservative voters might be more likely to support a path to citizenship if it involves certain qualifications. ¶ For instance, a Fox News poll conducted Jan. 15-17 among registered voters found that 56 percent of Republicans said the government should “allow illegal immigrants to remain in the country and eventually qualify for U.S. citizenship, but only if they meet certain requirements like paying back taxes, learning English, and passing a background check.” ¶ And a Gallup poll released this week found that 59 percent of Republicans would vote for “a law that would allow undocumented immigrants living in the United States the chance to become legal residents or citizens if they meet certain requirements.” ¶ On the other hand, a CBS News poll of adults conducted Jan. 24-27 found that only 35 percent of Republicans said illegal immigrants currently working in the country “should be allowed to stay in their jobs and to eventually apply for U.S. citizenship.” (CBS found that 25 percent of Republicans said illegal immigrants should be able to stay as guest workers and 36 percent said they should be required to leave the United States). ¶ The apples-to-apples comparisons we have are more mixed: Republican support in the mid-January AP/Gfk poll jumped to 53 percent from 31 percent in 2010. The latest ABC News/Washington Post poll moved to 42 percent Republican support for a path to citizenship from 37 percent in November 2012 (that’s inside the margin of sampling error). The CBS News poll did not move at all, finding 35 percent Republican support in both its December 2012 and late January 2013 surveys. And Quinnipiac polls, released on Thursday and in early December 2012, both found roughly 40 percent of registered Republicans support a path to citizenship and just more than 10 percent support legal status without citizenship. ¶ An uptick in Republican support for a pathway to citizenship could be statistical noise. And even if it is real, it could reverse itself. Some political science research suggests that anti-immigrant attitudes increase when immigration is in the news. ¶ But there are reasons to think that immigration, over all, has become less of a hot-button issue. A Pew study found that the number of illegal immigrants living in the United States has dropped since the 2007 push for change. Another Pew survey found that only 44 percent of Republicans see dealing with immigration as a top priority. That’s down from previous peaks of 69 percent in 2007 and 61 percent in 2011. ¶ Further polling is needed before a more concrete picture of Republican attitudes emerges. But if Republican voters have warmed to providing a

conditional path to citizenship, **it could increase the likelihood of an overhaul becoming law by freeing House Republicans, in particular, to back some kind of reform.**

## CIR on track to quick passage but Obama’s PC key to sustain consensus

**Milani 2/8** (Kate, “Muñoz Interview: White House Expects Broad Immigration Bill”, <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2013/02/08/white-house-expects-broad-immigration-bill/>

The White House point woman on immigration, Cecilia Muñoz, predicted a comprehensive overhaul would pass this year, and said she expects the Senate to move quickly on legislation now in the works.¶ The director of the White House's Domestic Policy Council, speaking to David Wessel on WSJ.com's weekly Seib & Wessel video show, said this year is different than past, unsuccessful attempts because a broad swath of constituencies back reform and there is already consensus between the White House and Congress over major policy points. The president would like the Senate move forward with an immigration bill in the next four weeks to six weeks, she said.¶ "The country understands that the system is broken and it needs to be fixed... And frankly the Latino community sent a pretty strong message in the election that I think Republicans are responding to," Ms. Muñoz said.¶ President Barack Obama has released his own set of principles for legislation, and applauded a bipartisan Senate proposal. Both call for for new border-security measures, a tougher employer-verification system and a path to citizenship for the 11 million people now in the country illegally. But the White House rejected a Senate proposal to require that border security measures be in place before people can qualify for citizenship.¶ There are some more minor differences between the White House and Senate, too. For instance, Mr. Obama's principles for immigration would allow gay and lesbian Americans to sponsor their same-sex partners for visas, which many Republicans oppose and the Senate framework doesn't include.¶ Since the 2012 election, many Republicans have shown new interest in immigration legislation, though some stop short of endorsing citizenship for all illegal immigrants here now. On Tuesday, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R., Va.) came out for the principles behind the Dream Act, which would give a path to citizenship to people brought to the U.S. illegally as children.¶ A short time ago, the White House would have welcomed such high-level GOP support for the Dream Act, but with a broader bill in sight, Ms. Muñoz said it would not be enough today. "We need a comprehensive bill. The Dream Act by itself doesn't fix what's broken in our immigration system," she said.¶ In any case, Ms. Muñoz said the biggest obstacle to overhauling immigration law is not policy-related.¶ "By and large there's a consensus on what the big pieces are of immigration reform," said Ms. Muñoz. "The biggest obstacle is political will and just making sure we get over the finish line."

**Will pass quickly, Obama and GOP goals are aligned despite political blustering – but it's not guaranteed**

**Robinson 2/5** (Eugene, WaPo Correspondent, "Eugene Robinson: Immigration reform likely", <http://www.goerie.com/article/20130206/OPINION09/302069994/Eugene-Robinson%3A-Immigration-reform-likely>)

Some Republicans, but not all. Given the extensive overlap between the "principles" laid out by a bipartisan group of senators and those offered by President Barack Obama, I believe there is a strong possibility that immigration reform can be accomplished within the next few months. But it still won't be easy.¶ Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., the key member of the Senate's pro-reform "Gang of Eight," is being pilloried from the right for having the temerity to face economic, sociological and political reality.¶ Sen. David Vitter, R-La., called Rubio "amazingly naive on this issue" and also "nuts." Some of the conservative commentariat has been less reserved.¶ National Review editor Rich Lowry called the Senate plan a "scam" that is likely to become "a monument to bad faith." My colleague Charles Krauthammer called the proposal "highly misleading" and complained that it would lead to "instant legalization" for those here without papers. Rush Limbaugh has vowed to fight the measure with all he's got -- but predicted that he and other opponents would ultimately lose.¶ Many establishment figures in the party accept that the GOP cannot thrive, and perhaps cannot even survive, if the nation's biggest minority group becomes a permanent part of the Democratic Party coalition. They understand Rubio's analysis that immigration is a "threshold" issue for Latino voters -- that if Republicans are seen as uncompromising and even hostile on this issue, many Latinos will not even give the party a hearing on the rest of its philosophy and agenda. They recognize that undocumented workers are integral participants in the nation's economic life.¶ The central task of immigration reform is the most controversial: designing some sort of legal status for the 11 million.¶ Critics on the right complain that this is unfair to would-be immigrants who are "waiting in line" to come into the country by following the rules. Some would have to wait years; many, probably most, would never make it in.¶ Truly comprehensive reform would include designing a viable legal pathway for those who want to come here and contribute their ambition, determination and skills. No such pathway exists now -- and none existed for the millions who decided to enter the country without papers or overstay their visas.¶ As far as I can tell, there is little meaningful difference between the Gang of Eight's plan and Obama's plan. You will hear lots of noise about border security and enforcement. Feel free to pay no attention.¶ Pro- and anti-reform Republicans will both agree that the Obama administration is somehow weak on enforcement. This is a laughable fiction; border

security is much tougher under Obama than under his predecessors, and deportations have soared. But perhaps a loud fight over enforcement will satisfy the Republican base and make agreement on real issues possible. Republicans are eager to talk about some kind of temporary-worker program to accommodate those who come here -- mostly from Mexico and Central America -- with the intention of working for a time and then returning to their home countries. Obama's framework for reform does not include a guest-worker provision, but the White House has indicated a willingness to look at the possibility. Obama could have taken a different tack. He could have written detailed proposed legislation rather than laying out broad principles, and in that bill he could have specified a short, direct path to full citizenship for the undocumented -- something Republicans could not conceivably accept. This would have further damaged the GOP, since Democrats would be able to tell Latino voters, "See? Once again the Republicans killed immigration reform. We're the ones who are on your side. Stick with us." Instead, Obama and a group of influential senators of both parties will try to work together to bring 11 million people out of the shadows. Our government is tackling a big problem and may actually solve it. Imagine that.

## Passage likely

**Morrison 2/9** (Clarke, "Jobs, guns likely Obama topics", <http://www.citizen-times.com/article/20130209/NEWS/302090036/>

immigration reform also is ripe for discussion following Obama's strong showing with Hispanic voters in the November election. "I think with what's been going on in Congress, immigration reform is becoming more and more likely," Cooper said. "So Obama is likely to make a pitch for his view."

## Momentum

**Shuey 2/10** (Karen, "On immigration reform, rare signs of compromise in Washington", [http://lancasteronline.com/article/local/812887\\_On-immigration-reform--rare-signs-of-compromise-in-Washington.html](http://lancasteronline.com/article/local/812887_On-immigration-reform--rare-signs-of-compromise-in-Washington.html),

It may be a foreign concept in Washington these days, but a group of U.S. senators showed last month that finding common ground is possible. The release of a new bipartisan plan to overhaul the nation's immigration laws and a policy address from President Barack Obama launched new momentum on a long-stalled issue. And congressional members who represent Lancaster County -- from both sides of the aisle -- said they are optimistic they can work together to pass immigration reform this year. "This is significant legislation because when you have this amount of people coming together it's a substantial step in the right direction," Sen. Bob Casey said. Coming up with the actual language of the bill, the Democrat said, will be the hard part.

## Will pass – Obama's push makes it priority and ensures momentum

**Seldin 2/7** (Jeff, "US Battle Over Immigration Reform Gathers Steam", Voice of America, <http://www.eurasiareview.com/07022013-us-battle-over-immigration-reform-gathers-steam/>,

U.S. President Barack Obama is expected to make immigration reform a priority in his State of the Union Address. But already, talk of tackling this controversial issue is gaining momentum. There are an estimated 11-million illegal immigrants in the United States with more still hoping to cross the border. Claudia Hernandez came here as a child, and like many in her situation, she feels she belongs in the U.S. "I have been here more than half of my life, and I respect the United States. This is my country," she said. Only days into his second term, President Obama began the push for change. "The time has come for common-sense, comprehensive immigration reform," he stated. "The time is now." Already, Congress has begun to hold hearings. And a bipartisan group of senators, including former Republican presidential candidate John McCain, is pushing ahead with a plan of its own. "We have been too content for too long to allow individuals to mow our lawn, serve us food, clean our homes and even watch our children while not affording them any of the benefits that make our country so great," McCain said. The bi-partisan plan calls for tighter border controls as well as a path to citizenship, something President Obama insists upon. That worries Jim Gilchrist. He founded the Minuteman Project, a citizen's group that helps guard the border. "If we are going to grant amnesty to 15 to 30-million people, who are here illegally now, we are going to be granting amnesty to 300 million," he added. "Who will follow them over the next several decades." Other activists and lawmakers say proposals to secure the borders don't go far enough -- even though the United States spends more money on immigration enforcement than on all other federal law enforcement activities combined. In the

meantime, the pressure is on – both President Obama and Congress.¶ Janet Murguía heads La Raza, the largest U.S. Hispanic civil rights and advocacy group. “The reality is that Hispanic and Latin voters went to the polls on election day with the economy on their minds, but with immigration reform in their hearts,” she said.¶ **With the State of the Union address as a platform, advocates on all sides of the issue are hoping something gets done**, all too aware such hopes have been dashed before.

## Obama’s push will persuade GOP fence-sitters

**Nakamura 2/7** (David, “Immigration advocates push Republicans to support path to citizenship”, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/immigration-advocates-push-republicans-to-support-path-to-citizenship/2013/02/07/04459f88-714d-11e2-8b8d-e0b59a1b8e2a\\_print.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/immigration-advocates-push-republicans-to-support-path-to-citizenship/2013/02/07/04459f88-714d-11e2-8b8d-e0b59a1b8e2a_print.html),

**Immigration advocates, backed by the White House, have begun a nationwide lobbying campaign,**

including rallies in more than a dozen cities and a planned demonstration on the Mall.¶ **The** loosely coordinated **effort is aimed** in part **at influencing** an ongoing debate in **the Republican Party** over whether to provide a path to citizenship for more than 11 million illegal immigrants, organizers said.¶ The campaign includes liberal-leaning Hispanic, Asian and African American groups and labor unions, as well as a more centrist coalition of faith, law enforcement and business representatives. Organizers said they are intent on making their voices heard at a time when some GOP leaders have called for granting undocumented residents legal status, but have stopped short of citizenship.¶ The debate is one of the key points of conflict between President **Obama and lawmakers**, who **are attempting to negotiate** the largest **overhaul of immigration laws** in three decades.¶ “The election sent Republicans a strong message to work with President Obama to fix our broken system or else face political suicide,” said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, whose organization announced plans Thursday for 14 rallies in big cities, along with phone calls, leaflets and television ads. “Our focus is citizenship, getting people to have the same rights as anybody else.”¶ In recent days, **an increasing number of congressional Republicans have embraced** what they described as **a middle ground between full citizenship and the position long held by many in the GOP that illegal immigrants be required to return to their home countries**.¶ Some House Republicans have argued that illegal immigrants could be allowed to live and work in the United States without fear of deportation, but should not be granted the full benefits of being a citizen, including the right to vote.¶ “If we can find a solution that is short of pathway to citizenship but better than just kicking 12 million people out, why is that not a good solution?” Rep. Raúl R. Labrador (R-Idaho) said this week during an immigration hearing in the House Judiciary Committee.¶ Clarissa Martinez de Castro, an official with the National Council of La Raza, told reporters in a conference call this week that the Republican tactic creates a “false choice” between the extremes of mass deportation and immediate citizenship. In reality, she said, both Obama and a bipartisan Senate working group have advocated a fairly arduous route that would require illegal immigrants to pay back taxes and learn English, among other requirements, before some would earn citizenship.¶ “To try to paint that rigorous path as amnesty or as extreme is simply incorrect and frankly out of step with where the American people are,” she said.¶ Obama, whose reelection was powered with overwhelming support from Latino and Asian voters, has vowed not to settle for a bill that does not include a citizenship provision. At a meeting with advocates this week, **he urged them to help the administration keep the pressure on Capitol Hill**.¶ A network of activist groups led by the Service Employees International Union is planning a major rally April 10 on the West Lawn of the Capitol that organizers said could draw tens of thousands of demonstrators. Smaller events will be held across the country to build momentum leading up to that date, said Ben Monterroso, SEIU’s national field director for immigration reform.¶ The activists said **they expect a bipartisan Senate working group to produce legislation by mid-March**. That group, made up of four Democrats and four Republicans, released principles last week that included a path to citizenship.¶ **We’re going to be targeting specifically those people in key positions in Congress**,” Monterroso said, “but we’re not letting anybody off the hook.”¶ Months after GOP leaders began signaling that the party would shift positions on immigration in response to their shellacking in the November election, Republicans are still working out their stance. Some Democrats and advocacy groups say that **public pressure could be particularly effective at exposing divisions within the GOP**.

## Obama’s push ensures passage – sustained momentum and avoiding fights is key

**Sink 2/19** (Justin, “Obama seeks to repair rift with Republicans on immigration reform”, <http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/283877-obama-seeks-to-repair-rift-with-with-gop-on-immigration>

**Republican support** for the immigration package is thought largely to **hinge on Rubio**, and **the phone calls** Tuesday

**appeared to be an effort by the White House to repair relations**.¶ **The gesture seemed to have paid**

**off with spokesmen** for the Republican senators **issuing optimistic statements** following the phone calls.¶ “Senator Rubio appreciated receiving President Obama’s phone call to discuss immigration reform late tonight in Jerusalem,” Conant said. Rubio was traveling Tuesday in Israel. ¶ **The Senator** told the President that he **feels good about the ongoing negotiations in the Senate**,

and is hopeful **the final product is something that can pass the Senate with strong bipartisan support.** ¶ A spokesman for Graham called the call "short" and "cordial," but said the South Carolina lawmaker and **the bipartisan immigration talks downplayed the criticism from Rubio and other Republicans about the leaked White House bill.** ¶ The aide suggested **it was all part of the complicated political dance that must take place to keep both liberals and conservatives at the table on immigration reform.** ¶ "I [ ] that the published proposal did not encompass the entirety of the principles Obama has laid out on immigration reform, which include enhancements to border security and reforms to the legal immigration system. ¶ "It's unfortunate that only a piece of it was leaked out," the aide said. ¶ Janet Murguía, head of the National Council of La Raza, an Hispanic civil-rights group, said there's "some legitimacy" to Rubio's criticisms of Obama. But she was quick to add that **it's** also "legitimate and **appropriate**" for the president to remind lawmakers that he'll push his own reforms if Congress fails to reach a deal on its own. ¶ **She characterized the partisan barbs as "healthy tensions" that put pressure on both sides to secure comprehensive reforms this year.** ¶ **Both appear committed,** she said.

**Obama's push ensures passage but maintaining bipartisan consensus is key**

**Economic Times 1/28** ("US lawmakers optimistic about immigration reform",

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/nri/visa-and-immigration/us-lawmakers-optimistic-about-immigration-reform/articleshow/18212224.cms>

WASHINGTON: **Leading Democratic and Republican senators said on Sunday there were encouraging signs in the push to overhaul US immigration laws - a top priority for President Obama's second term - and they would introduce their plan this week.** ¶ **With Obama set to begin his push for immigration reform with a speech in Las Vegas on Tuesday, a group of three Democratic and three Republican senators have been working for weeks on a plan.** ¶ One of those senators, Republican John McCain of the border state of Arizona, said on ABC's "This Week" program that the group still had hard work ahead but that he was pleased with the progress and that the principles of a comprehensive plan would be put forth this week. ¶ McCain said the plan was much like a 2007 immigration proposal that died during the presidency of George W. Bush. That plan included a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, tighter borders, a guest worker program and requirements for employers to verify workers' immigration status. ¶ The immigration issue was largely pushed aside during Obama's first term as economic concerns weighed more heavily, but the president, who had overwhelming backing from Hispanic voters in his 2012 re-election, cited it as part of his agenda when sworn in for a second term last week. ¶ McCain said **the political aspect of immigration reform should sway any Republicans** who object to a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. ¶ "We are losing dramatically the Hispanic vote, which we think should be ours, for a variety of reasons, and we've got to understand that," he said. ¶ McCain said change also was needed because "we can't go on forever with 11 million people living in this country in the shadows in an illegal status. We cannot forever have children who were born here, who were brought here by their parents when they were small children, to live in the shadows, as well." ¶ Democrat Dick Durbin of Illinois, another member of the six-person Senate group, said on "Fox News Sunday" that work remained to be done but that the progress was encouraging. ¶ "We are trying work our way through some very difficult issues but we are committed to a comprehensive approach to finally in this country having an immigration law that we can live with," he said. "We have virtually been going for maybe 25 years without a clear statement about immigration policy. That's unacceptable in this nation of immigrants." ¶ Senator Robert **Menendez**, a Democrat from New Jersey who is also a member of the immigration group, said on "This Week" that he **was cautiously optimistic because of the bipartisan spirit that has prevailed in the recent reform effort.** ¶ "I see things that were once off the table for agreement and discussion being on the table with a serious pathway forward," he said. ¶ Senator Bob **Corker** of Tennessee, a Republican who is not a member of the group, **said he had spoken with one of its members, who said he was "very optimistic" about reform.**



## 2nc UQ – top priority

### Top priority

**Sanchez 2/8** (Humberto, “Immigration Advocates Bullish on Obama's State of the Union”, [http://www.rollcall.com/news/immig\\_ration\\_advocates\\_bullish\\_on\\_obamas\\_state\\_of\\_the\\_union-222283-1.html?zkPrintable=true](http://www.rollcall.com/news/immig_ration_advocates_bullish_on_obamas_state_of_the_union-222283-1.html?zkPrintable=true))

Assured and galvanized by his speech last week in Las Vegas, **immigration overhaul advocates don't expect to hear anything new** on the issue **from** President Barack **Obama in his State of the Union** address Tuesday. ¶ “I am going to predict **he is going to say nothing different**, and it's going to be not as extensive as Las Vegas because he is going to cover a range of topics,” said Frank Sharry, executive director of left-leaning immigration advocacy group America's Voice on a conference call with reporters Friday. ¶ “Sometimes in the past we have breathlessly counted the number of words and where it was in the speech,” Sharry continued. **“The fact that he went to Las Vegas and threw down the way he did has really mobilized and motivated many of us in the immigration reform movement.”** ¶ In his speech, Obama made the case for why changes are needed and laid out what he wants to see in the measure, including a path to citizenship, an overhauled legal immigration system, a goal of reducing the hiring of undocumented workers, and continued securing of the border. ¶ “We want him to mention it, but **he has already proven that this is his top legislative priority** for the first six months of this year,” Sharry said. “We are pretty confident that **we are in a good position to move forward.**”

### Obama will push immigration – 3 weeks

**LA Times 1/21** <http://www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-pn-axelrod-immigration-reform-coming-early-in-obamas-agenda-20130121,0,2596253.story>

WASHINGTON -- **While fiscal battles have dominated** discussions of President Obama's second term, a top advisor said Monday that **the president will push forward with immigration reform** early on -- possibly as soon as the State of the Union speech **in three weeks**. ¶ Speaking shortly after the inauguration ceremony, senior advisor David Axelrod suggested **Obama carries the goodwill of the American public** with him as he sets out on his second term. ¶ “I think the country likes this president. I think they support this president. Now he has four years to finish the work he's begun,” Axelrod told reporters as he walked through the halls at the Capitol. “We've got a foundation on which to build and he has a chance to build on it.” ¶ Axelrod suggested congressional **Republicans should reconsider their opposition to the president's agenda**, as polls show Americans have grown tired of the cycle of brinkmanship. ¶ Several top Republicans panned Obama's inauguration speech on Monday, suggesting Obama did not signal a willingness to reach across the aisle to find common ground on issues. Arizona Sen. John McCain of Arizona, a former Republican presidential nominee, was among those lobbing a note of criticism. ¶ “Really? I'm surprised because Sen. McCain is usually so receptive to what the president has to say,” Axelrod said, in a sarcastic reference to the 2008 combatants' routine disagreement. ¶ The longtime Obama advisor defended the president's approach. ¶ “I think he did reach out in the sense that he made the point that we always have achieved what we achieved as a country by working together and we have to work together now,” Axelrod said. “You hear in the speech what you want to, I suppose. But I don't believe that it was a particularly political speech. I think it was a speech about the values and principles that should unite us -- and I hope they do.” ¶ **Axelrod declined to prioritize the top few issues** on the president's agenda, **but suggested immigration is gaining in importance** as the budget battles consume the early months ahead. ¶ **“I expect you're going to see immigration surface early** in the year,” he said. “We have certain immutable deadlines relative to the fiscal discussion, but I do believe **he's going to move quickly on immigration** as well -- he's got a State of the Union in three weeks.” ¶ So perhaps an immigration message at that time? ¶ “Early means early.”

### Immigration comes first – it's where Obama is focusing

**FOX News, 1/21/13**, “Obama warns against steep spending cuts, presses for immigration bill in inaugural address”, <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2013/01/21/obama-official-swearing-in-monday-but-celebrations-second-term-in-full-swing/>

More immediately, Obama has stated that Congress must increase the debt ceiling to keep the country from defaulting on its bills and that he will not negotiate on the issue. However, **the White House has already put Congress on notice that budget talks could be delayed because Obama will miss the legal Feb. 14 deadline** to submit his plan.

Despite having to deal with those issues right away, **Obama appears committed to addressing immigration reform in the early months**, purportedly **in a one-step, comprehensive package**.

## None of your thumpers matter – Immigration is the only thing Obama will be able to spend capital on

Todd J. **Gillman**, Washington Bureau, **1/19/13**, “Analysis: Barack Obama appears to bring new toughness to second term”, <http://www.dallasnews.com/news/politics/headlines/20130119-analysis-barack-obama-appears-to-bring-new-toughness-to-second-term.ece>

**Divided government and tight budgets are likely to keep Obama from achieving much in the way of new agenda items**. He'll spend much of the next few years fending off cuts to Social Security and warding off threats to

undermine his signature health care reforms. **One of the few major areas where Obama may find it easier to reach accommodation with Republicans is immigration. It's a rare issue on which Republicans have a strong electoral incentive to take many of the same steps sought by Democrats, because Latino voters overwhelmingly supported Obama and GOP strategists are keenly aware of the risk of long-term alienation of that growing bloc.**

## Top priority – but new issues will cause crowd-out

**González 1/4/12** (and Dan Nowicki, “‘Cliff’ fight, gun control pushing immigration reform out of spotlight”, <http://www.azcentral.com/news/politics/articles/20130103immigration-reform-at-crossroads.html>),

In an interview Sunday on NBC's “Meet the Press,” **Obama reiterated** that **“fixing our broken immigration system is a top priority.”** “We’ve talked about it long enough,” he said. **The overwhelming support Obama received from Latino voters in November** also **prompted many Republicans to call for immigration reform** in a bid to rehabilitate their party's negative image with Latinos. **But immigration reform has a long history of being sidetracked by other issues**. Health-care reform and fixing the economy knocked immigration reform off the table in 2009 and 2010. Now, spending cuts and gun control are threatening to derail immigration reform again. That's because **the window to pass immigration legislation is short**, analysts and immigration-reform advocates say. **If nothing happens this year, immigration reform may become too politically radioactive to tackle leading up to the 2014 congressional midterm election and then the 2016 presidential election.**

## Top priority – will invest all his PC

**Peterson 1/3/13** (Hayley, “Obama will introduce broad immigration reform as early as January”, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2256426/Obama-introduce-broad-immigration-reform-early-January.html>)

Now, **with his second election behind him, Obama is again pushing to make immigration a top priority for his administration.** “Fixing our broken immigration system is a top priority,” he said on NBC's “Meet the Press” last week. **Obama also said during the interview he would act quickly on passing new restrictions on firearms in 2013.** **“I'm going to be putting forward a package and I'm going to be putting my full weight behind it,”** he said. **“I'm going to be making an argument to the American people about why this is important and why we have to do everything we can to make sure that something like what happened at Sandy Hook Elementary does not happen again.”**

## 2nc A2 UQ o/w

### PC key arguments

Even if a bill passes, plan means it'd be watered down

Will pass but sustained bipartisanship is key – aggressive moves by Obama shatter compromise

**Olugbemiga 2/19** – graduate student in George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management (Ayobami, "Mr. President, your silence on immigration reform will be golden", <http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/elections-fastbreak/2013/feb/19/mr-president-your-silence-immigration-reform-will-/>,

WASHINGTON, D.C., February 19, 2013 — Sometimes the political environment requires a president to act and act quickly, perhaps even unilaterally. There are other times when the moment calls for the president to use his bully pulpit to lead and call on Congress to act.

However, in some unique circumstances when **Congress is already trying to act**, a president should practice silence. With that in mind, President Obama should take a backseat to the "Gang of 8" on immigration reform. **The Gang of 8** is a group of eight senators who **came together to provide a bipartisan solution for immigration reform**. The four Democrats are: Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Robert Menendez (R-NJ), Chuck Schumer (R-NY), and Michael Bennet (R-CO). The four Republicans are: Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), John McCain (R-AZ), and Lindsey Graham (R-SC). **In a rare moment of bipartisanship in Congress, these eight senators unveiled their framework for immigration reform** at a press conference in January. **Their plan calls for expanding visas for high-tech workers, creating an employment verification system** that will prevent the hiring of undocumented workers, **tightening security along the Mexican border, and providing a pathway to citizenship** for undocumented immigrants. Their press conference on Capitol Hill came a day before President Obama's immigration speech. Their strategy to deliberately preempt the president is noteworthy because the indirect message was: Get out of the way Mr. President, we will lead on this issue. Senators are men and women of pride like everyone else. They want to prove to the American public that they are competent. They do not like that their institution has only a 14 percent approval rating. Many of them are tired of watching President Obama scold them. "You know, Malia and Sasha generally finish their homework a day ahead of time. They don't wait until the night before. They're not pulling all-nighters. They're 13 and 10. You know, Congress can do the same thing..." President Obama said at a press conference on the debt ceiling in 2011. Members of Congress generally do not like to see their president condescendingly suggest that his 10 and 13 year old daughters have more discipline than they do. So whenever they can, they will try to advance an agenda before he does, which is what the Gang of 8 is doing on immigration reform. Meanwhile, instead of focusing on constructive ways to help them reach a solution, the Obama administration was busy preparing an alternative immigration reform proposal, as if the White House proposal will magically become law if the Gang of 8 fails. The backup proposal was leaked and obtained by USA Today. President Obama's Chief of staff Denis McDonough defended the plan: "We'll be prepared in the event that the bipartisan talks going on the Hill – which by the way we're aggressively supporting – if those do not work out, then we'll have an option we're ready to put out there," McDonough said Sunday on NBC's "Meet The Press." Having a backup plan is always wise, but President Obama's attempt to re-insert himself into the immigration reform debate seems self-serving. He wants sole ownership of the immigration issue. He needs it for his legacy. He would like to dominate the conversation with his big speeches and TV appearances so he can take full credit when the job is done, and remind the public that he is still in charge – the big boss calling the shots and running the show. It is a positioning strategy, and presidents often need to position themselves as leaders. But at this critical juncture, **the best form of leadership Obama can offer** the Gang of 8 **is** silence. He can **work the phones and offer to help but he should not be patronizing or overbearing**. **Doing so will intensify partisanship and make deal-making more difficult**. If members of Congress had not taken the initiative to reform the immigration system, then it would have been incumbent on the president to lead. But **the Senate is already moving on the issue. The Gang of 8 is already making progress. Their blueprint is not much different from what President Obama is talking about. They are slowly building trust, and the prospect of a bipartisan package looks promising**. If President Obama wants to take full credit for immigration reform, he can do so after the signing ceremony. But what the Gang of 8 need from him right now is his silent encouragement. So, please, Mr. President, get out of the way and let the "Gang of 8" finish the job.

## 2nc top of docket

### Immigration first, Obama pushing, capital key

ABC NEWS, "Analysis: 6 things Obama Needs to Do for Immigration Reform," 1--2--13, [http://abcnews.go.com/ABC\\_Univision/News/things-president-obama-immigration-reform/story?id=18103115#.UOYgd5PjIJ8](http://abcnews.go.com/ABC_Univision/News/things-president-obama-immigration-reform/story?id=18103115#.UOYgd5PjIJ8)

On Sunday, President Barack **Obama said** that **immigration reform is a "top priority" on his agenda** and that he would introduce legislation in his first year. To find out what he needs to do to make reform a reality, we talked to Lynn Tramonte, the deputy director at America's Voice, a group that lobbies for immigration reform, and Muzaffar Chishti, the director of the New York office of the Migration Policy Institute, a think tank. Here's what we came up with. 1. Be a Leader During Obama's first term, bipartisan legislation never got off the ground. The president needs to do a better job leading the charge this time around, according to Chishti. "He has to make it clear that it's a high priority of his," he said. "He has to make it clear that **he'll use his bully pulpit and his political muscle to make it happen, and** he has to **be open to using his veto power**." His announcement this weekend is a step in that direction, but he needs to follow through. 2. Clear Space on the Agenda Political priorities aren't always dictated by the folks in D.C., as the tragic Connecticut school shooting shows us. While immigration had inertia after the election, the fiscal cliff and gun violence have been the most talked about issues around the Capitol in recent weeks. **The cliff could recede from view now that Congress has passed a bill, but** how quickly **the president** can resolve the other issues on his agenda **could determine whether immigration reform is possible** this year. "There's only limited oxygen in the room," Chishti said.

### Yes Obama will push.

Oman Observer, 1-1-2013, p. main.omanobserver.om/node/136439

President Barack **Obama is pledging to focus in his second term on immigration reform**, boosting economic growth through infrastructure repair and energy policies that nod to environmental protection. The president is mired in a difficult fight with congressional Republicans to avoid sharp spending cuts and steep tax increases collectively referred to as the "fiscal cliff." However, **he** still **has a** longer-term **to-do list for his remaining four years in office**, he said in an interview on NBC's Meet the Press that was broadcast on Sunday. Obama, who won re-election in November after a campaign in which he succeeded in painting himself as a strong advocate for the middle class and those aspiring to join it, also promised in the interview to make a run at passing gun control legislation in the first year of his second term. **"Fixing our broken immigration system is a top priority," he said. He renewed a pledge to introduce legislation in the first year of his second term to get it done.** Immigration reform is a sensitive subject for the president, who failed to fulfil his promise to revamp the system during his first term. Latino voters were a critical part of the coalition that helped get him re-elected, a fact that may soften political opposition from Republicans, who are eager to bolster their support with that demographic group.

## A2 Border Security

### **Border security won't hold-up reform – Obama fighting off objections**

**Reuters 2/5** (“House Republicans try to chip away at immigration reform”,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/06/us-usa-immigration-idUSBRE9130V620130206>,

But immigration reform **activists asked Obama** at a White House meeting **to stick to his position** that 11 million people should not have to wait until the border is declared secure.¶ **“It can't be a trigger that keeps moving the goal posts and is**

**indefinable**. So it has to be meaningful, real and tangible for us to accept it,” said Janet Murguia, president of the Hispanic group National Council of La Raza.¶ The **Obama** administration **points to a steep drop in illegal immigration** from Mexico in recent years

**and the deployment of thousands of Border Patrol officers as evidence that the border is more**

**secure**.¶ Spokesman Jay Carney said **the White House had** **already met many of the Republican criteria** **for**

**border security**.¶ “Close to all of those goals, if not **all of those goals, have been met** because of the president's

commitment to enhanced border security,” he said.¶ **Congressional Republicans have become more willing to work**

**on an immigration** reform **after Hispanics delivered a clear message in the 2012 election**. Seventy-one percent of Latinos voted for Obama, compared to 27 percent for his Republican rival Mitt Romney.

## A2 Citizenship

### Won't hold-up passage

**Sargent 2/4** (Greg, "How House Republicans can kill immigration reform",

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/plum-line/wp/2013/02/04/how-house-republicans-can-kill-immigration-reform/>,

To be sure, **immigration** reform **could survive even if House Republicans don't allow a path to citizenship** to be included in the initial House compromise. **If the Senate passes its compromise by wide bipartisan margins, the**

**pressure on House Republicans to allow a vote on it will be extremely intense**, and **it could pass mostly with Dem support** (which is **how** the **fiscal cliff** deal **was resolved**).

But it would be far better if the emerging House compromise does contain a path to citizenship. If it doesn't, it will be yet another sign of just how hostile House Republicans are to genuine immigration reform — and how hard it will be to achieve.

## A2 Same-Sex Couples

### Won't derail overall reform

**Kelly 2/8** (Erin, "Gay rights becoming controversy in immigration reform", <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2013/02/08/gay-rights-immigration-reform/1903119/>,

**\*\*Note – This = Conclusion – follows the card the aff will likely read from this article**

Frank **Sharry**, a longtime immigrant rights' advocate and executive director of America's Voice, **acknowledged** that **the same-sex partner issue** will spark controversy **but does not believe it will derail immigration reform.**¶ "I'm sure it will be the subject of a huge amendment fight when an immigration reform bill comes to the Senate floor," said Sharry, who supports the same-sex partner provision. "But I think **it will ultimately survive. I don't think it will be a deal-breaker.**"¶ Sharry said

**Republicans are anxious to court Latinos**, who are the fastest growing ethnic group in America. Latino voters overwhelming supported Obama and Democratic congressional candidates in last fall's election, in part because of Republican opposition to any immigration reform that would offer illegal immigrants a chance to earn their way to legal status and citizenship.¶ "**Republicans are trying to save themselves** from certain electoral doom by reaching out to Latino voters," Sharry said. "**That's a much bigger concern** for them **than a same-sex partner provision**. It may bring some howls of protest, but **I'm optimistic it won't bring down the reform process.**"

### Obama won't push – no effect on reform

**Demirjian 2/7** (Karoun, "Obama's push for gay rights in immigration reform prompts GOP opposition", <http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2013/feb/07/obamas-push-gay-rights-immigration-reform-couple-p/>

Thus far, however, **Obama has not been pressing the point too forcefully. He left out any mention of same-sex couples in his immigration speech in Las Vegas last week,** during which **he** also **indicated he would defer to the congressional process**— unless it starts to falter. "The question is: How hard is the president going to push?" said David Damore, a professor of political science at UNLV who analyzes polling on immigration for Latino Decisions. "**When push comes to shove, if Republicans just refuse on this, you could see (Obama) saying 'OK, we'll address this later.'**"

## A2 thumper – generic

All of our uniqueness evidence answers this—he's only spending political capital on CIR

Their conception of link uniqueness is wrong --- the plan introduces an entirely new initiative on Obama's agenda. He has a carefully calibrated agenda now and has accounted for issues like \_\_\_\_\_, but not the plan.

And, default to issue specific uniqueness --- recent evidence proves CIR is likely now and there is only a chance the plan disrupts the agenda.

**It's top of the agenda and will pass---comes before guns and economy**

**Pimentel 2/15** Joseph is a writer at Asian Journal. "Proponents of comprehensive immigration reform hope for resolution in August," 2013, <http://www.asianjournal.com/community/community-news/19469-proponents-of-comprehensive-immigration-reform-hope-for-resolution-in-august.html>, LOS ANGELES – **Pro-immigration advocates are hopeful that the government will pass a comprehensive immigration reform (CIR) legislation by August**, giving relief to the more than 11 million undocumented individuals in the United States. ¶ During a New America Media national telebriefing: Tracking Immigration Reform in 2013 on Thursday, proponents of CIR believe **this is the year** – and have set August as its target date - **that reform legislation has to pass** or the issue may languish again. ¶ "That is an ambitious timeline but I believe I think it's one that is possible," said Angela Kelley, vice president for Immigration Policy and Advocacy, Center for American Progress. ¶ "Those of us who have been fighting for reform for all these years, it is one that we must push and frankly, demand. Time is not our friend. The closer you get to the end of the year, the harder it is to get (Senate and House of Representative) members to do anything," Kelley added. ¶ Comprehensive immigration reform has been a polarizing issue, mired in Washington politics for years with both sides unable to get anything done. This year **it appeared CIR would** once again **take a backseat as** other issues like **gun control, and the economy have been placed on top.** ¶ **Heading into his second term**, President Barack **Obama has placed immigration reform on top of his agenda** – doing a speech about the issue in Las Vegas and mentioning it again during his State of the Union address. ¶ "We know what needs to be done," said Obama during his state of the union speech. "As we speak, bipartisan groups in both chambers are working diligently to draft a bill, and I applaud their efforts. Now let's get this done. Send me a comprehensive immigration reform bill in the next few months, and I will sign it right away." ¶ **Obama is** looking at his legacy and **leading the charge on this issue**, said Kelley. ¶ Frank Sharry of America's Voice, an immigration policy group, said unlike years past when Republicans and Democrats constantly butted heads over the issue, now **both parties have a political imperative to get comprehensive immigration reform passed** the goal line."

**Immigration is top priority**

**Sun Times 2/15**

"Latino experts see possibilities, pitfalls in immigration reform effort", 2013, <http://www.suntimes.com/news/18233818-418/latino-experts-see-possibilities-pitfalls-in-immigration-reform-effort.html>, **Experts** from the local Latino community and beyond **met** Thursday **to voice** both **optimism and caution about the nation's plans for immigration reform.** ¶ **We are at a moment for comprehensive immigration reform unlike anything we've seen in recent history,** said Sylvia Puente, executive director of the Latino Policy Forum. ¶ In his State of the Union address on Tuesday night, President Barack **Obama said immigration reform is a top priority.** ¶ **A bipartisan group of eight senators**, including Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), **is working to fix the immigration system.** The record number of Latino voters turned out in November's election, and Republicans, who lost Hispanic voters, are now taking a serious look at an immigration overhaul.



## Top priority – comes before everything, including gun control

AP 1/26 (“Obama, senators launching immigration push”,

<http://www.newsday.com/news/nation/obama-senators-launching-immigration-push-1.4514347>

President Barack **Obama will launch a campaign next week aimed at overhauling** the nation's flawed **immigration** system and creating legal status for millions, as a bipartisan Senate group nears agreement on achieving the same goals. ¶ **The proposals from Obama** and lawmakers **will mark the start of** what is expected to be a **contentious** and emotional **process** with deep political implications. Latino voters overwhelmingly backed Obama in the 2012 election, leaving Republicans grappling for a way to regain their standing with an increasingly powerful pool of voters. ¶ **The president will press his case for immigration** changes during a trip to Las Vegas Tuesday. The Senate working group is also aiming to outline its proposals next week, according to a Senate aide. ¶ Administration officials say **Obama's second-term immigration push will be a continuation of the principles he outlined during his first four years in office** but failed to act on. He is expected to revive his little-noticed 2011 immigration "blueprint," which calls for a **pathway to citizenship** for illegal immigrants that includes paying fines and back taxes; increased **border security**; mandatory **penalties for businesses that employ unauthorized immigrants**; and **improvements to the legal immigration** system, including giving **green cards to high-skilled workers** and **lifting caps on legal immigration for the immediate family members** of U.S. citizens. ¶ "What has been absent in the time since he put those principles forward has been a willingness by Republicans, generally speaking, to move forward with comprehensive immigration reform," White House press secretary Jay Carney said. "What he hopes is that that dynamic has changed." ¶ The political dynamic does appear to have shifted following the November election. Despite making little progress on immigration in his first term, Obama won more than 70 percent of the Latino vote, in part because of the conservative positions on immigration that Republican nominee Mitt Romney staked out during the GOP primary. Latino voters accounted for 10 percent of the electorate in November. ¶ The president met privately Friday morning with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to discuss his next steps on immigration. Among those in the meeting was Rep. Linda Sanchez, D-Calif., who said **Obama told lawmakers "immigration reform is his number one legislative priority."** ¶ **That could bump back** the president's efforts to seek legislation enacting **stricter gun laws**, another issue he has vowed to make a top second term priority.

## A2 thumper – guns

### Won't be a fight and public pushes, not Obama

AP 2/5 ("Obama stands firm on gun control despite long odds",

<http://www.lewistownsentinel.com/page/content.detail/id/288266/Obama-stands-firm-on-gun-control-despite-long-odds-.html?isap=1&nav=5016>,

Obama also was more upbeat on the prospects of universal background checks, including for purchases at gun shows. "The good news is that we're starting to see a consensus emerge about the action Congress needs to take," he said. "The vast majority of Americans, including a majority of gun owners, support requiring criminal background checks for anyone trying to buy a gun. There's no reason why we can't get that done." He urged Americans to call their members of Congress to push for his entire package of stronger gun controls. "Tell them now is the time for action."

### Obama will focus capital on immigration first

Bellantoni 1/31 (Christina, "Obama Keeps Up Pressure for Gun Laws, Immigration Reform",

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/2013/01/obama-continues-full-court-press-for-gun-immigration-agendas.html>,

The Washington Post's Ed O'Keefe and David Farenthold assessed the hearing in full and concluded, "A consensus is emerging among lawmakers for an expansion of background checks for gun buyers, a proposal with far more bipartisan support than a reinstatement of the federal assault-weapons ban." The NewsHour put together a detailed report on the day's drama. Watch here or below: More of our coverage of the gun debate can be found here. On immigration, Mr. Obama participated in interviews with two television networks catering to Spanish-language audiences. On Telemundo the president said he won't pull back on enforcement of the law or scale back deportation. He acknowledged it could be a tough political battle ahead but emphasized his commitment to the issue. "The one thing I can guarantee is my effort," Mr. Obama told Telemundo. "I can guarantee that I will put everything I've got behind it. We're putting our shoulder to the wheel." He told Univision that he wants to see legislation move forward swiftly. "If they are on a path as they have already said, where they want to get a bill done by March, then I think that's a reasonable timeline and I think we can get that done. I'm not going to lay down a particular date because I want to give them a little room to debate," he said. "If it slips a week, that's one thing. If it starts slipping three months, that's a problem." The New York Times' Michael Shear and Mark Landler report that administration aides are sounding confident notes about political momentum being on the president's side. Politico's Lois Romano writes of an effort afoot in the House by four Republicans and four Democrats. She reports they "had hoped to put forth a statement of principles as early as Friday, but sources say that is unlikely" and it could be closer to Feb. 12, the day of the State of the Union. With Mr. Obama's annual address to lawmakers less than two weeks away and his plans to make his case at campaign-style events outside of Washington, the pressure on Congress will only increase.

### Biden pushes, not Obama

Shiner 1/31 (Meredith, "Biden Continues Upbeat Mission on Gun Control",

[http://www.rollcall.com/news/biden\\_continues\\_upbeat\\_mission\\_on\\_gun\\_control-222070-1.html?pg=2](http://www.rollcall.com/news/biden_continues_upbeat_mission_on_gun_control-222070-1.html?pg=2)

Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. paid a House call to Senate Democrats' weekly policy lunch Thursday, pushing the president's gun control agenda and calling the implementation of stricter gun laws a political "no brainer." Words come easier to Biden in a mob of reporters, however, than they do to Senate Democratic leaders when they craft legislative text. Democrats have taken their first steps toward legislation by holding Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, but the timeline for an actual bill, whatever that might look like, is unclear. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has said he would like any gun violence bill to move through the committee in regular order, something that would happen perhaps at the same time the panel considers a massive immigration overhaul. Biden, who was tasked by President Barack Obama to craft the administration's gun policy, visited his old stomping ground to remind his colleagues that gun control is a top priority of Obama's, even if the caucus hasn't come forward with a clear strategy to proceed and handfuls of members are reluctant to touch gun control at all. "The visual image of those 20 little children being riddled with bullets has not only traumatized the nation but ... it's like the straw that broke the camel's back," Biden told

**reporters** after meeting with Democrats in the Mansfield Room, right off the Senate floor. "**I made the case** for not only assault weapons but for the entire set of recommendations the president laid out."

## Immigration will pass and guns will not thump it

**News Times 1/19** <http://www.newstimes.com/local/article/Immigration-reform-suddenly-approachable-4208125.php>

Ironically, **the success of the domestic agenda** in his second term -- which, as of **now, appears centered on immigration reform** and gun control -- **depends on playing to both red states and the blue ones.** Neither immigration nor gun control had a significant place in Obama's first-term agenda. Indeed, at their core, both are public safety programs -- messy and dark and generally removed from the "hope" that got him to the White House. But in the span of a few weeks, the 2012 presidential election and the massacre at Newtown provided the impetus for a renewed push for both comprehensive immigration reform and comprehensive gun controls. The question now is whether the White House can do both, and that has proponents of immigration reform very anxious. Pro-immigration forces had the president's ear in November. Hispanics are now over 10 percent of the total electorate, twice as big a portion as just 20 years ago, and they gave Obama over 70 percent of their votes. But then all those children were killed in Newtown, and immigration reform became a lesser priority. The moral obligation to address gun violence fell quickly on Obama and Vice President Joe Biden. Their announcement last week of sweeping legislative and administrative changes was driven by a near-universal revulsion at what happened in Connecticut. A CBS News/New York Times poll released last Thursday showed that, among Democrats, 93 percent support background check for gun purchasers; among Republicans, it's 89 percent. These numbers are more than a mandate; they make some kind of change a foregone conclusion. **The political reality today is that immigration reform and gun control can occur simultaneously, because they are being driven by different forces.** This is hopeful news for those who believe we should be judged as a nation both by how we treat our newest citizens and protect our youngest ones. **With Republicans now eager to engage in a discussion on immigration reform,** to undo some of the damage of their past resistance, **Obama can leave much of the impetus for immigration to the red states** and promote gun control via the blue ones. The last part is already happening: Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, and New York Governor Andrew Cuomo either are pushing, or have already passed, state legislation in tandem with the White House's gun-control effort. Democrats in conservative states, like Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana and Majority Leader Harry Reid on Nevada, will need the White House to stay engaged on gun control, if only to provide them with cover. Meanwhile, as Republicans become more recalcitrant on gun control -- and the lunacy of the NRA's media campaign continues -- they will need to find an issue that makes them seem kinder and gentler. Enter immigration reform. **The Republicans know that their future rests on embracing a more diverse electorate. They need immigration reform as much as it needs them.** This pressure is felt most acutely by state-level Republican leaders aiming for 2016, such as Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal. Hints of this strategy were apparent last week, when the White House complimented Florida Republican Senator Marco Rubio for conceding, in a Wall Street Journal interview, that he would support a path for citizenship for 11 million illegal immigrants. The Obama administration can afford to be gracious to Rubio, the GOP's rising star and a likely 2016 presidential candidate. They had stolen his thunder last summer when they stopped deportations of young, illegal immigrants (the DREAMers) before Rubio could get a similar proposal out.

## Immigration 1st – comes before everything, including gun control

**AP 1/26** ("Obama, senators launching immigration push",

<http://www.newsday.com/news/nation/obama-senators-launching-immigration-push-1.4514347>

President Barack **Obama will launch a campaign next week aimed at overhauling** the nation's flawed **immigration** system and creating legal status for millions, as a bipartisan Senate group nears agreement on achieving the same goals. **The proposals from Obama** and lawmakers **will mark the start of** what is expected to be a **contentious** and emotional **process** with deep political implications. Latino voters overwhelmingly backed Obama in the 2012 election, leaving Republicans grappling for a way to regain their standing with an increasingly powerful pool of voters. **The president will press his case for immigration** changes during a trip to Las Vegas Tuesday. The Senate working group is also aiming to outline its proposals next week, according to a Senate aide. Administration officials say **Obama's** second-term immigration **push will be a continuation of the principles he outlined during his first four years in office** but failed to act on. He is expected to revive his little-noticed 2011 immigration "blueprint," which calls for a **pathway to citizenship** for illegal immigrants that includes paying fines and back taxes; increased **border security**; mandatory **penalties for businesses that employ unauthorized immigrants**; and **improvements to the legal immigration** system, including giving **green cards to high-skilled workers** and **lifting caps on legal immigration for the immediate family members** of U.S. citizens. "What has been absent in the time since he put those principles forward has been a willingness by Republicans, generally speaking, to move forward with comprehensive immigration

reform," White House press secretary Jay Carney said. "What he hopes is that that dynamic has changed."¶ The political dynamic does appear to have shifted following the November election. Despite making little progress on immigration in his first term, Obama won more than 70 percent of the Latino vote, in part because of the conservative positions on immigration that Republican nominee Mitt Romney staked out during the GOP primary. Latino voters accounted for 10 percent of the electorate in November.¶ The president met privately Friday morning with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to discuss his next steps on immigration. Among those in the meeting was Rep. Linda Sanchez, D-Calif., who said **Obama told lawmakers "immigration reform is his number one legislative priority."**¶ **That could bump back the president's efforts to seek** legislation enacting **stricter gun laws**, another issue he has vowed to make a top second term priority.

## Won't be a fight or effect immigration

**Hopkins 1/20** (Cheyenne, "Plouffe Predicts Passage of Gun Control, Immigration Changes", <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-01-20/plouffe-predicts-passage-of-gun-control-immigration-measures.html>,

President Barack Obama's proposed **immigration law** changes **and gun control** measures **should be able to pass Congress**, said David Plouffe, Obama's senior political adviser.¶ **Newtown has changed the debate**, Plouffe said on CNN's "State of the Union" today, referring to the Connecticut town where 20 schoolchildren and 6 educators were killed last month. "Sadly, it took a tragedy like that, but you're seeing **a lot of people** -- by the way Democrats and Republicans -- **think differently about this issue** since this tragedy."¶ Enlarge image Obama Takes Oath at White House to Begin Second Term¶ U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts administers the oath of office as U.S. President Barack Obama is sworn in for a second term in the Blue Room of the White House in Washington, D.C. on Sunday. Photographer: Brendan Smialowski/Pool via Bloomberg¶ Obama was officially sworn in today, as required by the Constitution, in a small ceremony at the White House. He will take the oath a second time tomorrow in a public event on the steps of the U.S. Capitol. Chief Justice John Roberts will administer both oaths.¶ Vice President Joe Biden was also sworn in today for a second term by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor at his residence at the Naval Observatory in Washington. Later, Obama and Biden laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery.¶ Obama has staked out a second term agenda of overhauling immigration, gun control and the tax code. **Plouffe took an optimistic stance, saying that the time has come for both immigration change and gun control.**¶ Republican Reaction¶ U.S. Senator Roy Blunt, a Republican from Missouri, said he wants to see a detailed gun control plan from Obama.¶ "Let's do things better rather than take an opportunity to go after an old agenda," Blunt said today on "Fox News Sunday" program. "There has to be a plan that could possibly work or the president won't get it done."¶ Senator John Barrasso, a Republican from Wyoming, said the president's plan won't pass Congress and he doubts Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid will bring it to the floor.¶ "He has six Democrats up for election in two years in states where the president received fewer than 42 percent of the vote," Barrasso said on CNN's "State of the Union." Democrats control the Senate with 53 seats to 45 Republican seats. The two independent senators caucus with the Democrats.¶ "He doesn't want his Democrats to have to choose between their own constituencies and the president's positions," Barrasso. He said the president is focusing too much on gun control and ignoring mental health and violence in society.¶ Economic Wreckage¶ Obama's first term was largely consumed by repairing economic wreckage from the 2008 financial crisis and getting his health care law passed. His second term is starting with efforts to reach a compromise with Congress on raising the debt ceiling and cutting deficit spending. A Republican plan for a short-term debt ceiling increase, giving the Treasury Department three more months of borrowing capacity, is "progress," Plouffe said on the "Fox News Sunday" program. "We don't think short-term is smart for the economy" because it doesn't offer certainty, he said on Fox.¶ The debt limit has been periodically raised since its creation in 1917, when Congress and President Woodrow Wilson authorized the Treasury to issue long-term securities to help finance entry into World War I. Since 1960, Congress has raised or revised the limit 79 times, including 49 times under Republican presidents, according to the Treasury Department, noting the U.S. never has defaulted on its obligations.¶ Three Months¶ "Three months is no way to run the economy or railroad or anything else so that's not ideal," Plouffe said on CBS's "Face the Nation" program. Still, "it's a significant moment that the Republican party now has moved off their position that the only way they're going to pay their bills is if they get the correct kind of concessions."¶ The Senate will pass a budget this year, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, a Democrat from New York, said on NBC's "Meet the Press" program.¶ "It's going to have revenues in it and our Republican colleagues better get used to that fact," Schumer said.¶ House Republicans last week said they plan to vote on a three-month extension of U.S. borrowing authority in an effort to force the Democratic-led Senate to adopt a budget.¶ Financing for government agencies is scheduled to lapse in March. Congress faces two other fiscal deadlines in the next 90 days, and House Republicans plan to use those debates -- rather than the struggle over the debt limit -- to try to force spending cuts.¶ The last time Congress fought over the ceiling, Obama signed an increase on Aug. 2, 2011, the day that the Treasury warned U.S. borrowing authority would expire.¶ Credit Rating¶ Standard & Poor's cut the nation's credit rating. Still, Treasury bond investors -- who most directly bear the risk of any government default -- haven't shown alarm. Yields on 10-year U.S. Treasury notes declined to 2.56 percent on Aug. 5, 2011, the day of the S&P downgrade, and continued to fall.¶ Yields on 10-year Treasuries, a benchmark for everything from mortgages to corporate borrowing costs, are down from more than 5 percent in 2007, before the financial crisis of 2008.¶ Treasury 10-year notes rose last week for a second week for the first time since November as the absence of a resolution to the impasse the U.S. debt ceiling sustained demand for the safest securities. The 10-year note yield fell this week three basis points, or 0.03 percentage point, to 1.84 percent, according to Bloomberg Bond Trader pricing.¶ Plouffe said Congress has the votes to pass Obama's agenda.¶ "We're confident and that's one reason we want to stay in communication with the American people because I think they are going to demand action here," Plouffe said on CNN.¶ Gun Control¶ The Dec. 14 shooting in a Connecticut grade school thrust gun control to the top of Obama's second-term agenda. This past week, he unveiled the most ambitious gun-control proposals in decades, announcing a \$500 million package of legislation and executive actions aimed at curbing firearms violence.¶ The president called on Congress to require background checks for all gun buyers, ban high-capacity

ammunition clips, and reinstate a ban on sales of assault weapons. Obama also signed 23 executive actions aimed at circumventing congressional opposition to new gun restrictions, including several designed to maximize prosecution of gun crimes and improve access to government data for background checks.¶ Plouffe said **the president should be able to get the 60 votes in the Senate and the 219 votes in the House needed to pass a gun control bill.**¶ Assault Weapons¶ “If you look at high-capacity magazines, assault weapons, universal background checks, progress we can make on mental health and school safety, **all of these things enjoy enormous support** of the American people, **both Democrats and Republicans.**” Plouffe said on ABC’s “This Week with George Stephanopoulos.”¶ “Putting together the legislative coalition is going to be hard, obviously, but **we’re very confident.** I do think **things have changed** since Newtown,” Plouffe said.¶ Obama’s call has put him in conflict with the National Rifle Association, which opposes the restrictions and has called for armed guards in every school. The gun lobby last week released an ad saying Obama’s own daughters are protected by armed guards at school and calling the president an “elitist hypocrite.”¶ Obama’s inaugural address tomorrow and State of the Union speech on Feb. 12 will set the tone as he pushes for action.¶ Plouffe said **there is no reason** “that **immigration reform shouldn’t pass.**”¶ “Obviously **the legislative process has to work its way through** but **this is the moment.**” Plouffe said. “**The stars seem to be aligned** to finally get comprehensive immigration reform.”

## **Immigration will pass by the summer – PC is key and no thumpers -**

Chris **Weignat 1/23** Political writer and blogger with the Huffington Post, “Handicapping Obama's Second Term Agenda,” [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/chris-weigant/obama-second-term\\_b\\_2537802.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/chris-weigant/obama-second-term_b_2537802.html)

**Realistically, Obama's only going to have anywhere from a few months to (at most) a year and a half to get anything accomplished. Which is why he is right to push his agenda immediately,** as evidenced by his inaugural speech. **But even he must realize that he's not going to get everything he wants, so it will be interesting to see what makes it through Congress and what dies an ignoble legislative death. There is reason for hope. Obama begins from a position of strength, politically.** His job approval ratings have **been consistently over 50 percent since he was re-elected** -- a range Obama hasn't seen since 2009. As mentioned, **the Republican presence in both houses of Congress has shrunk. More importantly,** though, **the House Republicans are visibly chastened (or even "shaken") by the election's outcome.** This has already allowed Obama to rack up two early victories in the endless budget debates -- and in both, Obama got almost everything he asked for, did not give up much of anything, and held firm on some very bold negotiating tactics. **Obama won the fight over the fiscal cliff,** which resulted in the first rise in income tax rates in two decades, **and** the only thing he had to budge on was the threshold for these higher taxes. Today, the House Republicans passed a "clean" rise in **the debt ceiling,** after Obama swore over and over again that he "was not going to negotiate" on the issue at all. **The score so far is: Obama two, House Republicans zero** (to put it in sporting terms). Of course, the Republicans only extended the debt ceiling for a few months, but this shouldn't really worry anyone, because a longer-term extension will doubtlessly be a part of any sort of grand bargain on the budget talks. **The Republicans,** very wisely, **realized they were playing a losing game and decided to reshuffle the deadlines on the calendar.** Rather than being faced with the debt ceiling crisis first, and then two budgetary crises, they **have moved the debt ceiling problem to the end of the list.** Which means the next big fight Obama faces is going to be another haggle over the budget. This is going to be a tough battle, and Obama is bound to disappoint some of his supporters in the midst of it. Some sacred cows are going to wind up as hamburger, although at this point it's hard to see which ones. The real measurement of success here will be whether the House Republicans and Obama can come to terms with a budget for the next year or year-and-a-half. Long-term budget stability has been largely absent from Washington for a while now, so if any agreement can be reached perhaps it'll help the economy recover a lot faster throughout 2013 and 2014. In the long run, that will be a positive thing, no matter what such a budget agreement actually contains. One safe bet for what will be in it, though, is a long-term extension of the debt ceiling. **Budget battles are going to happen no matter what else does -- that's another safe bet. What is more interesting, though, is handicapping which of Obama's agenda items will actually see some action.** **There are three major initiatives that Obama is currently pushing: action on global warming, comprehensive immigration reform, and gun control. Obama did mention other issues in his speech, but these are the big three for now.** Gay marriage, for instance, is in the hands of the Supreme Court right now, and no matter how they rule it's hard to see any legislative action (good or bad) happening on it immediately afterwards. Gun control will likely be the first of these debated in Congress. Vice President Biden laid out a wide array of possible actions Congress could take on the issue, all of which Obama then backed. While the Newtown massacre did indeed shift public opinion dramatically on the overall issue, the biggest initiative is not likely to become law. **An assault rifle ban** is very important to some Democrats, but the way I read it is that this was included to have something to "trade away" in the negotiations. If Obama gets most of the other gun control initiatives -- closing loopholes on background checks, much

better tracking of weapons, and all the other "small bore" (sorry about that pun) ideas -- then he will at least be able to say he accomplished something at the end of the day. Perhaps this is pessimistic, but the mechanics of banning "assault weapons" become very tricky, when you have to actually define what they are in legal language. And such a ban may not get universal Democratic backing anyway, so I fully expect this **will be shelved at some point in exchange for support for all the other initiatives. Without such a ban,** the prospects for other meaningful **gun control legislation** get a lot better, though, and I think that a bill **will eventually pass.** **The second big agenda item is immigration reform. President Obama holds virtually all the cards, politically, on this one.** All Republicans who can read either demographics or polling numbers know full well that this may be their party's last chance not to go the way of the Whigs. Their support among Latinos is dismal, and even that's putting it politely. Some Republicans think they have come up with a perfect solution on how to defuse the issue, but they are going to be proven sadly mistaken in the end, I believe. The Republican plan will be announced by Senator Marco Rubio at some point, and it will seem to mirror the Democratic plan -- with one key difference. Republicans -- even the ones who know their party has to do something on the immigration problem -- are balking at including a "path to citizenship" for the 11 million undocumented immigrants who are already in America. The Republicans are trying to have their cake and eat it too -- and it's not going to work. "Sure," they say, "we'll give some sort of papers to these folks, let them stay, and even let them work... but there's no need to give them the hope of ever becoming a full citizen." This just isn't going to be good enough, though. There are essentially two things citizens can do which green card holders cannot: serve on juries, and vote. The Republicans are not worried about tainted juries, in case that's not clear enough. Republicans will bend over backwards in an effort to convince Latinos that their proposal will work out just fine for everyone. Latinos, however, aren't stupid. They know that being denied any path to citizenship equals an effort to minimize their voice on the national political stage. Which is why, as I said, Obama holds all the cards in this fight. Because this is the one issue in his agenda which Republicans also have a big vested interest in making happen. Obama and the Democrats will, I believe, hold firm on their insistence on a path to citizenship, and I think **a comprehensive immigration bill will likely pass some time this year, perhaps before the summer congressional break.** The path to citizenship it includes will be long, expensive and difficult (Republicans will insist on at least that), but it will be there. On gun control, I think Obama will win a partial victory. On immigration, I think he will win an almost-total victory. **On global warming,** however, **he's going to be disappointed.** In fact, **I doubt -- no matter how much "bully pulping" Obama does -- that any bill will even appear out of a committee in either house of Congress.** This will be seen as Obama's "overreach" -- a bridge too far for the current political climate. Anyone expecting big legislative action on global warming is very likely going to be massively disappointed, to put it quite bluntly. In fact, Obama will signal this in the next few months, as he approves the Keystone XL pipeline -- much to the dismay of a lot of his supporters. Of course, I could be wrong about any or all of these predictions. I have no special knowledge of how things will work out in Congress in the immediate future. I'm merely making educated guesses about what Obama will be able to achieve in at least the first few years of his second term. **Obama has a lot of political capital right now, but that could easily change soon.** The House **Republicans** seem almost demoralized right now, and Obama has successfully splintered them and called their bluff on two big issues already -- but they **could regroup and decide to block everything** the White House wants, and damn the political consequences. **Unseen issues will pop up** both on the domestic and foreign policy stages, as they always do. **But, for now, this is my take on how the next few years are going to play out in Washington.** Time will tell whether I've been too optimistic or too pessimistic on any or all of Obama's main agenda items. We'll just have to wait and see.

## A2 thumper – NLRB

### **More ev to support this distinction – Obama’s legislative prioritization ensures passage**

**Gomez, 1/25** (Alan, “Obama, members of Congress start immigration push,”

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2013/01/25/obama-immigration-congress-legislation/1865129/>,

**Obama has vowed to make immigration a 'top legislative priority.'** The push to overhaul the nation's immigration laws is officially underway. President **Obama met with Hispanic members of Congress** at the

White House on Friday **and is planning** a speech in Las Vegas on Tuesday **to "redouble the administration's efforts to work with Congress to fix the broken immigration system this year,"** according to a White House statement.

**Obama insisted that he would lead on the issue** and emphasized that any changes to the nation's immigration laws would include an "earned pathway to citizenship" for the nation's 11 million illegal immigrants. Republicans have insisted that the country fully secure the borders and enact tight restrictions on businesses from hiring illegal immigrants before granting any new rights to people illegally living in the country. STORY: Jeb Bush pushes comprehensive immigration strategy After Friday's meeting, **members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus** — all Democrats — **said they were enthusiastic by the president's commitment to moving**

**on an immigration bill.** **"The president is the quarterback and he will direct the team, call the play**

**and be pivotal if we succeed,"** said Rep. **Luis Gutierrez**, D-Ill., one of the House members who will be shepherding the bill through Congress. **Both Republicans and Democrats have discussed the need to tackle immigration this**

**term, but there are many disagreements over what it will look like and how to proceed.** Republicans, including Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, have insisted that they approach it piece by piece. A bipartisan group of senators plan on introducing a bill on Tuesday focused on increasing the number of visas for high-skilled immigrants with degrees in the STEM fields — science, technology, engineering and mathematics — according to The Hill. Meanwhile, many Democrats support a "comprehensive" bill that would address all the issues at once. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid filed Senate Bill No. 1 as the "Immigration Reform that Works for America's Future Act," a symbolic, but telling indication of how important the issue will be in the new Congress. Another bipartisan group of senators is almost ready to unveil their own comprehensive immigration plan, according to The Washington Post. **Whatever the approach, members feel**

**the stars are finally aligned** to tackle an issue that eluded George W. Bush during his White House years and Obama during his first term in office. "Immigration reform is not a matter of 'if' but 'when,'" said Rep. Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., chairman of the House Democratic Caucus. "After today's meeting, it's clear that President Obama is determined to fix our long broken immigration system."

### **Get real – the decision was a joke and won't stick**

**AP 1/26** (White House: Ruling won't affect other Obama picks, [http://www.pal-](http://www.pal-item.com/article/20130126/UPDATES/130126003/White-House-Ruling-won-t-affect-other-Obama-picks)

[item.com/article/20130126/UPDATES/130126003/White-House-Ruling-won-t-affect-other-Obama-picks](http://www.pal-item.com/article/20130126/UPDATES/130126003/White-House-Ruling-won-t-affect-other-Obama-picks),

The **Justice Department hinted** that **the administration would ask the Supreme Court to overturn the decision**, which was rendered by **three conservative judges** appointed by **Republican presidents**. "We

disagree with the court's ruling and believe that **the president's recess appointments are constitutionally sound**," the

statement said. The court acknowledged that **the ruling conflicts with what** some **other federal appeals courts have held about** when **recess appointments** are valid, **which only added to the likelihood of an appeal** to the high court.

## A2 thumper – sequestration

**Empirically denied --- immigration is making progress now despite the sequestration fight --- 1NC Latino Post.**

**Sequestration won't thump --- Obama regrouping now.**

**Washington Post, 3-1**, p. [www.washingtonpost.com/politics/obama-to-refocus-attention-on-immigration-gun-control/2013/03/01/64f8e2d0-81ef-11e2-a350-49866afab584\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/obama-to-refocus-attention-on-immigration-gun-control/2013/03/01/64f8e2d0-81ef-11e2-a350-49866afab584_story.html)

President **Obama signaled** Friday **a desire to refocus his attention on second-term priorities, such as immigration** and gun control, **after weeks of fruitless wrangling with Republicans over his fiscal agenda.** “What I want to try to do is make sure that we’re constantly focused . . . on how are we helping American families succeed,” Obama said at a news conference after failing to strike a deal with congressional leaders to avert \$85 billion in mandatory budget cuts. “Deficit reduction is part of that agenda, and an important part, but it’s not the only part,” he said. “And I don’t want us to be paralyzed on everything just because we disagree on this one thing.” For a president who has bemoaned Washington’s penchant for lurching between self-manufactured political crises over the past two years, the inability to compromise with Republicans appeared to leave him simultaneously exasperated and emboldened. Though he had run out of ideas on how to get Congress to support his plan on taxes and spending — “What more do you think I should do?” he asked a reporter — **Obama sounded an upbeat note on other initiatives**, including raising the minimum wage, expanding preschool programs and changing voting laws. “There are other areas where we can make progress,” he said. “This is the agenda that the American people voted for. These are America’s priorities. They’re too important to go unaddressed.” **The president’s tone came as a relief to advocates who have fretted that the ongoing fight over the deficit would drain attention and critical momentum from Obama’s promise to champion** reforms to gun control and **immigration** laws. Though Obama touched on both during his State of the Union address Feb. 12, the last event he dedicated solely to gun control was a Feb. 4 appearance at a Minneapolis police station, and on immigration it was a Jan. 29 speech at a Las Vegas high school. In the meantime, **the administration has tried to remain engaged via less high-profile means.** Vice President Biden made policy speeches and met with advocates on gun control, and **Obama used phone calls to Capitol Hill and a private Oval Office meeting with two Republican senators to push** quietly on **immigration**. “There are plenty of issues Congress needs to be getting to,” said David Leopold, an executive committee member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. “Manufactured crises like the ‘fiscal cliff’ or sequester do not advance anyone’s agenda, least of all the American people’s agenda.” Advocates acknowledged that the White House’s decision to focus on the economy made sense in light of polls showing Americans overwhelmingly believe that jobs and growth should be Obama’s top priority. But they have learned from experience that momentum for their causes can disappear quickly. Obama promised comprehensive immigration reform in his first term but pursued a major health-care overhaul that ate up his political capital and the administration’s attention. He gave a much-heralded speech about gun violence after the mass shooting in Tucson, Ariz., in January 2011 that wounded former representative Gabby Giffords (D), but no changes to gun laws followed. Obama has “got to be an effective spokesperson on [gun violence] to do a good job, but the minute he changes focus from the economy, everybody goes bananas,” said Matt Bennett, a senior vice president at Third Way, a think tank that supports stricter gun control. “That puts him in a bit of a bind.” On Capitol Hill, a bipartisan coalition of senators is working on legislation that would require mandatory background checks for all private gun sales, closing a long-standing loophole. The bill hit a snag after Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) opposed adding language to the bill that would require gun owners to keep transactional records of private firearms sales. **Another bipartisan Senate group is drafting a comprehensive immigration bill** that would likely include a path to citizenship for the nation’s 11 million illegal immigrants. Senators said they hope to produce a draft in March, but the bill could be delayed until after the Easter recess, which runs through April 5, several sources said.



## PC key

**Obama is making a commitment to work with Congress to pass immigration reform --- it's a top priority and capital is key**

**Gomez, 1/25** (Alan, "Obama, members of Congress start immigration push,"

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2013/01/25/obama-immigration-congress-legislation/1865129/>

**Obama has vowed to make immigration a 'top legislative priority.'** The push to overhaul the nation's immigration laws is officially underway. President **Obama met with Hispanic members of Congress** at the White House on Friday **and is planning** a speech in Las Vegas on Tuesday to **"redouble the administration's efforts to work with Congress to fix the broken immigration system this year,"** according to a White House statement.

**Obama insisted that he would lead on the issue** and emphasized that any changes to the nation's immigration laws would include an "earned pathway to citizenship" for the nation's 11 million illegal immigrants. Republicans have insisted that the country fully secure the borders and enact tight restrictions on businesses from hiring illegal immigrants before granting any new rights to people illegally living in the country. STORY: Jeb Bush pushes comprehensive immigration strategy After Friday's meeting, **members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus** — all Democrats — **said they were enthusiastic by the president's commitment to moving on an immigration bill.** **"The president is the quarterback and he will direct the team, call the play**

**and be pivotal if we succeed,"** said Rep. Luis **Gutierrez**, D-Ill., one of the House members who will be shepherding the bill through Congress. **Both Republicans and Democrats have discussed the need to tackle immigration this**

**term, but there are many disagreements over what it will look like and how to proceed.** Republicans, including Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, have insisted that they approach it piece by piece. A bipartisan group of senators plan on introducing a bill on Tuesday focused on increasing the number of visas for high-skilled immigrants with degrees in the STEM fields — science, technology, engineering and mathematics — according to The Hill. Meanwhile, many Democrats support a "comprehensive" bill that would address all the issues at once. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid filed Senate Bill No. 1 as the "Immigration Reform that Works for America's Future Act," a symbolic, but telling indication of how important the issue will be in the new Congress. Another bipartisan group of senators is almost ready to unveil their own comprehensive immigration plan, according to The Washington Post. **Whatever the approach, members feel**

**the stars are finally aligned** to tackle an issue that eluded George W. Bush during his White House years and Obama during his first term in office. "Immigration reform is not a matter of 'if' but 'when,'" said Rep. Xavier Becerra, D-Calif., chairman of the House Democratic Caucus. "After today's meeting, it's clear that President Obama is determined to fix our long broken immigration system."

## Capital key

**DALLAS MORNING NEWS**, editorial, "Actions Must Match Obama's Immigration Pledge," **1--2--13**, <http://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/editorials/20130102-editorial-actions-must-match-obamas-immigration-pledge.ece>

President Barack **Obama said** all the right things Sunday about immigration reform. The president told NBC's Meet the Press that he **is serious about getting Congress to overhaul the laws governing immigrants**. He even declared that he will introduce an immigration bill this year. This newspaper welcomes that announcement. Texans particularly understand the unique challenges that an outdated immigration system presents. Even though the flow of illegal immigrants into the U.S. has subsided in the last few years, the many holes in the system leave families, schools, businesses and law enforcement struggling. And those are just some of the constituents challenged by flawed immigration laws. The president's words to NBC's David Gregory are only that — words. **What will really matter is whether he puts his muscle into the task** this year. We suggest that Obama start by looking at the example of former President George W. Bush. Back in 2006 and 2007, the Republican and his administration constantly worked Capitol Hill to pass a comprehensive plan. They failed, largely because Senate Republicans balked. But the opposition didn't stop the Bush White House from fully engaging Congress, including recalcitrant Republicans. **Obama may have a similar problem with his own party**. The dirty little secret in the 2006 and 2007 immigration battles was that some Democrats were content to let Senate Republicans kill the effort. **Labor-friendly Democrats didn't want a bill**, either. And they may not want one this year. **That reluctance is a major reason the president needs to invest in this fight**. He must figure out how to bring enough Democrats along, while also reaching out to Republicans. In short, the nation doesn't need a repeat of the process through

which the 2010 health care legislation was passed. Very few Republicans bought into the president's plan, leaving the Affordable Care Act open to partisan sniping throughout last year's election. **If the nation is going to create a saner immigration system, both parties need to support substantial parts** of an answer. The new system must include a guest worker program for future immigrants and a way for illegal immigrants already living here to legalize their status over time. Some House Republicans will object to one or both of those reforms, so Speaker John Boehner must be persuasive about the need for a wholesale change. But **the leadership that matters most will come from the White House.** The president has staked out the right position. Now he needs to present a bill and fight this year for a comprehensive solution. Nothing but action will count.

### Capital's key

Michael **Shifter**, President, Inter-American Dialogue, "Will Obama Kick the Can Down the Road," REVISTE IDEELE, **12--27--12**, <http://www.thedialogue.org/page.cfm?pageID=32&pubID=3186>

Not surprisingly, **Obama has been explicit that reforming** the US's shameful and broken **immigration** system will be a top priority in his second term. There is every indication that **he intends to use some of his precious political capital** – especially in the first year – to push for serious change. The biggest lesson of the last election was that the "Latino vote" was decisive. No one doubts that it will be even more so in future elections. During the campaign, many Republicans -- inexplicably -- frightened immigrants with offensive rhetoric. But the day after the election, there was talk, in both parties, of comprehensive immigration reform. **Despite the sudden optimism** about immigration reform, there is, of course, no guarantee that it will happen. **It will require a lot of negotiation and deal-making. Obama will have to invest a lot of his time and political capital -- twisting some arms, even in his own party.** Resistance will not disappear. There is also a chance that something unexpected could happen that would put off consideration of immigration reform. Following the horrific massacre at a Connecticut elementary school on December 14, for example, public pressure understandably mounted for gun control, at least the ban of assault weapons. But a decision to pursue that measure -- though desperately needed -- would take away energy and time from other priorities like immigration.

### Political capital key to immigration.

**ABC News, 1-2-2013**, p. [abcnews.go.com/ABC\\_Univision/News/things-president-obama-immigration-reform/story?id=18103115#.UOUq8onjkax](http://abcnews.go.com/ABC_Univision/News/things-president-obama-immigration-reform/story?id=18103115#.UOUq8onjkax)

On Sunday, President Barack **Obama said that immigration** reform **is a "top priority"** on his agenda **and that he would introduce legislation** in his first year. To find out what he needs to do to make reform a reality, we talked to Lynn Tramonte, the deputy director at America's Voice, a group that lobbies for immigration reform, and Muzaffar Chishti, the director of the New York office of the Migration Policy Institute, a think tank. Here's what we came up with. 1. Be a Leader **During Obama's first term, bipartisan legislation never got off the ground. The president needs to** do a better job **leading the charge this time around**, according to Chishti. **He has to make it clear that it's a high priority** of his," he said. **He has to make it clear that he'll use his bully pulpit and his political muscle to make it happen**, and he has to be open to using his veto power." His announcement this weekend is a step in that direction, but **he needs to follow through.**

### Political capital key to immigration reform.

**American Prospect, 12-29-2012**

**Address Immigration** While **Obama was unable to make good on his promise of passing comprehensive immigration reform** in his first two years in office thanks to Republican stonewalling after passage of the

Affordable Care Act, the president was able to offer some administrative relief to those left in legal limbo by our dysfunctional immigration system. In June of this year, the administration announced it would stop deporting undocumented immigrants who had been brought to the country through no fault of their own before age 16; had graduated from high school, earned a GED, or served in the military; and had no criminal record. The move was widely seen as an effort to provide relief for undocumented youth after the DREAM Act, which would have given undocumented youth brought to the country by their parents a path to citizenship, failed to pass the Senate in 2010. The Department of Homeland Security also suspended its 287(g) program, which authorized local law-enforcement officials like Arizona's notorious Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio to enforce federal immigration laws. But none of these administrative measures scratches the surface of the problems with the immigration system, which include overburdened courts, deplorable conditions in immigrant-detention centers, draconian family-unification policies, insufficient work Visas and arbitrary Visa caps, years-long administrative delays, and per-country caps that do not reflect current economic and humanitarian demands. The dysfunction in our immigration system is largely the reason there are 12 million undocumented immigrants currently living in the U.S.

**Buoyed by his re-election and with key Republicans eager to soften their image with Latino**

**voters, Obama has a prime opportunity to modernize** our outdated and dysfunctional **immigration system**. **Doing so is** both savvy politically and **necessary from an economic and humanitarian standpoint: It will** redound to the president and his party's advantage; serve to **meet the needs of the agriculture and technology sectors, which rely heavily on immigrant labor; and provide humanitarian relief for those fleeing poverty** in their home countries. **While the president is sure to face stalwart opposition from hard-line anti-immigrant legislators, he only needs to rally his party behind him and win over** the support of **a critical mass of Republicans. Immigrant-rights groups are** rightly **pushing for the president to undertake** comprehensive immigration **reform** in 2013, **before his political capital begins to wane** and he **slips into the lame-duck twilight** of his presidency.

## Obama's push ensures passage of comprehensive immigration reform

**Babington 12/24** (Charles, "Obama Agenda Provides Long Work List To Tackle When He Returns", 2012, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/24/obama-agenda\\_n\\_2359400.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/24/obama-agenda_n_2359400.html), CMR)

Americans' affinity for firearms runs deep, and **many political activists think Obama could have** more **sweeping success with immigration changes.** ¶ **He won a big majority of Hispanics' votes in both his elections. The trend alarms Republican strategists, who fear their party won't win another presidential election until it repairs its bad relations with Latinos.** ¶ With Democrats and Republicans increasingly aware of Hispanics' growing political clout, **this might be** **an historic opportunity,** ¶ **Troy said.** ¶ **Chris Dolan, a political scientist at Lebanon Valley College in Penn**sylvania, **agrees.** **He** said he **expects Obama to be** **"incredibly ambitious** on comprehensive immigration reform." ¶ The effort, Dolan said, could "build a lasting Democratic support group. You can't do that with gun control." ¶ **Still, opposition** to granting citizenship to illegal immigrants **runs deep in many circles** especially the Republican Party's base. Bids for "comprehensive immigration reform" have gone nowhere in Congress in recent years. ¶ Several advocacy groups want Obama to make the most of his executive powers to enact measures that don't require congressional action. ¶ **The Migration Policy Institute** earlier this year made several suggestions regarding immigrants. They included "establishing uniform enforcement priorities," defining "what constitutes effective border control," and "allowing applicants for immigrant visas to file in the United States." ¶ Now that Obama has won re-election, however, the advocacy group **wants him instead to** **push a broader agenda** through Congress. ¶ **"With the issue teed up for possible action,"** said Doris Meissner, a former commissioner at the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, **antagonizing congressional Republicans with executive actions "would not be politically smart."** ¶ **The political climate for sweeping immigration changes "is** **significantly better**" Meissner said, "but that does not mean it will happen." ¶ Even with a full plate of challenges and a hostile party controlling the House, she said, "I think **Obama absolutely has to go big on immigration.**"

## YES political capital

### PC High—reelection

Jeff **Fong**, 1/24/2013. (MA, Political Science, San Jose State University) Policy Mic. “Obama's Inauguration Will Be the Highlight of His Second Term”

<http://www.policymic.com/articles/24030/obama-s-inauguration-will-be-the-highlight-of-his-second-term>

**The president is entering his second term with good field position and decent political capital** — at least **compared to the Republicans as a party**. The fight, however, is going to be messy wherever pockets of the opposition have circled the wagons.

**What's likely going forward is the political system** continuing to seize up as it operates under an intense partisan divide, and one that **features a less-than cohesive Republican Party**. To return to the original metaphor, **it certainly is all downhill from here for the president. The hardest work is over** but there are still some serious cracks in the **pavement he'll have to avoid on the way down**.

### Obama is steamrolling

Joan **Walsh** (Salon's editor at large) 1/21 “Obama II: Older, wiser, stronger”,

[http://www.salon.com/2013/01/21/obama\\_ii\\_older\\_wiser\\_stronger/](http://www.salon.com/2013/01/21/obama_ii_older_wiser_stronger/)

But he's never had a month like this last one. **In** January alone, over **the final three weeks of his first term, the president faced down three of the most toxic forces in American politics** — call them the three Ns: the National Rifle Association, Norquist (as in Grover) and the neocons — **and won crucial battles**, if not the war.¶ On Jan. 2 he signed a deal that raised top tax rates on the wealthiest Americans, winning the first GOP votes for a tax hike since 1990, despite their solemn vow otherwise to Norquist. On Jan. 7, he appointed former Sen. Chuck Hagel his Secretary of Defense despite once-fatal charges that he's anti-Israel — or worse, anti-Semitic — from neocon bullies. On Jan. 16, he rallied the nation behind a gun control agenda and issued 23 “executive actions” that shouldn't be controversial but are, thanks to the way the NRA has controlled gun politics in the last 20 years.¶ **And after** flatly **refusing to negotiate over a debt ceiling** deal again, on Friday **he won a big battle with House GOP** dead-enders. The overmatched Republican leadership announced it would back lifting the ceiling for three months, and if they caved this time it's hard to see them mounting a challenge in April.¶ A president who began his first term trying tirelessly to compromise with people who despise him completed it by finally standing up to them. It no doubt helped that **in November he became the first president since Dwight Eisenhower to win 51 percent of the vote twice**. Just in January, **Obama faced down menacing political forces other presidents have ducked or placated**. As he takes the oath of office a second time (well, the fourth time, technically) on the nation's official holiday honoring Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., it's hard not to be optimistic. **If Obama keeps up his January pace, his second term will make even more history than his first**

### PC High: same sex marriage support

Rick **Sanchez**, 1/24/2013. “Rick Sanchez: Is President Obama Smarter than an 11th Grader?” Fox News Latino. <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/opinion/2013/01/24/rick-sanchez-is-president-obama-smarter-than-11th-grader/#ixzz2lySqF2Vb>

Now let's move on to gay rights, or more specifically, **same sex marriage**. It **is very much an issue where the president has collected enormous amounts of political capital for a variety of reasons, including coming out in support of same sex couples' right to marry** in May of last year and now becoming the first president to mention gays **in an inaugural speech** and bring the matter front and center. Obama presently owns the issue, and it's not like the LGBT community is looking for an excuse to vote Republican. So why make waves? In the end, this is one that will be decided by the courts, not the White House. And the president would be smart to not interfere.

## YES political capital – A2 Assault Weapons

### **PC Spent on Assault Weapons gets regenerated. Kills opposition.**

Anthony **Gregory**, 1/24/2013. (Research Fellow at the Independent Institute; Author of forthcoming 'The Power of Habeas Corpus') "The Bellicosity of a Democrat's Second Term" HUFFPO  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/anthony-gregory/democratic-presidents-war\\_b\\_2522143.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/anthony-gregory/democratic-presidents-war_b_2522143.html)

But what could be the motive? Here is my fear: **Obama**, like most progressive Democrats before him, probably wants to go down in history as a truly great president. Meanwhile, he **is spending lots of political capital on gun control measures he knows will face major resistance** and can hurt his party. **What better way to win back support from the center and neutralize the conservatives than to** take a cue from the Democratic Party's playbook and **save the big explosions for Act II?** **His progressive supporters** might say they won't stand for it, but **historically**, they **either looked the other way or, more often, lined up enthusiastically**, when their president decided it was time for war. Indeed, we have already seen the opposition to militarism, indefinite detention, and even torture decline on the mainstream left every year Obama's been in power.

### **Obama won't push assault weapons. Won't lose PC**

Rick **Moran**. 1/25/2013 "What the...? Proposed 'assault weapon' ban includes shotguns, handguns"  
[http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2013/01/what\\_the\\_proposed\\_assault\\_weapon\\_ban\\_includes\\_shotguns\\_handguns.html#ixzz2lybs7FJg](http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2013/01/what_the_proposed_assault_weapon_ban_includes_shotguns_handguns.html#ixzz2lybs7FJg)

**There aren't many Democratic Senators or House members who are vulnerable in 2014 - and the list is long - who will sign on to this political suicide pact. I haven't heard of a single Republican who will vote for it, and there might be as many as 12 Democratic Senators and 60 House members who wouldn't vote for it either. Those numbers may shrink if the president does any serious arm twisting but I can't see Obama spending any political capital to try and pass an assault weapons ban.** Verdict: **Feinstein's bill is DOA.**

## YES political capital – A2 Same Sex Marriage

### **Obama won't spend PC on gay marriage**

Goldstein, **Nancy**. **1/24/2013**. "Obama, civil rights is about legislation, not alliteration" THE GUARDIAN. [Nancy Goldstein is a writer and commentator whose work has appeared in the Guardian, the Washington Post, Salon, the Nation and National Public Radio. She also co-edited The Gender Politics of HIV/Aids in Women (1997)] <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jan/24/obama-legislation-alliteration-lgbt-rhetoric>

Cynical, me? No indeed. **The Obama who boomed** on Monday **that "our journey is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else** under the law – for if we are truly created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must be equal as well" **sent out his press secretary the very next day to assure us that the president won't be expending any political capital to make his rhetoric a reality. When it comes to audacity, Obama's real legacy is not one of hope, but of feigned helplessness. There's plenty he could do about LGBT inequality in America if he wanted to, Congress be damned.**

## YES Public Popularity

### **Public popularity is high – agenda**

Mark **Murray**, Senior Political Editor at NBC News, **1/17/13**, “NBC/WSJ poll: Public lowers expectations heading into Obama's 2nd term”, [http://firstread.nbcnews.com/\\_news/2013/01/17/16570498-nbcwsj-poll-public-lowers-expectations-heading-into-obamas-2nd-term?lite](http://firstread.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/01/17/16570498-nbcwsj-poll-public-lowers-expectations-heading-into-obamas-2nd-term?lite), acc. 1/25/13

**As** President Barack **Obama is set to begin his second term next week, he finds himself with a job-approval rating above 50 percent and with majorities supporting his general direction** on gun control and immigration, **according to a new** NBC News/Wall Street Journal **poll**. But he also confronts an American public holding mixed attitudes about the next four years, concerns about the economy and a belief that tougher times lie ahead. It's a stark reversal from four years ago, when Obama's first inauguration – despite taking place in the midst of the Great Recession – contained high expectations and seemed more like a “coronation,” says Democratic pollster Peter D. Hart, who conducted the survey with Republican pollster Bill McInturff. “If 2009 was all about hope, 2013 is about the ability to cope,” Hart adds of the public's lower expectations about the economy and reducing partisanship in Washington. General support for Obama's gun, immigration agenda In the poll, **52 percent of adults approve of the president's overall job performance**, which is down one point from last month. In addition, **49 percent approve of his handling of the economy, versus 48 percent who disapprove**. What's more, **the public appears to be receptive to the broad outlines of his top agenda items for a second team**.

### **Public popularity is high**

Robert B. **Reich**, former Secretary of Education, **1/25/13**, “Obama's debt-limit strategy lies with the GOP”, <http://www.tennessean.com/article/20130125/COLUMNIST0150/301250003/Robert-B.-Reich-Obama-s-debt-limit-strategy-lies-with-the-GOP>, acc. 1/25/13

The timing may be right for such a strategy. **The president is riding a wave of post-election popularity. A recent Gallup poll showed him with a 56 percent job approval rating, his highest rating in more than three years**.

### **As the economy recovers, so will Obama's approval**

**Kornacki 1-21** (Steve, Salon.com “Obama's Best Days are probably ahead” access google [http://www.salon.com/2013/01/21/obamas\\_best\\_days\\_are\\_probably\\_ahead/](http://www.salon.com/2013/01/21/obamas_best_days_are_probably_ahead/))

Obviously, **the biggest** single **factor in** determining **Obama's second term popularity will be the economy**. **As it improves**, and especially if the pace of improvement accelerates, **his numbers** should **rise**. **Following through on** his promise of **an** orderly **end to the Afghanistan war** in the next two years **should also help** Obama's standing. Avoiding high-profile scandals, one of his first-term strengths, will also help his numbers. And then there's the opposition. Obama talked during the campaign of breaking the Republican fever, and while that hasn't happened yet, the last month has brought some genuinely encouraging signs. **The president may well notch the sort of big bipartisan deals he so eagerly sought in his first term. Voters love idea of bipartisanship**; if they're suddenly exposed to lots of noise about Obama striking deals with Republicans that both sides seem to like, there should be a polling benefit. In other words, the idea that **Obama's approval rating might climb well into the 50s and maybe even cross the 60 percent mark in his second term** is quite plausible. This would be good for Obama's legacy, of course, but it would also have a dramatic impact on the next presidential race.

### **America loves a winner - Obama's approval is resilient – fiscal cliff proves**

**Hagler '12** (Frank Hagler, Policy Mic, “Obama Approval Rating is Strong, Despite Fiscal Cliff Muck-Ups” <http://www.policymic.com/articles/21530/obama-approval-rating-is-strong-despite-fiscal-cliff-muck-ups> access google)

If President Obama's approval ratings are any indication, **America sure does love a winner**. According to the Rasmussen Daily Presidential Tracking Poll, **55% of Americans approve of Obama's** job performance. Staggeringly **Obama's approval** rating **has been**

**above 50% every day since the November 2.** Obama's approval rating was at 50% on election day and it has climbed 5 points to its current level. But nothing has changed so why **is Obama polling better now** than he did during the election season? Could it be related to the unemployment rate? Unemployment has stayed below 8% for three consecutive months. In September when unemployment dropped below 8% for the first time in 43 months, Obama's opponents accused the government of cooking the books. Now that it has stayed under 8% these conspiracy theorists have gone silent. Obama's approval rating and the unemployment rate were the key performance indicators used to attack Obama's re-election plans. There was a constant stream of articles and pundit analysis documenting the statistical anomaly of re-electing a president with an approval rating below 50% and an unemployment rate above 8%. It seems that

there should be equal time given to the president's current numbers, 55% approval rating and 7.7% unemployment rate. **The Gallup Poll also supports the notion that America loves a winner. On election day, Obama's approval rating was**

**52%. It is now 57%.** Obama's approval rating is at a 52 week high for 2012 and is 16 points higher than the 52 week low of 42% he hit in January 2012. Talking Points Memo noted that Obama's post-election approval rating "calls to mind the bullish days of his first year in office before a stagnant economy and protracted disputes with Congressional Republicans took a toll on his approval rating." That is not a good sign for his 2013 approval rating. Obama is still engaged in that same fight as evidenced by his inability to get a budget deal done with House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio). The two leaders have until January 1 to get a deal done and avoid the fiscal crises that will be brought on by automatic tax increases and spending cuts. Obama cut his holiday vacation short to return to Washington and work on a deal. Obama appears to be right back where he started in 2009. Unemployment is at the same place it was when he took office in his first term, the economy has

stabilized and things have gotten better, but we are not in full recovery yet and the fiscal cliff threatens to throw us back into a recession. **His approval numbers indicate that some people are still hoping that he can make a change in the way politics**

**are done in Washington.** There is the possibility that he can break the gridlock and lead a bipartisan government. If Obama fails to get a deal done the Bush tax cuts will expire, raising taxes on all Americans. Additionally extended unemployment benefits will also expire putting millions of Americans in jeopardy. If Obama fails to get a deal done and unemployment begins to tick up then the ride he is enjoying from his post-election bump in approval ratings will be short lived. Next week the December unemployment numbers will be released. It will probably stay below 8% given the current trend, however the January 2013 report to be released in February will be telling because it will show whether the 4th quarter 2012 numbers were skewed by seasonal employment. TPM said "all it took was a victorious election for Obama to earn higher marks for his job performance." All it will take is a repeat of 2012 –like government gridlock to reverse that trend.

## **Obama's popularity boosted by gun control efforts**

**Enten '12** (The Guardian, "Gun control fate tied to presidential popularity", access google <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jan/25/fate-gun-control-tied-presidential-popularity>)

**Want to know how people feel about President Obama's gun control plan?** Simply **ask whether they approve** or disapprove **of how the president and his administration are doing their job. The two questions are nearly perfectly linked,** and that could have major consequences for the future of gun control legislation.

**The latest ABC/Washington Post polls prove the strong relationship.** Many individual gun proposals are highly popular. In fact, seven tested gun measures, including background checks and bans on assault weapons and semi-automatic handguns, have majority support ranging from 51% to 88%. **When you attach Obama's name by calling it "Barack Obama's proposals",** the Post discovered that 53% **of Americans favor the proposals – nearly identical to Obama's approval rating of 55%** in a separate Post poll last week. Gallup found the same, with 53% in favor of Obama's gun control plan, compared to his monthly approval rating of 52%.



## A2 no political capital

Prefer issue specific uniqueness

Yes political capital --- fiscal cliff victory.

Politico, 1-1-2013

While **Democrats** outside the West Wing **view**ed **the fight over the fiscal cliff as a win-win**, Obama's aides, ever leery of wasting political capital, saw it as a dangerous dilemma, and one that pulled the president in opposite directions simultaneously. To avoid going over the cliff and attracting blame for hiking taxes on millions of middle-class Americans, he needed to be a deal-maker, even at the risk of being accused of caving to GOP demands. But **to establish his authority for the fights ahead, he needed to be a back-breaker**, a role he has never embraced. **That his first major post-election decision sought a moderate, middle course** that triangulated between the extremes of both parties **comes as no surprise** to the people who have worked most closely with Obama. They expect him to be similarly on guns, immigration and entitlements -- no more prone to engage in fights he feels he can't win than he was before beating Mitt Romney. Obama said as much this weekend. "I remain optimistic, I'm just a congenital optimist, that eventually people kind of see the light. Winston Churchill used to say that we Americans, we try every other option before we finally do the right thing," he told Gregory. "I think that that's true for Congress as well. And I think it's also important for Americans to remember that politics has always been messy. People have been asking me a lot about the film 'Lincoln' --" Gregory interrupted to ask Obama if the fiscal cliff was "your Lincoln moment?" Obama -- who kicked off his 2008 campaign in the shadow of Lincoln at the Springfield, Ill., statehouse, bristled: "I never compare myself to Lincoln," he shot back. But he does have a president in mind, according to several people in his inner circle: Ronald **Reagan, who was able to leverage an improving economy and a strong victory into** a year or **more** of **muscular governance** after the 1984 campaign. And **a reasonable deal on the cliff**, even a middling, short-term New Year's Eve deal being floated to the consternation of liberals, **could set the stage**.

Yes capital

Kathleen Hennessey, LA Times, 12/29/12, [www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-pn-obama-fiscal-cliff-vote-20121228,0,2652554.story](http://www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-pn-obama-fiscal-cliff-vote-20121228,0,2652554.story)

**The move was meant to increase the political heat on Republicans**, who opposed Obama's plan to allow taxes to rise on top earners. If no deal is reached, Republicans could find themselves in the position of blocking the legislation that would prevent the tax hike for most taxpayers. Obama delivered the same message Friday night, after a meeting with congressional leaders at which Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and Senate Minority Leader Mitch **McConnell** (R-Ky.) **agreed to work together to try to reach a last-minute compromise to avoid the fiscal cliff**. "There's not much time, but there's still time to act," said Sen. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), in the GOP address. **"The president will never have more political capital than he does right now"**, and the next few days will begin to define his second term. **He was elected to lead."**

Yes capital

Tim Penny, Star Tribune, 12/29/12, Now, Obama will cement his economic legacy, [www.startribune.com/opinion/commentaries/185098751.html?refer=y](http://www.startribune.com/opinion/commentaries/185098751.html?refer=y)

**What are the lessons to be learned as** President **Obama begins a second term** that will give lasting meaning -- for better or worse -- to Obamanomics? Three points stand out: • Build tax reform for the next generation, not just the next political deadline. Investors, workers, savers, retirees -- all of us -- need long-term, predictable tax policy. "Tax the rich" doesn't get us there. Obama should take the Republicans up on their offer to reform the tax code, eliminating loopholes, making the system fairer and promoting investment and savings over consumption. • **Spend** some **political capital**. A recent **Pew** Research Center survey **puts Obama's job approval rating at a comfortable 55 percent**. **He should use his public goodwill for public good**. **Tackle the tough** spending **issues**, starting with serious reform of entitlement programs and adjustments to Obamacare to control future health costs. Bring innovation to other government programs, then hold them accountable to meaningful outcomes. And stop passing the buck to states. If the federal government thinks a program is necessary, fund it; if not, get rid of it. • Economic policy isn't just about taxing and spending. Obama's leadership on trade, immigration, energy and monetary policy also will define our nation's economic future. With or without Congress, Obama has presidential authority to either inhibit or advance policy in all these areas. **Obama will have advantages in the second term that didn't exist four years ago**. **The economy** still **is** fragile, but **growing stronger**. **Energy**

**independence** -- little more than a campaign bullet point in 2008 -- **likely will be a reality over the next decade.**

**"Inshoring" is the new "offshoring"** as companies as diverse as General Electric and Apple are bringing manufacturing jobs back to this country. And even though chaos still grips much of the world, the United States continues to reduce its on-the-ground presence in the Mideast, allowing us to reduce our massive military spending in that region. **Nurturing these opportunities**, moving decisionmaking off phony cliffs, creating and selling a long-term vision that is coordinated and consistent, and taking a bold approach to tax and spending reform **could create a legacy of prosperity that could positively define Obamanomics for generations to come.**

## A2 Obama won't spend PC

### Obama focusing capital on immigration

**Benen 2/6** (Steve, "Defining the 'extremes' in the immigration debate", [http://maddowblog.msnbc.com/\\_news/2013/02/06/16868677-defining-the-extremes-in-the-immigration-debate](http://maddowblog.msnbc.com/_news/2013/02/06/16868677-defining-the-extremes-in-the-immigration-debate), CR)

At the surface, **there's ample reason for optimism on** comprehensive **immigration** reform. President **Obama is investing considerable political capital** into the issue; the public strongly supports the reform efforts; **a bipartisan bill is already progressing** in the Senate; **and every Republican strategist and consultant is warning the party not to further alienate the fastest-growing voting constituency** in the country.

## A2 Republicans Won't Compromise

### Momentum now, GOP knows they need to deal

Ken Walsh, "Republicans Reconsidering Immigration Reform," US NEWS & WORLD REPORT, 12--27--12, [www.usnews.com/news/blogs/Ken-Walshs-Washington/2012/12/27/republicans-reconsidering-immigration-reform](http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/Ken-Walshs-Washington/2012/12/27/republicans-reconsidering-immigration-reform)

**It's becoming increasingly clear that immigration will be a breakthrough issue next year.** ¶ President Obama has been in favor of what he calls comprehensive immigration reform for a long time, which would include creating a "path" to citizenship or legal residency for millions of illegal immigrants. ¶ Republicans have resisted for years, arguing that what Obama wants would be a form of amnesty for unlawful entry into the United States. But the November election showed that this position has alienated many Hispanic voters, who believe the GOP is against them. One result was that Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney, who called for "self-deportation" of illegal immigrants, lost the Latino vote to Obama by more than 40 percentage points, a major reason for Romney's defeat. ¶ Now, **Republicans are rethinking the whole issue.** Among those expected to take the lead are Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, a rising star in the GOP, and Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin, chairman of the House Budget Committee and the Republican vice-presidential nominee this year. It's interesting and significant that both Rubio and Ryan are considered possible presidential candidates in 2016. They seem to realize that the GOP needs to make inroads with Hispanic voters in order to recapture the White House in four years. ¶ Former governor Jeb Bush of Florida, another possible presidential contender in 2016, also wants Republicans to move quickly on immigration reform by proposing their own overhaul of immigration laws that Hispanics might support. It was Bush's brother, President George W. Bush, who attempted to get such a bill through Congress several years ago, but he failed because of conservative objections. ¶ There is still strong sentiment in the Republican Party to resist comprehensive reform that is seen to reward people who entered the country illegally by giving them a chance to gain citizenship before those who followed the rules. "The **smart Republicans know they can't leave this hanging** out there," says Democratic pollster Geoff Garin. "But **the Republicans are still very divided against themselves.**" ¶ For their part, White House officials think **there has been enough of a shift on the GOP side that, despite the polarization on other issues, prospects for passage of an immigration bill are brightening.**

### GOP has incentive to deal

FINANCIAL TIMES, "White House Builds Immigration Pact," 1--2--13, [www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e6b2805c-4ac9-11e2-929d-00144feab49a.html#ixzz2GqyunGKI](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e6b2805c-4ac9-11e2-929d-00144feab49a.html#ixzz2GqyunGKI)

The president is likely to make his first big push for immigration reform in his State of the Union address after his inauguration later this month, and **officials are preparing a bill that will be ready for introduction in the Senate.** ¶ "We are building a coalition in key states around the country so that when Obama pushes for this, we will be ready to give positive encouragement to weak congressmen or senators," said another person involved in the White House's preparations, asking not to be named. ¶ This "positive encouragement" will come in the form of door-knockers urging people to lobby their representatives to support immigration reform, similar to the army of supporters who blitzed the swing states and help Mr Obama score a surprisingly resounding victory in November. ¶ That win was propelled in no small part by support from Hispanic voters, a whopping 71 per cent of whom backed Mr Obama, to Republican Mitt Romney's 27 per cent. ¶ This was in part the result of Mr Romney's hostile language during the Republican primary campaign, when he said, if president, he would make conditions so bad for illegal immigrants that they would choose to "self deport". ¶ At the same time as Mr Obama's proportion of the Hispanic vote went up, so did the raw number of Latino voters – to more than 12.5m, an increase of almost 30 per cent over 2008, making the group a voting bloc to reckon with. ¶ The coalition of allies will also start compiling scorecards for lawmakers, incorporating not just how they vote on immigration-related issues but also whether they do things such as stopping a vote from taking place, which they hope to distribute to 90 per cent of Latino voters. ¶ "Our goal is to make sure that the community can see who stood with us on immigration reform and who deserves to be finding another job," Mr Medina said. ¶ Groups involved also include the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, the National Council of La Raza and Voto Latino. ¶ As they try to avoid further alienating the US's fastest growing demographic, **Republicans are eager to deal with the issue of immigration reform and get it off the table** before the 2014 midterm elections.

### Republicans will be forced to compromise --- electoral concerns.

KTVB, 12-26-2012, p. [www.ktvb.com/news/politics/184782901.html](http://www.ktvb.com/news/politics/184782901.html)

**For years, Republicans fiercely adhered to bedrock conservative principles, resisting calls for tax hikes, comprehensive immigration reform and gun control. Now, after an electoral drubbing, party leaders and rank-and-file alike are signaling a willingness to bend** on all three issues. Raising tax rates is suddenly part of a

GOP House plan to avert a potential fiscal crisis. **Party luminaries have started calling for a wholesale shift in the Republican approach to immigration.** And some Republicans who previously championed gun rights now are opening the door to restrictions. **The change in tone** among some Republicans **comes** seven **weeks after the defeat of** GOP presidential nominee Mitt **Romney, who moved far to the right** during the primary season **and**, some in the party say, **lost the general election as a result.**

## A2 High-Skilled Inevitable/Piecemeal\*\*

### Skilled workers tied to comprehensive reform, won't be addressed separately

**Higgins 2/6** (John K. Higgins is a career business writer, with broad experience for a major publisher in a wide range of topics including energy, finance, environment and government policy, "Immigration Reform Could Open the Door for IT Talent", <http://www.ecommercetimes.com/story/77241.html>,

Congressional Hurdles and Outlook. **How the bill fares in Congress may depend on how an overall comprehensive package of immigration reforms is handled.** "The Immigration Innovation Act could stand on its own, but in **the current political situation it is unlikely that immigration issues will be handled piecemeal.**" Bob Sakaniwa, associate director of advocacy at the American Immigration Lawyers Association, told the E-Commerce Times. **The better prospect is that it will be included within a comprehensive package and its fate will be tied to what Congress does on the overall immigration reform effort.** "The history of congressional immigration debates also indicates that **the IT issue should be part of a comprehensive reform effort,** LeDuc added. "As much as we might like, or it might seem practical to enact various **reform initiatives independently, that's not a political reality at this time.**" "The momentum now exists for comprehensive immigration reform, and issues related to highly skilled workers have already made their way into bipartisan legislative language. **We know that the attention of Congress will now be fully focused on achieving comprehensive reform and a complete bill in the next few months,**" Coffey said. **We're hoping that they succeed, and that's where our focus is."**

### Nope – Democrats won't sign-off on piecemeal reform

**Song 2/5** (Kyung, "Immigration committee examines skilled versus unskilled workers", [http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2020294802\\_immigrationhearingxml.html](http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2020294802_immigrationhearingxml.html),

WASHINGTON — **Members of the House Judiciary Committee showed a sharp partisan divide during a hearing on immigration Tuesday that sometimes seemed to pit high-skilled foreign workers against illegal immigrants and those admitted to the U.S. through family ties.** A big portion of the hearing — the first on immigration this year — focused on temporary H-1B visas for science and technology workers. Citing a shortage of qualified American engineers and programmers, Microsoft has been leading aggressive lobbying efforts to lift the cap on such foreign hires as well as for green cards allowing them to stay permanently. Many **members of the panel expressed strong support for creating more slots for high-tech talent. But Democrats largely swatted down Republicans' suggestions to tackle that issue separately** from possible citizenship for an estimated 11 million illegal immigrants and other thornier aspects of comprehensive immigration reform being debated in Congress.

### More ev – dems won't agree

**Berman 2/5** (Russell, "In first immigration hearing, House GOP seeks middle ground on citizenship path", <http://thehill.com/homenews/house/281187-in-first-immigration-hearing-house-gop-seeks-middle-ground-on-citizenship-path>,

**Democrats on the committee used their time to reject a piecemeal approach, arguing that the complex issues in immigration reform could only be addressed together.** "The notion of a comprehensive immigration [bill] has been pushed around and bandied about, but the fact of the matter is **this is one big challenge that I don't think we can handle on a piecemeal basis,**" **said** Rep. John Conyers (Mich.), **the committee's ranking Democrat.**

## A2 State Roll-back

**No evidence states will target high-skilled workers – their ev assumes Arizona-style legislation against illegals**

**Our UQ args prove that state-level republicans would have no incentive to rollback reforms**

**States efforts get rolled back – unconstitutional**

David G. **Savage**, Tribune Washington Bureau, September 9, **2010** "Court ruling reaffirms regulation of immigration as federal domain", <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/sc-dc-0910-immigration-law-20100909,0,4897857.story>,

WASHINGTON — **A city may not punish employers who hire illegal immigrants** or landlords who rent to them, **a U.S. appeals court ruled Thursday, insisting that regulation of immigrants is "clearly within the exclusive domain of the federal government."** The decision strikes down an anti-immigrant ordinance adopted four years ago in Hazleton, Penn., that touched off a wave of similar measures in cities and states, including Arizona. **The ruling is the latest to send the message that Washington sets the rules on immigration, not states or localities. "Deciding which aliens may live in the United States has always been the prerogative of the federal government," said Judge Theodore McKee of the U.S. Court of Appeals** in Philadelphia. "If Hazleton can regulate as it has here, then so could every other state or locality."

**Federal reform checks – overwhelms any signal**

**McKanders 9** Karla Mari McKanders \* Associate Professor at University of Tennessee College of Law.

University of Arkansas at Little Rock Law Review 31 U. Ark. Little Rock L. Rev. 579 Summer, 2009

ARTICLE: THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF STATE AND LOCAL LAWS TARGETING IMMIGRANTS. LEXIS

**The practice of employing state and municipal laws to exclude immigrants should be discontinued.** State and local governments cannot cite and allege the depletion of resources as the rationale for passing laws when the real reason is to prohibit immigrants from entering their communities. Similarly, states and municipalities cannot use state and local laws to cause the removal of lawful immigrants from the community. n149 **If states and localities are permitted to enact immigration laws, our country will have fifty different iterations of pro- and anti-immigrant laws. This will also cause state and local governments across the country to compete with each other to see who can pass laws to exclude immigrants from their states, so they will not have to address any issues that come along with migration and integrating immigrants into their communities. This will essentially result in a downward spiral of states with laws that exclude (a race to the bottom) as states and localities attempt to enact laws which result in immigrants relocating or self-deporting. This will cause the unequal regulation and enforcement of immigration laws which may lead to violations of immigrants' rights. This can all be halted with the federal government taking an active role in enforcing existing immigration laws and enacting laws that clearly articulate that federal government regulates immigration** and defines the conditions under which states and localities can aid the federal government.

# **Affirmative**



## 2ac TFA

### No pass – Rubio

**Grunwald, 2/20** (Michael, 2/20/2013, Time, “Yes, Rubio and Obama Mostly Agree on Immigration. No, That Doesn’t Mean Reform Is Inevitable,” <http://swampland.time.com/2013/02/20/yes-rubio-and-obama-mostly-agree-on-immigration-no-that-doesnt-mean-reform-is-inevitable/>)

It’s true that Senator Marco Rubio’s stated principles for comprehensive immigration reform are quite similar to President Obama’s. It’s also true that **when Rubio attacks the president over reform, as he did after a White House legislative draft leaked last weekend, he’s signaling to his fervently anti-Obama base that he’s still a solid Tea Party Republican.** As I wrote in my Rubio profile, “some of this is Beltway theater; reform could become toxic to Republicans if it’s perceived as Obama-friendly.” This is why smart restrictionists like Mark Krikorian of the National Review as well as smart reformers like Benjy Sarlin of Talking Points Memo seem to agree that Rubio is just posturing, that what really matters are the similarities between his principles and the president’s, that the partisan theater is designed to reduce Republican resistance to bipartisan reform.¶ Well, maybe. Obama did call Rubio in Jerusalem Tuesday night, and both sides expressed ritual optimism. But there are some real differences between Rubio and Obama on immigration. Sure, **Rubio’s rhetoric could help make reform politically palatable to Republicans, and even help move reform substantively to the right. But it could also help lay the groundwork for Rubio to scuttle reform,** **accuse Obama of overreaching, and claim credit for trying to forge a bipartisan solution.** Beltway theater can have real consequences, and **the more Rubio threatens to walk away from any deal that doesn’t include everything he wants, the more pressure he will face to walk away when the deal, inevitably, doesn’t include everything he wants.** Nobody but Rubio knows how far he is willing to bend to cut a deal few of his supporters want with a president most of his supporters despise.¶ Remember, in interviews with right-wing talkers like Rush Limbaugh, Mark Levin and Sean Hannity, **Rubio has drawn a series of lines in the sand, pledging to oppose any immigration bill that doesn’t reflect conservative principles.** He said he wouldn’t support any legislation that doesn’t secure the border (whatever that means in practice) and set up an employment verification system (also in the eye of the beholder) before sending undocumented immigrants along a path to citizenship. He insisted that all 11 million undocumented immigrants will have to go to the “back of the line” behind foreigners who followed the rules. He demanded a special “guest worker” program for agriculture. And he said Obama’s draft proposal, by failing to address “future flow” of legal immigrants, would actually make the situation worse.¶ The details of these differences may matter less than the fact that **there are so many of them. Rubio has left himself an awful lot of exit ramps** on the long and winding highway to bipartisan legislation. **Ferocious opposition from right-wing radio helped derail similar reforms during the Bush administration,** and everything Rubio is saying is consistent with an effort to try to defuse that opposition. But **everything Rubio is saying is also consistent with an effort to get “caught trying,” a phrase the Obama White House uses to describe losing a battle but getting credit for fighting. Rubio has already taken a stand for reform, so he’s well positioned to try to blame Obama for demanding too much if a deal doesn’t happen.** He’s the only prominent Republican who could make that case en espanol. And **it’s hard to think of any Republican who has suffered any political consequences for blaming Obama for anything.**¶ “It’s not an if-Obama-is-for-it-we-have-to-be-against-it-mentality,” he told me earlier this month. “There are a lot of points of contention, and they need to be worked through to my satisfaction if I’m going to support the final product.”¶ (MORE: Marco Rubio Responds to Obama’s State of the Union)¶ So it all depends how badly Rubio really wants reform. As I wrote, it’s a personal issue for him. He comes from a family of immigrants, a community of immigrants. It’s hard to imagine a more influential lobbyist than his mom. He’d also like to transcend his reputation as an achievement-free ideologue; brokering a reform deal would show he’s capable of getting stuff done. And ever since Hispanic voters overwhelmingly rejected Mitt Romney and his “self-deportation” theories, many Republican elites have been warning that the party may be doomed in presidential elections until it can get the immigration issue off the table.¶ But **if Rubio wants to get elected president in 2016, he’ll need to win a Republican primary dominated not by elites, but by Tea Party activists who think of the undocumented as freeloaders and the president as a nightmare. They’re a lot likelier to trust a guy who denied Obama a major victory than a guy who helped him achieve it. Rubio also has to worry about House Republicans** (who generally live in fear of their own Tea Party primary challenges) **derailing the reform train while he’s still on it, which would make him look ineffectual as well as Obama-appeasing.** And the 2016 Republican presidential primary is starting now, while the general election won’t start until 2016; there would be plenty of time for Rubio to pivot back to reform if he won the nomination. Anyway, if Republicans decide that winning back Hispanics is their key to winning back the White House, Marco Antonio Rubio will have a leg up whether

reform happens or not. (PHOTOS: Marco Rubio, Republican Savior) For now, if Rubio's swipes at Obama help keep the Limbaughs and Levins of the world from launching an anti-reform crusade, they're probably helping the cause of reform. And he's got nothing to lose by pressing Obama to accept stricter enforcement, a more arduous path to citizenship, and other items on conservative wish lists. But **eventually, there's going to be a deal, and he's going to have to decide whether to take it. With me, at least, he didn't sound all that optimistic.** "I'm not trying to throw cold water on the effort," he said. "It's a good effort, an important effort. But we have to be realistic about the pitfalls that lie ahead. This is a very difficult problem that the country hasn't solved in over two decades."

## Citizenship

**Marra 2/20** (Andrew, "Editorial: Leak of Obama's immigration plan should not stall debate on reform", <http://www.palmbeachpost.com/news/news/opinion/editorial-leak-of-obamas-immigration-plan-should-n/nWSwK/>)

Whatever its impact, the scuffle highlights what will be **one of the biggest sticking points** in the bill: **how quickly illegal immigrants will be able to begin the "path to citizenship"** that leaders from both parties now endorse. Both President Obama and Sen. Rubio, who has become the GOP's face on immigration, have said they believe that illegal immigrants will need to go to the "back of the line" to attain permanent resident status ("green cards") so as not to cut ahead of people outside the country who have applied through the normal process. In the meantime, illegal immigrants would be granted temporary legal status, allowing them to work legally but leaving them still ineligible for government benefits. But Sen. Rubio has also insisted on demonstrable progress in securing the U.S.-Mexican border before illegal immigrants are granted permanent residence. He has not specified how this would work in practice, so any bill from the senators must do so. The fact that such a debate is even happening is remarkable, given that less than a year ago the GOP considered even legal status for illegal immigrants to be "amnesty." But President Obama's dominance of Hispanic voters has Republicans desperate to court the Latino vote. It will be Sen. Rubio's job to persuade conservative leaders that attaching conditions to eligibility for citizenship is not "amnesty." But **the politics of immigration reform is still tenuous, as the many failed bipartisan efforts over the last decade have shown.** That's why **the Obama** administration's **leak** was a problem. Perhaps it will make passing a bill easier. But it **easily could have derailed it** too.

## Guest workers

**Navarrette 2/19** (Ruben, "Guest worker issue may kill immigration reform", 2013, <http://www.cnn.com/2013/02/19/opinion/navarrette-immigration-reform/index.html>)

All **those** who are **hoping** that comprehensive **immigration** reform **is going to happen this year** -- Latinos, businesses, churches, agriculture industry, law enforcement and others -- **are in for a rude awakening.** The trick for politicians will be to look as if they're doing something, when really they're doing nothing. But, regardless of how it looks, **it's a long shot** that **Congress will pass immigration** reform **this year.** That's bad news for those who want to give the undocumented a chance to get right with the law and develop a sensible, fair and efficient policy for future immigrants. But it's good news for those who resist legalizing the undocumented because they're afraid of foreigners -- either because of competition with their work ethic, or that they're changing the culture and complexion of the country. Is enforcement key to fixing America's immigration system? Ruben Navarrette Jr. Ruben Navarrette Jr. The problem isn't just **Republicans**, who **can't get on the same page** about whether they want to be reformers. It's also **Democrats**, who **seem to be playing the immigration reform camp for chumps.** The signs are everywhere, if you know where to look. For instance, a few days ago, a draft of President Obama's immigration reform plan was leaked. It took four years to write, and yet its key points fit on a cocktail napkin with room to spare. Here's what is in the plan: more border security, a requirement that employers use an electronic system to verify if prospective hires are eligible to work, and a long path to citizenship for the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. Obama's immigration plan leaked. Obama: Harvest immigrants' talents. How long? The undocumented could immediately apply for a special protective status to avoid deportation, but it would take them about eight years to get legal permanent residency (a green card) and another four or five years to become a U.S. citizen. Here's **what is not in the plan: a guest worker program. Republicans have repeatedly insisted that this needs to be in the mix for them to vote for any reform package.** The fact that **it** was left out **tells us** that **Obama isn't serious about reform and ensures** that **his plan would be**, as Republican Florida Sen. Marco Rubio said, "**dead on arrival**" in Congress. Opinion: Economy and immigration linked to American dream. The idea would be to bring in a few hundred thousand temporary "guest workers" to do the hard and dirty jobs that Americans won't do at any wage. When the work is done, and the workers have been paid a fair salary, they go home. And another batch is brought in. It's not a perfect solution. But you won't find any of those in the immigration debate. The first U.S. president to push for guest workers was Abraham Lincoln. Industries were facing labor shortages during the Civil War and, with Lincoln's support, Congress

in 1864 passed The Act to Encourage Immigration. The bill allowed employers to recruit foreign workers and pay their way to America. There were more guest workers during World War I. But the concept really became popular during World War II and the Cold War. From 1942 to 1964, under the Bracero program (as in "brazo", which is Spanish for arm as in someone who works with his arms and hands), nearly 5 million guest workers came in and out of the United States.¶ In fact, arguably, the reason the Braceros stopped coming was because journalist Edward R. Murrow -- in the 1960 CBS documentary, "Harvest of Shame" -- exposed the horrible treatments the workers received at the hands of employers, including low wages, unsanitary conditions, dilapidated housing, etc. Congress pulled the plug soon thereafter.¶ But exploitation doesn't have to be part of the deal, and not every guest worker program is run as badly as that one. There are apple growers in Washington State who don't have to scramble for pickers at harvest time because the same crews return every year. The growers lure them back by paying decent wages and providing clean living quarters. Everyone is happy.¶ Well, maybe not everyone. Many in organized labor hate the concept of guest workers because their leaders are busy peddling the fantasy that the hard and dirty jobs in question are sought after by union members. Sure. Then why aren't they doing them now? Answer: Because they're hard and dirty.¶ It's time for Congress to create a new guest worker program for the agriculture industry where employees can have decent wages, access to health clinics, livable housing, workers comp in case of injury, and legal protection so that they aren't exploited. Of course, there's the catch. If growers have to pay for all that, labor economists say, it might well kill the incentive for them to participate.¶ Immigration debate: High-stakes political poker¶ But it's those same growers who are now complaining that they aren't able to find American workers who are willing to pick a variety of crops that can't be harvested by machine -- peaches, plums, apples, lettuce, tomatoes, avocados, nectarines, strawberries, blueberries, apricots, table grapes, etc. So those employers will have to make some tough choices. If they want a reliable labor supply, it'll cost them. That's the way it should be. There is no free lunch.¶ Either way, it's **a guest workers program** that **will** make or **break** the **prospects for immigration reform**. I'm betting it's the latter.

## Executive action solves

**Lillis 2/16** Mike, "Dems: Obama can act unilaterally on immigration reform",  
thehill.com/blogs/regwatch/administration/283583-dems-recognize-that-obama-can-act-unilaterally-on-immigration-reform, (accessed by CMR on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013)

President **Obama can – and will – take steps on immigration reform in the event Congress doesn't reach a comprehensive deal this year**, according to several House Democratic leaders.¶ While the Democrats are hoping Congress will preclude any executive action by enacting reforms legislatively, they say **the administration has the tools to move unilaterally if the bipartisan talks on Capitol Hill break down**. Furthermore, they say, **Obama stands poised to use them**.¶ "I don't think the president will be hands off on immigration for any moment in time," Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.), the head of the House Democratic Caucus, told reporters this week. **He's ready to move forward if we're not**.¶ Rep. Joseph Crowley (N.Y.), vice chairman of the Democratic Caucus, echoed that message, saying **Obama is "not just beating the drum"** for immigration reform, **he's** actually **the drum major**.¶ "There are limitations as to what he can do with executive order," Crowley said Wednesday, "but **he did say** that **if Congress continued to fail** to act that **he would take steps and measures to enact common-sense executive orders** to move this country forward."¶ Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-Ariz.), who heads the Congressional Progressive Caucus, said **there are "plenty" of executive steps Obama could take if Congress fails to pass a reform package**. "The huge one," Grijalva said, is "the **waiving of deportation** in order **to keep families together**."¶ "Four million of the undocumented [immigrants] are people who overstayed their visas to stay with family," he said Friday. "So that would be, I think, an area in which ... **there's a great deal of executive authority** that he could deal with."¶ **The administration could** also **waive visa caps**, Grijalva said, **to ensure** that **industries** like agriculture **have ample access to** low-skilled **labor**.¶ **Everybody's for getting the smart and the talented in**, but there's also a labor flow issue," he said.¶ To be sure, Obama and congressional Democrats would prefer the reforms to come through Congress – both because that route would solidify the changes into law and because it would require bipartisan buy-in.¶ Still, House Republicans have been loath to accept one of the central elements of Obama's strategy: A pathway to citizenship for the estimated 11-12 million undocumented people currently living in the country – a move which many conservatives deem "amnesty."¶ Indeed, when the House Judiciary Committee met earlier this month on immigration reform, much of the discussion focused on whether there is some middle ground between citizenship and mass deportation.¶ "If we can find a solution that is ... short of a pathway to citizenship, but better than just kicking 12 million people out, why is that not a good solution?" Rep. Raul Labrador (R-Idaho) asked during the hearing.¶ Obama on Tuesday spent a good portion of his State of the Union address urging Congress to send him a comprehensive immigration reform bill this year. Central to that package, he said, should be provisions for "strong border security," for "establishing a responsible pathway to earned citizenship" and for "fixing the legal immigration system to cut waiting periods and attract the highly-skilled entrepreneurs and engineers that will help create jobs and grow our economy."¶ "We know what needs to be done," Obama said. "So let's get this done."¶ Becerra said he and other immigration reformers have had two meetings with the White House on immigration this month, one with the executive team working on the issue and, more recently, with Obama himself. Becerra said administration officials "essentially" know what reforms they want – "and they have communicated that to both House and Senate members, bipartisanly" – but they also want Congress to take the lead.¶ "They're giving Congress a chance to work its will to move this," Becerra said. "But ... I don't think he's going to wait too long."¶ "If you were to ask him would he be prepared to submit a bill if Congress isn't ready ... he would tell you, I have no

doubt, "I can do it in a heartbeat," Becerra added. **"The president will move forward where he can if Congress doesn't act."** ¶ Indeed, **Obama has already shown a willingness to do just that.** Last summer, just months before November's elections, **Obama shocked political observers when he launched a program through the** Department of Homeland Security **(DHS) allowing undocumented immigrants brought to the country as children to remain without threat of deportation.** The two-year "deferred action" was modeled on the Dream Act legislation that has been unable to pass Congress. ¶ **The change was not an executive order, but** an extension of **"prosecutorial discretion"** on the part of the DHS. ¶ Although conservatives howled about administrative overreach, Obama's gamble paid off, as the president won more than 70 percent of the Hispanic vote at the polls – a margin that has fueled the drive for immigration reform this year, as GOP leaders are anxious to avoid a similar divide in 2016. ¶ Grijalva said the **expansion of the deferred action** program **represents another opportunity for Obama to move immigration reform administratively.**

## Thumpers first – no vote for 7 months

**Neyoy 2/8** (Cesar, "Grijalva: Debate on immigration may take time",

<http://www.yumasun.com/news/reform-85153-congress-immigration.html>

Congress could begin debate within six months on an immigration reform measure that could give millions of undocumented immigrants a path toward legal residency in the United States, U.S. Rep. Raul Grijalva predicts. ¶ But **a vote** by Congress **on any reform bill is not likely** to come **until just before the end of the year,** the Tucson Democrat said during a recent visit to Somerton. ¶ Grijalva, whose district includes the southern half of Yuma County, said any measure that advances through Congress will not confer any automatic benefits for immigrants. ¶ "There will be many people who won't qualify, either because they have committed some crime or because they can't demonstrate that they have roots here aside from the fact of being in the country." ¶ "The central issue of this reform is to unify families where, for example, the children are U.S. citizens but the parents have been deported. The process is to unify families." ¶ The applicants for legal status, aside from having to pay fines, will have to meet certain requirements for legal residency, he added. ¶ In the wake of the November elections, Grijalva said, support in Congress for immigration reform has increased from less than 50 percent of lawmakers to nearly 60 percent. ¶ But **in the event Congress does not act** on the issue, he added, President **Obama has the option of taking executive action to enact immigration reform, as he did last summer** when his administration suspended deportations of undocumented youths for two years to give them time to apply for legal residency. ¶ Grijalva said he and other lawmakers will visit their districts to try to line up broad-based community support for immigration reform amid what he expects will be a drawn-out debate over the subject in Congress. ¶ **"It's going to be a process of almost seven months,"** he said. "Right now, **we don't have any concrete proposal.** We are practically starting from scratch."

## Sequestration

**AFP 2/20** ("What is the sequester and why does it matter?",

<http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2013/02/20/what-is-the-sequester-and-why-does-it-matter/>

America's political leaders are once again playing Russian Roulette with the world's single largest economy. ¶ Fresh from a debt ceiling showdown and year-end fiscal cliff brinkmanship, President Barack **Obama and Republicans are now locked in a test of wills over huge budget cuts** due to come into force on March 1. ¶ The White House and independent analysts fear the so-called "sequester" could cost hundreds of thousands of jobs and crimp already slow economic growth, and **there is little hope in Washington that it can be averted.** ¶ THE SEQUESTER ¶ The sequester, a multi-billion dollar package of spending cuts, was designed never to come into force. It is a measure of the political estrangement in Washington that it looks certain to do so. ¶ The idea was that the cuts would be so devastating to domestic spending favored by Democrats and defense spending beloved of Republicans that they would have no choice but to get together on a deal to cut the deficit. ¶ But no deal is done and prospects of a last-minute agreement seem slim. ¶ So on March 1, cuts that will slash defense spending by \$55 billion and non-defense discretionary spending by \$27 billion this year look set to come into force. ¶ In a wider sense, the sequester is just the latest reflection of starkly differing political philosophies dividing Washington. ¶

**Republicans see bloated spending driving the economy to disaster. Obama refuses to countenance**

**social programs being decimated or the imposition of a budget that is balanced** in a way that he says will hurt the middle class. ¶ THE COST ¶ The cost of the sequester, if allowed to unfold in full, could be devastating, in human and economic terms. ¶ The Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington estimates that one million jobs could be lost. ¶ The Congressional Budget Office predicts growth, already down by 0.1 percent last quarter, could slip 0.7 percent as government departments and related businesses stagger under the sequester's impact. ¶ Obama, seeking to pressure Republicans into a deal, paints a dire picture of misery to come after March 1. ¶ "If Congress allows this meat cleaver approach to take place, it will jeopardize our military readiness," Obama said Tuesday, warning emergency workers could be also hampered and thousands of teachers could be laid off. ¶ Defense Secretary Leon Panetta warned Wednesday almost all the Pentagon's 800,000 civilian employees would face furloughs starting in April. ¶ The military will cut back on training and repairs while the Navy has halted the

deployment of the aircraft carrier Harry S Truman to the Gulf. ¶ THE POLITICS ¶ **The sequester showdown has degenerated into a game of who will blink first, likely to climax after the sequester goes into effect.** ¶ Right now, neither side can even agree on who came up with the idea of the sequester. Republicans blame Obama. The White House notes that both chambers of Congress passed it. ¶ The White House is confident, flexing muscle after Obama's re-election win and triumph over Republicans in the fiscal cliff tax showdown. ¶ Obama is proposing a "balanced" package of spending cuts and increases in revenue from closing tax cut loopholes in a "buy down" solution so Congress can come up with a long-term budget deal to end successive budget crises. ¶ His hardball media strategy is rooted in a bid to saddle Republicans in the unpopular Congress with the blame for the calamitous post-sequester scenarios. ¶ "Americans will lose their jobs because Republicans made a choice for that to happen," White House spokesman Jay Carney said. ¶ Republicans are adamant the rise in tax rates for the wealthy they conceded last year is all the revenue Obama is going to get. ¶ Some conservatives are relaxed about the sequester — as their focus is purely on cutting spending. ¶ But House Republican Speaker John Boehner said in a Wall Street Journal op-ed Wednesday it was an "ugly and dangerous" way to cut the deficit. ¶ "Mr President, we agree that your sequester is bad policy. What spending are you willing to cut to replace it?" Boehner wrote. ¶ The Obama-backed Democratic plan to forestall the sequester is not cutting much ice either. ¶ "I wouldn't line my bird cage with it, and I don't have a bird," Republican congressman Trey Gowdy told AFP. ¶ THE LIKELY ENDGAME ¶ Privately, White House officials believe that pressure on Republicans will get so great that they will be forced into a spending and revenues deal. ¶ The politics seem to favor the president — he is more popular than Republicans and polls show voters like the idea of more taxes for the rich. ¶ The danger for Obama is that if the sequester is not quickly fixed and the economy is damaged his presidential legacy is on the line. ¶ **Political capital he needs to drive through** key second-term agenda items such as **immigration reform** and gun control **could also be tarnished.**

### ---Gun control

**Stirewalt 12/12** Chris, "Gun Control Will Crowd Out Other Obama Policy Points", <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2013/02/12/gun-control-will-crowd-out-other-obama-policy-points/#ixzz2L1VJ9wQ2>,

**How much political capital is President Obama willing to spend to achieve gun control?** ¶ **The choice may not be entirely up to him.** ¶ Obama tonight will talk about many things in his fourth State of the Union address in an effort to goad his adversaries into action or increase the political penalties for their resistance. ¶ He will batter Republicans on their refusal to accept his plan to replace part of automatic cuts to federal spending that begin at the end of the month with a tax hike on top earners. Expect to hear of dire consequences that will befall the nation if spending drops by \$120 billion this year: unsafe medicines, hungry children, unsecured nukes, etc. ¶ Obama will denounce foes of a rapid amnesty for illegal immigrants and call for additional stimulus spending to "invest" in middle-income jobs. That jobs plea will, as it has invariably become for Obama, be tied to global warming. Obama Democrats see the fight against changes in the earth's climate as a twofer: it's environmentalism and a jobs subsidy program. ¶ There will be all of those things and more in what promises to be a flurry of policy provisions befitting a re-elected president determined to have a transformative second term. He may not match Bill Clinton's record for longest-ever (1 hour, 28 minutes and 49 seconds in 2000), but Obama will certainly not be wrapping up quickly. ¶ But **whatever Obama talks about, it is likely to be overshadowed by his call for a gun ban** in response to mass shootings and a steady tide of urban shootings, particularly in his hometown of Chicago. ¶ The Constitution instructs the president "from time to time" to update Congress on the state of the union and "recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient." ¶ The tradition since 1790 has been for presidents to do this once a year, but the Framers included the line in order to make sure that there was at least some communication between the legislative and executive branches. ¶ Presidents since Woodrow Wilson have needed little encouragement to tell Congress what's on their minds, especially the current chief executive. Obama talks to, about and around Congress constantly. ¶ So all that Obama says tonight about immigration, taxes, stimulus and global warming will have been heard and re-heard by the lawmakers Obama is ostensibly there to talk to. ¶ The real purpose of States of the Union addresses since Lyndon Johnson moved his speech to primetime from the sleepy midday affairs of his predecessors is to talk to the folks at home and to get the political press to restate your talking points. ¶ The speeches are predictable news events that allow for lavish coverage and great pictures — lots of cheering, the big Stars and Stripes, etc. What the president says can be analyzed, re-analyzed and dissected for the evening, and, since Obama will give partial versions of the speech in three campaign stops, for days afterward. ¶ But **the full laundry list of policies won't make it through the media wringer. Despite Obama's claims that Washington can "walk and chew gum at the same time" he surely knows by now that it cannot.** ¶ In the case of this speech, **it seems inevitable that his push on gun control will predominate.** ¶ It's an issue that his political base adores, it being an article of faith on the American left that limiting gun sales will reduce gun crime. Add to that the double bias in favor of the issue in the press — dramatic stories for the "if it bleeds it leads" set and a policy that fits overall view in the establishment press that firearms are bad.

### --Climate

**Daily Camera, 2/15** ("Obama's new vision: Doable?" 2/15/2013, Factiva))

The president also renewed his call to reduce carbon emissions, suggesting that he may spend some political capital on that vital issue. He endorsed sensible steps to deter gun violence, including new protections against sham sales that arm criminals. And he reconfirmed his commitment to ending the U.S. war in Afghanistan next year.

## PC isn't finite or key – the plan is a win that spills over to future victories

Hirsh 2/7 – chief correspondent of National Journal (Michael, “There’s No Such Thing as Political Capital”, <http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/there-s-no-such-thing-as-political-capital-20130207>, CMR)

On Tuesday, in his State of the Union address, President **Obama will** do what every president does this time of year. For about 60 minutes, he will **lay out a sprawling and ambitious wish list** highlighted by gun control and immigration reform, climate change and debt reduction. In response, the **pundits will** do what they always do this time of year: They will **talk about how** unrealistic most of the proposals are, discussions often informed by sagacious reckonings of how **much “political capital” Obama possesses to push his program through.** Most of **this**

**talk will have no bearing on what actually happens** over the next four years. Consider this: Three months ago, just before the November election, if someone had talked seriously about Obama having enough political capital to oversee passage of both immigration reform and gun-control legislation at the beginning of his second term—even after winning the election by 4 percentage points and 5 million votes (the actual final tally)—this person would have been called crazy and stripped of his pundit’s license. (It doesn’t exist, but it ought to.) In his first term, in a starkly polarized country, the president had been so frustrated by GOP resistance that he finally issued a limited executive order last August permitting immigrants who entered the country illegally as children to work without fear of deportation for at least two years. Obama didn’t dare to even bring up gun control, a Democratic “third rail” that has cost the party elections and that actually might have been even less popular on the right than the president’s health care law. And yet, for reasons that have very little to do with Obama’s personal prestige or popularity—variously put in terms of a “mandate” or “political capital”—chances are fair that both will now happen. What changed? In the case of gun control, of course, it wasn’t the election. It was the horror of the 20 first-graders who were slaughtered in Newtown, Conn., in mid-December. The sickening reality of little girls and boys riddled with bullets from a high-capacity assault weapon seemed to precipitate a sudden tipping point in the national conscience. One thing changed after another. Wayne LaPierre of the National Rifle Association marginalized himself with poorly chosen comments soon after the massacre. The pro-gun lobby, once a phalanx of opposition, began to fissure into reasonables and crazies. Former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., who was shot in the head two years ago and is still struggling to speak and walk, started a PAC with her husband to appeal to the moderate middle of gun owners. Then she gave riveting and poignant testimony to the Senate, challenging lawmakers: “Be bold.” As a result, momentum has appeared to build around some kind of a plan to curtail sales of the most dangerous weapons and ammunition and the way people are permitted to buy them. It’s impossible to say now whether such a bill will pass and, if it does, whether it will make anything more than cosmetic changes to gun laws. But one thing is clear: The political tectonics have shifted dramatically in very little time. Whole new possibilities exist now that didn’t a few weeks ago. Meanwhile, the Republican members of the Senate’s so-called Gang of Eight are pushing hard for a new spirit of compromise on immigration reform, a sharp change after an election year in which the GOP standard-bearer declared he would make life so miserable for the 11 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. that they would “self-deport.” But this turnaround has very little to do with Obama’s personal influence—his political mandate, as it were. It has almost entirely to do with just two numbers: 71 and 27. That’s 71 percent for Obama, 27 percent for Mitt Romney, the breakdown of the Hispanic vote in the 2012 presidential election. Obama drove home his advantage by giving a speech on immigration reform on Jan. 29 at a Hispanic-dominated high school in Nevada, a swing state he won by a surprising 8 percentage points in November. But the movement on immigration has mainly come out of the Republican Party’s recent introspection, and the realization by its more thoughtful members, such as Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida and Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, that without such a shift the party may be facing demographic death in a country where the 2010 census showed, for the first time, that white births have fallen into the minority. It’s got nothing to do with Obama’s political capital or, indeed, Obama at all. The point is not that “political capital” is a meaningless term. Often it is a synonym for “mandate” or “momentum” in the aftermath of a decisive election—and just about every politician ever elected has tried to claim more of a mandate than he actually has. Certainly, Obama can say that because he was elected and Romney wasn’t, he has a better claim on the country’s mood and direction. Many pundits still defend political capital as a useful metaphor at least. “It’s an unquantifiable but meaningful concept,” says Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute. “You can’t really look at a president and say he’s got 37 ounces of political capital. But the fact is, it’s a concept that matters, if you have popularity and some momentum on your side.” The real problem is that **the idea of political capital**—or mandates, or momentum—**is so poorly defined that presidents and pundits often get it wrong.** “Presidents usually over-estimate it,” says

George Edwards, a presidential scholar at Texas A&M University. “The best kind of **political capital**—some sense of an electoral mandate to do something—**is very rare. It almost never happens.** In 1964, maybe. And to some degree in 1980.” For that reason, **political capital**

**is a concept that misleads far more than it enlightens. It is distortionary.** It conveys the idea that we know more than we really do about the ever-elusive concept of political power, and it discounts the way unforeseen events can suddenly change everything. Instead, **it suggests,**

**erroneously, that a political figure has a concrete amount of political capital to invest, just as someone might have real investment capital—that a particular leader can bank his gains, and the size of his account determines what he can do at any given moment in history.** Naturally, any president has practical and electoral limits. Does he have a majority in both chambers of Congress and a cohesive coalition behind him? Obama has neither at present. And unless a surge in the economy—at the moment, still stuck—or some other great victory gives him more momentum, it is inevitable that the closer Obama gets to the 2014 election, the less he will be able to get done. Going into the midterms, Republicans will increasingly avoid any concessions that make him (and the Democrats) stronger. But the abrupt emergence of the immigration and gun-control issues illustrates how suddenly shifts in mood can occur and how political interests can align in new ways just

as suddenly. Indeed, **the pseudo-concept of political capital masks a larger truth about Washington that is kindergarten simple: You just don’t know what you can do until you try.** Or as Ornstein himself **once**

**wrote** years ago, **“Winning wins.”** In theory, and in practice, **depending on Obama’s handling of any particular issue,**

even in a polarized time he could still deliver on a lot of his second-term goals, depending on his skill and the breaks. Unforeseen catalysts can appear, like Newtown. Epiphanies can dawn, such as when many Republican Party leaders suddenly woke up in panic to the huge disparity in the Hispanic vote.¶ Some political scientists who study the elusive calculus of how to pass legislation and run successful presidencies say that political capital is, at best, an empty concept, and that almost nothing in the academic literature successfully quantifies or even defines it. "It can refer to a very abstract thing, like a president's popularity, but there's no mechanism there. That makes it kind of useless," says Richard Bensele, a government professor at Cornell University. Even Ornstein concedes that the calculus is far more complex than the term suggests. Winning on one issue often changes the calculation for the next issue; there is never any known amount of capital. "The idea here is, if an issue comes up where the conventional wisdom is that president is not going to get what he wants, and he gets it, then each time that happens, it changes the calculus of the other actors" Ornstein says. "If they think he's going to win, they may change positions to get on the winning side. It's a bandwagon effect."¶ ALL THE WAY WITH LBJ¶ Sometimes, a clever practitioner of power can get more done just because he's aggressive and knows the hallways of Congress well. Texas A&M's Edwards is right to say that the outcome of the 1964 election, Lyndon Johnson's landslide victory over Barry Goldwater, was one of the few that conveyed a mandate. But one of the main reasons for that mandate (in addition to Goldwater's ineptitude as a candidate) was President Johnson's masterful use of power leading up to that election, and his ability to get far more done than anyone thought possible, given his limited political capital. In the newest volume in his exhaustive study of LBJ, *The Passage of Power*, historian Robert Caro recalls Johnson getting cautionary advice after he assumed the presidency from the assassinated John F. Kennedy in late 1963. Don't focus on a long-stalled civil-rights bill, advisers told him, because it might jeopardize Southern lawmakers' support for a tax cut and appropriations bills the president needed. "One of the wise, practical people around the table [said that] the presidency has only a certain amount of coinage to expend, and you oughtn't to expend it on this," Caro writes. (Coinage, of course, was what political capital was called in those days.) Johnson replied, "Well, what the hell's the presidency for?"¶

## PC irrelevant to immigration – zero risk of an internal link

Hirsh 2/7 (Michael, "There's No Such Thing as Political Capital",

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/there-s-no-such-thing-as-political-capital-20130207>,

Meanwhile, the Republican members of the Senate's so-called Gang of Eight are pushing hard for a new spirit of compromise on immigration reform, a sharp change after an election year in which the GOP standard-bearer declared he would make life so miserable for the 11 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. that they would "self-deport." But this turnaround has very little to do with Obama's personal influence—his political mandate, as it were. It has almost entirely to do with just two numbers: 71 and 27. That's 71 percent for Obama, 27 percent for Mitt Romney, the breakdown of the Hispanic vote in the 2012 presidential election. Obama drove home his advantage by giving a speech on immigration reform on Jan. 29 at a Hispanic-dominated high school in Nevada, a swing state he won by a surprising 8 percentage points in November. But the movement on immigration has mainly come out of the Republican Party's recent introspection, and the realization by its more thoughtful members, such as Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida and Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, that without such a shift the party may be facing demographic death in a country where the 2010 census showed, for the first time, that white births have fallen into the minority. It's got nothing to do with Obama's political capital or, indeed, Obama at all.¶

## New immigrants not key---immigration and visas already increasing

Porter 2-5 – Eduardo Porter, writer for the New York Times, February 5th, 2013, "Immigration Reform Issue: The Effect on the Budget" [www.nytimes.com/2013/02/06/business/immigration-reform-issue-the-effect-on-the-budget.html?pagewanted=all&pagewanted=print](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/06/business/immigration-reform-issue-the-effect-on-the-budget.html?pagewanted=all&pagewanted=print)

Yet immigration reform today means something quite different than it did in 2007. Notably, the elements needed to stop the flow of illegal immigrants north are much less important to the enterprise. The Obama administration has already spent huge amounts of money on border enforcement. Today, border policing costs about \$18 billion a year — nearly 50 percent more than it did in 2006. And deportations have soared. What's more, illegal immigration has slowed to a trickle, as Mexico has grown more robustly than the United States. The illegal immigrant population has even been shrinking in the last few years.

And **it may continue** to do so **as the Mexican population of prime migration-age people stops growing.**¶ Also, **many employers have already gotten some of what they wanted: the number of workers entering the United States on temporary visas for low-end jobs in agriculture and other industries has increased sharply.**¶ “The discussion is in a different environment,” said Gordon H. Hanson, an **expert on the economics of immigration at the University of California, San Diego.** “**The flow of new immigrants is not the story anymore.**”

## Obama won't push and PC isn't key

**Grant 2/13** David, “Immigration reform: Why many GOP lawmakers applauded Obama speech”, 2013, <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/DC-Decoder/2013/0213/Immigration-reform-Why-many-GOP-lawmakers-applauded-Obama-speech>,

Mr. Obama seems to have anticipated Mr. Brady. During his State of the Union message Tuesday night, **the president briefly outlined his proposals before passing immigration reform over to Congress. His approach to the issue**, which has vexed several previous presidents and Congresses, **was notably less strident than his calls for action on a range of other issues, from gun control to cybersecurity.** ¶ Obama's careful handling of immigration reform reflects a do-no-harm strategy that **seems to recognize deep suspicions about his motives among many GOP lawmakers**, such as Brady. ¶ “I think **the president will** invariably **make it hard**er **for both sides to come together** because he sort of **likes baiting Republicans on this**,” Brady said after the speech. “**If he wanted to see true immigration reform, he'd lock himself in the Oval Office until Congress got it done.**” ¶ Fellow Democrats, too, see the challenges facing Obama on immigration reform. ¶ “He is in a difficult spot,” says Rep. John Yarmouth (D) of Kentucky, who is part of a House group working on bipartisan immigration legislation. “**It can't be seen as an Obama plan, or Republicans won't vote for it.**” I think he rightly said **there are two bipartisan groups working on it**, two bipartisan groups are going **to advance plans** and we should have a vote on that. And I think **that's the only way it can possibly become reality** is that if it's always perceived in both chambers as a bipartisan plan.” ¶

## Obama PC fails now---plan generates GOP support for other priorities like immigration

**CSM 1-20** – Christian Science Monitor, 1/20/13, “Obama's second term: Can he work with Congress? (+video),” <http://www.csmonitor.com/layout/set/print/USA/DC-Decoder/2013/0120/Obama-s-second-term-Can-he-work-with-Congress-video>

“**The president has been criticized** by many people **for his inability or unwillingness to spend a lot of time stroking members of Congress**,” says Ross Baker, a congressional historian at Rutgers University who is writing a book on bipartisanship in the US Senate. “I think a lot of this is based upon the widely-accepted theory [that the] power of a presidency is the power to persuade – which is perfectly plausible, and it was certainly plausible in the 1950s.... The problem is, there are no persuadables” today. ¶ **But by focusing on issues of common ground with the GOP, Washington could generate some bipartisan successes in** the next four years. ¶ **Immigration** and Energy ¶ For one, the president could team up with Republican moderates and much of the party's leadership on immigration reform. ¶ “We believe that immigration reform is different in that it has a past, present, and future of bipartisan support,” said Ali Noorani, executive director of the National Immigration Forum. “What we've seen over the last two years is conservatives, moderates, and liberals want this president and this Congress to act, and that's different from any other issue.” ¶ And **the president could** perhaps **turn down the bellicosity on the Hill by working with** some of **his loudest critics** (though risking the ire of environmentalists in his political base) **in** one area that the deeply-red right and the president could agree: **energy policy**.



## 1ar – PC Not Key

### **Pol cap isn't key—Obama is letting congress work out the details**

Elise **Foley**, staff writer, **1/15/13** ["Obama Gears Up For Immigration Reform Push In Second Term," HuffPost, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/15/obama-immigration-reform\\_n\\_2463388.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/15/obama-immigration-reform_n_2463388.html)]

In a briefing with The Huffington Post, a senior administration official said **the White House** believes it **has met enforcement goals** and must now move to a comprehensive solution. **The administration is highly skeptical of claims from Republicans that immigration reform** can or **should be done in a piecemeal fashion**. **Going down that road**, the White House worries, **could result in passage of the less politically complicated pieces, such as an enforcement mechanism and high-skilled worker visas, while leaving out** more contentious items such as **a pathway to citizenship** for undocumented immigrants. ¶ "Enforcement is certainly part of the picture," the official said. "But if you go back and look at the 2006 and 2007 bills, if you go back and look at John McCain's 10-point 'This is what I've got to get done before I'm prepared to talk about immigration,' and then you look at what we're actually doing, it's like 'check, check, check.' We're there. The border is as secure as it's been in a generation or two, so it's really time." ¶ One key in the second term, advocates say, will be convincing skeptics such as Republican Sen. John Cornyn of Texas that the Obama administration held up its end of the bargain by proving a commitment to enforcement. The White House also needs to convince GOP lawmakers that there's support from their constituents for immigration reform, which could be aided by conservative evangelical leaders and members of the business community who are pushing for a bill. ¶ Immigrant advocates want more targeted deportations that focus on criminals, while opponents of comprehensive immigration reform say there's too little enforcement and not enough assurances that reform wouldn't be followed by another wave of unauthorized immigration. The Obama administration has made some progress on both fronts, but some advocates worry that the president hasn't done enough to emphasize it. The latest deportation figures were released in the ultimate Friday news dump: mid-afternoon Friday on Dec. 21, a prime travel time four days before Christmas. ¶ Last week, the enforcement-is-working argument was bolstered by a report from the nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute, which found that the government is pouring more money into its immigration agencies than the other federal law-enforcement efforts combined. There are some clear metrics to point to on the border in particular, and Doris Meissner, an author of the report and a former commissioner of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, said she hopes putting out more information can add to the immigration debate. ¶ "I've been surprised, frankly, that the administration hasn't done more to lay out its record," she said, adding the administration has kept many of its metrics under wraps. ¶ **There are already lawmakers working on a broad agreement. Eight senators, coined the gang of eight, are working on a bipartisan immigration bill**. It's still in its early stages, but nonmembers of the "gang," such as Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) are also talking about reform. ¶ **It's still unclear what exact role the president will play**, but sources say he does plan to lead on the issue. Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.), the top Democrat on the House immigration subcommittee, said **the White House seems sensitive to the fact that Republicans and Democrats need to work out the issue in Congress -- no one is expecting a fiscal cliff-style arrangement jammed by leadership** -- while keeping the president heavily involved. ¶ In other words, **it's not the place for steamrolling**. "He needs to be an honest broker here," said Ali Noorani, executive director of the National Immigration Forum, which works on bipartisan consensus for reform. "Instead of the politician forcing immigration reform, Obama needs to be the statesman creating immigration reform." ¶ Beyond the border, Obama will push for changes to the legal immigration system, which is universally considered to be out of date and ill-suited to the labor market and to managing the future flow of immigrant workers. **Any bill will almost certainly include an increase in visas for graduates with advanced degrees in science, technology, engineering or math, and more and better flexibility for foreign migrant labor.**

### **PC's not key – GOP self-motivated**

**Nakamura, '12** (David, "Advocates fear gun control agenda will divert Obama from immigration reform, December 22, [www.washingtonpost.com/politics/advocates-fear-gun-control-agenda-will-divert-obama-from-immigration-reform/2012/12/22/2725d3d0-4acc-11e2-b709-667035ff9029\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/advocates-fear-gun-control-agenda-will-divert-obama-from-immigration-reform/2012/12/22/2725d3d0-4acc-11e2-b709-667035ff9029_story.html))

"As we line up a path to gun control and the response to Connecticut, **everybody expects Congress**, just like the rest of the American people, **will be able to take on more than one thing**," said Clarissa Martinez de Castro, director of civic engagement and immigration for the National Council of La Raza. **"There is a real premium for Republicans moving forward on**

immigration. It's **less about their position with Democrats** than with **making inroads with** a section of **the electorate** that they will not see the inside of the White House without. **That's their biggest motivation."**

## PC not key

**McManus 2/1/13** (Doyle, "The GOP: New fans of immigration reform",

<http://www.mercedsunstar.com/2013/02/01/2794775/the-gop-new-fans-of-immigration.html>,

**Obama's main challenge in this battle is to stay out of the way**. That won't be as easy as it sounds. During his reelection campaign, the president promised to make immigration reform an early priority in his second term, and his aides have worked for months on a detailed legislative proposal that Obama had planned to unveil Tuesday in Las Vegas.¶ Instead, **Democratic supporters of**

**immigration reform asked him to hold back**. A Schumer-McCain plan will be difficult enough to get Republican legislators to

sign onto, they told him; **an "Obama plan" would be dead on arrival in Congress.**¶ Instead of acting as Mr. Inside, a role

that brought him little success during the last four years, **Obama's role is to act as Mr. Outside** -- mobilizing public support,

keeping pressure on Congress to move a bill forward and reassuring anxious Democrats that they're getting a good deal despite the concessions Republicans will demand.

## 1ar – no pass – citizenship

### House citizenship disputes kill it in committee

**Fabian 2/21** (Jordan, "Obstacle to Reform? Top House Republican Opposes Path to Citizenship", [http://abcnews.go.com/ABC\\_Univision/Politics/obstacle-reform-top-republican-opposes-path-citizenship/story?id=18559421&singlePage=true](http://abcnews.go.com/ABC_Univision/Politics/obstacle-reform-top-republican-opposes-path-citizenship/story?id=18559421&singlePage=true),

**The head of the House committee tasked with overseeing the nation's immigration laws has come out squarely against a pathway to citizenship** for undocumented immigrants, **yet another sign that a**

**comprehensive reform bill could face a tough road to passage.** ¶ House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob

**Goodlatte** (R-Va.) told NPR he **opposes allowing** many of the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States from eventually gaining full **citizenship.** ¶ "People have a pathway to citizenship right now: It's to abide by the immigration laws, and if they have family relationships, if they have a job skill that allows them to do that, they can obtain citizenship," Goodlatte said in a piece that aired Thursday. "But simply someone who broke the law, came here, say, 'I'll give you citizenship now,' that I don't think is going to happen." ¶ Goodlatte's comments should come as no surprise. He is a favorite of immigration restrictionist groups and has long voiced skepticism about a path to citizenship. Goodlatte called a path "extreme" during a committee hearing on immigration reform earlier this month. ¶ But the congressman's comments are an indication that **comprehensive immigration reform**, which is supported by President Barack

Obama, a bipartisan group of senators, and a majority of the American public, **could still face significant trouble passing**

**Congress.** ¶ "If people start prescribing or prejudging how we're going to find common ground in the middle, he's simply going to not have a bill," Goodlatte said of President Obama during his interview with NPR. ¶ That could be an **alarming warning for supporters of comprehensive reform.** Should the House take up an immigration reform bill using its traditional process, **the legislation would have to be**

**passed out of the Judiciary Committee before it reaches the full House floor.** **The committee includes**

**several other high-profile Republican lawmakers** such as Reps. Lamar Smith (Texas), Steve King (Iowa), and Louie

Gohmert (Texas), **each of whom have long opposed a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.** ¶

Goodlatte told NPR he would favor other reforms such as streamlining the legal immigration system and strengthening immigration enforcement, both on the border and on employers that hire undocumented immigrants. For many people who have entered the country illegally, however, there is virtually no existing path to citizenship. ¶ While many Republican leaders have urged the party to support

immigration reform, **Goodlatte may very well be speaking for a majority of the GOP rank-and-file.** A Washington Post-ABC News poll this month showed that a majority of Republicans oppose a path to citizenship. And Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), who is helping negotiate an immigration bill, heard an earful from constituents who were angry over the proposal at a town hall event this week.

## No pass – no vote

### No vote till Summer

**Helderman 1/26** (Rosalind S. Helderman and David Nakamura, “Obama, senators start push on immigration reform”, [http://www.denverpost.com/nationworld/ci\\_22453721/obama-senators-start-push-immigration-reform](http://www.denverpost.com/nationworld/ci_22453721/obama-senators-start-push-immigration-reform))

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., a veteran of the 2007 effort who is part of the current working group, said Republican attitudes have dramatically shifted since the party's defeat at the polls in November. Obama won more than 70 percent of the vote among Latinos and Asians, and a growing number of **Republican** leaders **think action on immigration is necessary** to expand the party's appeal to minority groups. ¶ "Obviously, it's had a very distinct impression," said **McCain**, who lost his own bid for the White House in 2008. "It's time to move forward on this." ¶ But he **added, "I don't claim that it's going to be easy."** ¶ Also included in **the** new **Senate** group are Schumer, who is chairman of the key Senate subcommittee where legislative action will begin; Graham; Robert Menendez, D-N.J.; and Marco Rubio, R-Fla.. Two others, Jeff Flake, R-Ariz. and Michael Bennet, D-Colo., have also been involved in some talks. ¶ Their **timetable would aim for a bill to be written by** March or **April** and **potentially considered for final passage in the Senate as early as the summer.**

### No vote till August

Chris **Johnson, 1/23/2013** (staff writer, “Will Obama include gay couples in immigration reform?” <http://www.washingtonblade.com/2013/01/23/will-obama-include-gay-couples-in-immigration-reform/>, Accessed 1/23/2013, CMR)

But while signs indicate that Obama will ask Congress to pass a UAFA-inclusive immigration reform bill, questions linger over whether the Senate will come to an agreement to pass an immigration package that would protect LGBT families. ¶ **Concurrent with the plan the White House is developing, a bipartisan group of senators has engaged in talks to craft a comprehensive bill that** according to the Times, **could be introduced as early as March** with the plan to hold **a floor vote** before **August**. **Legislation is expected to start in the Democratic-controlled Senate before moving over the Republican-controlled House for final passage.**

## No pass – house blocks

### House blocks – PC can't overcome

**DeFrancesco 1/4** – Dr. Victoria M. DeFrancesco Soto is an NBC Latino and MSNBC contributor, Senior Analyst for Latino Decisions and Fellow at the Center for Politics and Governance at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, at Austin (“Opinion: Immigration reform will not be easy, but it’s not impossible”, <http://nbclatino.com/2013/01/04/opinion-immigration-reform-will-not-be-easy-but-its-not-impossible/>)

Unlike in his first administration, **the president** seems to be on board and ready for **rolling up his sleeves** and getting into immigration reform, but that **won't cut it**. **The problem** for immigration reform in 2013 **is rooted in Capital Hill**. **The president's support** is a necessary condition for any major policy overhaul, but it **is not a sufficient condition**. ¶ Let's just assume the president can arm-wrestle the Senate Democrats and a few Senate Republicans into supporting his immigration reform. **Two out of three won't cut it**. ¶ **The Republican-controlled House** is what **stands in the way** of immigration reform. More specifically, **the GOP's split mindset** regarding Latinos and immigration is what **will** likely **prevent the president from crossing off immigration** reform from his 2013 **to-do list**. ¶ There are **moderate GOP voices**, such as that of Jeb Bush, that are calling for Republicans to not just go along, but lead in an immigration overhaul effort. These are the folks who see the demographic handwriting on the wall and recognize that the Republican Party cannot survive by alienating the fastest-growing segment of the electorate. However, those voices **are few and far between**.

## 1ar – thumpers generic

### **Gun control and climate thump – capitals already been spent**

**Steinhauser2/8** (Paul, CNN Political Editor, “Obama's approval rating edging down?”,

<http://politicalticker.blogs.cnn.com/2013/02/08/obamas-approval-rating-edging-down/comment-page-1/>,

As President Barack **Obama** gets ready to give the first State of the Union address of his second term, it appears his **poll numbers are** a bit **lower than** they were just **last month**. According to a CNN Poll of Polls, which averages the latest surveys, 49% of Americans say they approve of the job the president's doing in office, with **44%** saying they **disapprove of his performance** in the White House. That's down just a bit from a 52%-43% job approval rating in a CNN Poll of Polls from mid January, just before Obama's second inauguration. The new CNN Poll of Polls, compiled and released Friday, averages the three non-partisan, live operator national surveys conducted in the past week and a half: Gallup's daily tracking poll (Feb 5-7), Fox News (Feb. 4-6), and Quinnipiac University (Jan. 30-Feb. 4). Since the CNN Poll of Polls is an average of multiple surveys, it does not have a sampling error. "Historically speaking, it's not a surprise for a second-term president to lose a couple of points in the aftermath of his second inauguration," says CNN Polling Director Keating Holland. "It looks like the approval ratings for Bill Clinton in 1997 and Ronald Reagan in 1985 dropped two to four points after the celebratory coverage surrounding their inaugurations faded. It's possible that second-term presidents have honeymoons just like first-term presidents, except that in the second term the honeymoon can be measured in days or weeks, not months," adds Holland. But the president's busy "to-do" list may also be contributing to the slight decline in his overall approval rating. "I think **he's put forward an aggressive agenda on guns** immigration gay rights. It's hard to get much beyond 50% with that approach, unless the president gets a big tailwind from faster economic recovery," says CNN Senior Political Analyst and National Journal Group's Editorial Director Ron Brownstein. And Holland agrees that there may be more to the slight dip other than just tradition. While President George W. Bush had a lot on his plate at the start of the second term, his one major controversial push right out of the gate centered on Social Security reform. "President George W. Bush's approval ratings remained constant in early 2005, so there may be more at work here. **Obama has promised to spend political capital to achieve** some of his more controversial goals on immigration, **gun control and climate change**. If his approval rating has changed, it may be a sign that some of that **capital has already been spent**," says Holland

### **Citizenship, gun control, economy**

**Reuters 2/5** (“House Republicans try to chip away at immigration reform”,

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/06/us-usa-immigration-idUSBRE9130V620130206>,

(Reuters) - The first major **immigration** reform effort since 1986 **came under attack** on Tuesday **from congressional Republicans** who cast doubt on a proposal backed by President Barack Obama to give 11 million illegal immigrants a chance to become citizens. An immigration **overhaul** suddenly **looked possible last week** when a group of senators from both parties launched a reform campaign. **But it has not taken long for partisan rancor to emerge**. **Republicans** in the House of Representatives **are questioning** a core element of the immigration plan: **a path to citizenship** for undocumented residents, most of them Hispanic, who are already in the United States. Bob Goodlatte, Republican chairman of the Judiciary Committee, raised the possibility of a "middle ground" between the current U.S. policy of deporting illegals and of placing them on a path to citizenship, as Obama demands. "Are there options to consider between the extremes of mass deportation and pathway to citizenship?" the Virginia lawmaker asked during a session on immigration reform. Any **challenge to** the Democrats' goal of providing a route to **citizenship might derail reform** **at a time when other divisive issues like gun control and deficit reduction share the legislative agenda**.

### **Economy thumps**

**AP 1/31** (JIM KUHNHENN, “Economic jitters compete with Obama agenda”,

<http://news.yahoo.com/economic-jitters-compete-obama-agenda-081854479--finance.html>,

WASHINGTON (AP) — **Just as** President Barack **Obama is pushing** new initiatives on **gun control and immigration, the gloomy old problem of a sluggish economy is elbowing its way back into prominence**. Consumer confidence is falling, the economy is contracting and large automatic spending cuts are threatening to hit the Pentagon and other programs, with uncertain consequences. **These troubles arise as Obama's** public approval is improving and as he **begins to use his sway to**

**promote the key features of his second-term agenda.** The White House, the Federal Reserve and independent economists attributed the shrinkage in gross domestic product and the drop in consumer confidence to one-time events and said underlying economic factors were still showing encouraging signs.¶ But in politics, power resides in the moment. **Any immediate economic setback — or the perception of one — could weaken Obama's clout or at least distract him as he carefully tries to put his imprint on initiatives dealing with immigration and gun violence.**¶ At the White House, there was no evidence of a course alteration. And White House officials expressed confidence in consumption and investment trends that showed evidence of strength.¶ But the Commerce Department announcement Wednesday that the economy shrank at an annual rate of 0.1 percent came a day after the Conference Board reported a sharp decline in consumer confidence in January. That drop, together with one in December, erased consumer confidence that had built up in 2012.¶ What's more, the new data comes just two days before the government releases the January unemployment report, which economists believe will stay at the still-high rate of 7.8 percent, where it has held for two months.¶ "What's most critical to consumer confidence is employment," said Lynn Franco, director of economic indicators at the Conference Board. "We've had spurts where we've had strong job growth and we've seen a rebound in confidence, and then suddenly you have a pullback in employment and you get a pullback in confidence. So we need a convincing story, and that's going to take several months of jobs growth."¶ Analysts said the economy is still on track to grow steadily if modestly at a roughly 2 percent pace, as long as the housing and auto industries continue to recover.¶ The Commerce Department attributed the economic contraction mainly to companies restocking at a slower rate and to reductions in government spending on defense. While companies will ultimately have to rebuild their inventories, the cuts in defense spending could offer a hint of things to come.¶ The administration argued that the 22 percent reduction in defense spending was partly in anticipation of automatic spending cuts that were going to take effect at the beginning of the year. Obama and congressional Republicans averted that so-called fiscal cliff by extending Bush-era tax rates to all but the wealthiest Americans.¶ But the deal simply delayed the automatic cuts until March 1. At that point, the Pentagon faces across-the-board cuts of 7 percent, while domestic programs will have to shrink by 5 percent. Some analysts believe that if those cuts are allowed to occur, as some Republicans are now suggesting, the economy could lose a half a percentage point of growth.¶ "If the economy would continue to slow down, the interesting question is how does that affect negotiations in and around sequester, government spending, tax reform, the debt ceiling," said John Sides, a political scientist at George Washington University who studies the impact of economic data on politics. "To me **it's not so much that an economic slowdown is going to hurt the president's ability to get things done, it's how it's going to affect the negotiations that we already know are going to happen.**"¶ Some in the business community hope the experience in the last quarter will alert lawmakers to the potential economic damage the automatic cuts could create.¶ "I don't think any time you see a reduction in economic growth that it's good news," White House press secretary Jay Carney conceded Wednesday.¶ But he cautioned, "We need to make sure that in Washington we are not taking actions that undercut that progress that we have been making and can continue to make and will continue to make."¶ Carney said letting the automatic cuts take effect is a "sort of political brinksmanship of the kind that results in one primary victim, and that's American taxpayers, the American middle class."¶ Still, the White House insists the only alternative to those cuts is a mix of savings and new tax revenue. Republicans say the \$600 billion in revenue they already gave Obama as part of the New Year's fiscal cliff deal is enough. They insist that if he wants different spending cuts than those due to start on March 1, he should submit a new plan.¶ But the White House has been eager to move away from fiscal and budget fights, ready to use the president's re-election and the uptick in his popularity to push his noneconomic agenda.¶ On Tuesday, he traveled to Las Vegas to push for an overhaul in immigration. On Monday, he is traveling to Minneapolis to promote his proposals to reduce gun violence.¶ **The issues are not simple** ones for Obama. The economy and the nation's debt still rank higher than immigration and guns as issues in the mind of the public. Moreover, Obama has to navigate gingerly with Congress on immigration, where a fragile coalition of Democrats and Republicans is assembling legislation that, among other things, could provide a path to citizenship for 11 million illegal immigrants in the U.S.¶ Obama has vowed to use his bully pulpit to build public support for his new agenda. **Defending his economic stewardship was not supposed to be part of the playbook.**

## Gun control

**Klein 1/14** (Rick, "Analysis: Gun Control Set to Crowd Out President Obama's Second-Term Agenda," 1/14/2013, <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2013/01/analysis-gun-control-set-to-crowd-out-president-obamas-second-term-agenda/>)

WASHINGTON — President **Obama is putting his chips on guns.**¶ It wasn't an issue he campaigned on — actually, it was almost the opposite of that. It did more to grab him than he did to grab it.¶ But a month after the unfathomable tragedy at Sandy Hook, **the president has positioned himself to take on a fight with long odds as his biggest domestic-policy initiative** this side of the never-ending fiscal fights.¶ The valuable run-up to the inauguration — traditionally a White House's best chance to put forward a bold new policy initiative — is being dominated by the polarizing debate over **gun control.** The coming **fight has broad implications on virtually every other** Washington **priority** in 2013 and beyond.¶ Vice President Joe **Biden's guns task force is strongly signaling recommending a robust menu of policy options,** spanning executive actions and legislative initiatives. **Each piece is sure to require the full force of presidential leadership** to turn into action.¶ "The public demands we speak to it," Biden said last week, referencing the emotions that followed a tragedy involving young children.¶ It may yet be a solid bet that this moment is different than past shootings. Powerful allies including New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Rep.

Gabrielle Giffords are lending their considerable political weight to the efforts, prodding action along.¶ Already, the fact that Washington hasn't lost interest bodes well for a major legislative push that includes more background checks and a renewed assault weapons ban.¶ But **the gun lobby has been explicit** that **it won't be giving in.** **The fight will consume** valuable **political oxygen**, perhaps all of what's available to a reelected president whose party controls only half of Capitol Hill.¶ **That means other** ambitious subject **areas** — **immigration** reform, **energy** and **environmental policy**, a major infrastructure initiative — **will have to wait.** Moreover, the coming **brinksmanship over spending and budget issues could further poison the chances of action**, potentially **grinding Washington to an effective halt.**¶ President George W. Bush found out the hard way that **political capital doesn't last long into a second term**, even if the president tries to spend it with a friendly Congress. Bush's push for Social Security reform not only went nowhere, it helped sow the seeds of the Democratic takeover of Congress in 2006.¶ This fight over guns has the potential to be more than that for Obama, though. After a campaign devoid of much inspiration, a passionate debate that gets to the heart of the nation's culture may be what the recently reelected president needs.¶ **The fight will mobilize** and energize those on **both sides** — **even if it tires everyone out before discussions begin in other areas.**



## 1ar – sequestration thumper

### Thumpers are devastating – empirics prove

**Karst 2/21** (Tom, “Immigration reform hangs in the balance”, <http://www.thepacker.com/fruit-vegetable-news/Immigration-reform-hangs-in-the-balance-192315371.html>,

Guenther said that while there is bipartisan support for reform in the House and Senate, a comprehensive immigration deal isn't a slam dunk. ¶ Immigration reform was supported by President Bush in 2006, along with both

Democratic and Republican members of Congress, Guenther said. However, posturing and overreaching by opposing factions of the debate led to the breakdown in the process. ¶ Beyond bipartisan plans being negotiated in

the Senate and House, the White House was circulating a draft immigration bill that includes a provision for a visa for illegal immigrants and would allow them to become legal permanent residents in eight years, according to an article in USA Today. ¶ Frank Gasperini/Gasperini The White House plan didn't mention a reformed guest worker program, said Frank Gasperini, executive vice president for Vienna, Va.-based National Council of Agricultural Employer. ¶ “It's troubling,” he said. “We have to have a flow of foreign workers.” ¶ Gasperini said

immigration reform is overshadowed by budget issues. The gun control debate could also curb progress on immigration reform, he said.

### GOP won't back-down – kills immigration

**Brown 2/20** (Carrie Budoff, and Jake Sherman, “President Obama's sequestration strategy: Shame”, [http://www.politico.com/story/2013/02/obamas-sequestration-strategy-shame-87829\\_Page2.html](http://www.politico.com/story/2013/02/obamas-sequestration-strategy-shame-87829_Page2.html),

But if Republicans hold to their cuts-only approach – as they insist they will – and the sequester kicks in, Obama could face a fiscal crisis that threatens to tank the economy and sideline his top legislative priorities such as immigration reform and gun control. ¶ The early signs aren't encouraging for the president. ¶ In

the face of the planned escalation in pressure from the White House, House Republicans feel no compulsion to do anything — at all. ¶ Speaker John **Boehner** (R-Ohio), Majority Leader Eric **Cantor** (R-Va.) and Majority Whip Kevin **McCarthy** (R-Calif.) think they've done their job by passing a bill last Congress to replace the sequester cuts, and they're content with blaming the president, since Bob Woodward reported that the White House staff devised the idea of sequester before House and Senate leadership pushed it through the Capitol.

### Collapses agreement on border security and overall reform

**Marlantes 2/20** (Liz, “One casualty of the sequester? Obama's entire legislative agenda. (+video)”, <http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/DC-Decoder/Decoder-Wire/2013/0220/One-casualty-of-the-sequester-Obama-s-entire-legislative-agenda.-video>,

President Obama has been highlighting, with increasing urgency, all the ways in which the sequester – the across-the-board cuts to defense and nondefense discretionary spending scheduled to hit at the end of next week – would be bad for average Americans and could do serious damage to the economy. ¶ What he hasn't said, but what's abundantly clear from looking at where the cuts would hit, is that the sequester also would make virtually all of Mr. **Obama's second-term** legislative agenda, including a few items that have Republican

support, essentially dead on arrival. ¶ At an event Tuesday with first responders whose jobs could be eliminated by the sequester, Obama spelled out the consequences of allowing the cuts to take effect: “This is not an abstraction,” he said. “People will lose their jobs.” ¶ That's true. And many of those job reductions are poised to hit in areas where Obama would actually need an increase in federal spending and activity in order to enact the legislative agenda outlined in his inaugural and State of the Union addresses. ¶ Consider immigration reform, one of Obama's top legislative priorities. With a bipartisan group of senators currently working on a bill – and with the Republican Party looking for new ways to reach out to Hispanic voters – it appears to have a decent chance of passing. But many conservatives have made clear that they will only support a comprehensive reform bill if it makes securing the border a precondition of giving illegal immigrants a path to citizenship. ¶ And beefing up border security could become all but impossible if the sequester takes effect – since it will force big cuts in the number of border patrol agents. Last week,

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano told the Senate Appropriations Committee that the sequester will lead to the elimination of 5,000 agents over the next year (out of a total of 17,500). Noting that she'd just spent the previous day testifying before the Senate Judiciary

Committee on immigration reform – where she was repeatedly urged by Republicans to do more on border security – Napolitano joked that she felt like she was having "a little bit of an out-of-body experience."¶ Then there's gun control, another top issue for Obama. The gun-control measure that appears to have the most bipartisan support right now is to make background checks mandatory for all gun purchases, including at gun shows. That proposal wins near-universal support from the public, according to polling.¶ But the sequester could make any proposed expansion of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), which conducts criminal background checks on prospective gun buyers, extremely difficult. Why? The NICS is operated by the FBI, and sequestration would hit the FBI directly, reducing the number of agents – as well as the number of ATF agents and US attorneys – by an estimated 3,700. According to one report, the cuts could cripple even the current, nonuniversal background-check system by making the checks take longer, making them unavailable on weekends (when most gun shows take place), and allowing more people to slip through the cracks. Likewise, the reduction in US attorneys and ATF agents could make any proposal to crack down harder on gun crime – another measure often put forward by Republicans as a way to combat gun violence – a moot point.¶

Needless to say, other **items on the president's agenda** that **face even stiffer political headwinds, looked at in the context of the sequester, seem even more improbable**.

Universal preschool? Probably a pipe dream, given that 15,000 teachers and aides would lose their jobs as a result of the sequester – which, incidentally, would also cut funding for Head Start, the nation's current and popular public pre-school program. Climate change? It's hard to see how that goes anywhere, given that the sequester would slash funding to the Environmental Protection Agency, and would also cut funding to NOAA – which could impact the nation's ability to accurately predict major weather events like hurricanes.¶ Of course, there's always the chance that Congress finds a way to restore funding to some of these areas after the sequester hits. But given their current track record, we wouldn't count on it. Which means that **the sequester could wind up dictating** – in a major way – how much, or more accurately **how little, of Obama's top priorities ever become law.**

## Thumper – Fiscal fights

### Fiscal fights and foreign policy obliterate PC and the agenda

**Benac 1/21** – over 3 decades of experience covering govt and politics in Washington (Nancy,

“Analysis: Optimistic Obama faces tough to-do list”,

<http://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/viewart/20130122/GPG06/301220172/Analysis-Optimistic-Obama-faces-tough-do-list>

**First up is certain battle with Congress in the next few months over** deadlines on automatic **budget cuts**, expiring **government spending** authority **and** raising the **debt limit**. House Republicans last week agreed to bump up the debt limit slightly, but that just puts off that part of the fight for a few months. **Obama’s goal is to get through that trifecta and still have the political capital left for** the things he’d rather focus on: reducing **gun violence**, overhauling **immigration** policy, revamping **tax laws, addressing climate change** and more. **With Republicans in Congress approaching the new year with very different goals, it’s a formula for deadlock and difficulty for the president,”** says James **Thurber, director of the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies at American University.** **“I don’t think this president has even a month of political capital.”** **International worries, including** the civil war in **Syria, Iran’s nuclear intentions and** instability in **Mali could complicate the president’s Term** **Two game plan as well.** **“Things are stacked up,”** Obama senior adviser David Plouffe acknowledged Sunday on ABC’s “This Week.”

### Fiscal fights first – derails immigration

**O'Brien 1/21** (Michael, “Ambitious agenda: Debt fight, gun control and immigration top president's to-do list”, 2k13, [http://nbcpolitics.nbcnews.com/\\_news/2013/01/21/16610922-ambitious-agenda-debt-fight-gun-control-and-immigration-top-presidents-to-do-list?lite](http://nbcpolitics.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/01/21/16610922-ambitious-agenda-debt-fight-gun-control-and-immigration-top-presidents-to-do-list?lite)

**Confronting** the **fading effectiveness of a second-term presidency, dogged opposition** from **Republicans** in Congress **and unexpected hurdles that will inevitably arise** over the next four years, **Obama must act** with a sense of urgency on his plans, particularly **amid** the **fiscal cliff negotiations.** **“Second-term presidents generally get eight months** or so ... **where there's a honeymoon** to push an agenda,” said James **Thurber, the director of Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies at American University.** **“He doesn't even have a month.”** **“**Newly armed with “Organizing for Action” – the remnants of the president’s campaign structure, converted to a nonprofit for advocacy purposes – Obama has suggested he will indeed act quickly on his top priorities. **“**NBC News presidential historian Michael Beschloss points out that the US needs a president who is also going to suggest things that are not raised by an event of national magnitude, and that was something we saw a lot of in Obama's speech Monday. **“**But **the next few months might** well **test the limits of the political capital** that **the president won** in November, which saw Obama score a decisive victory over Republican opponent Mitt Romney and Democrats add seats in the House and the Senate. **“**If this past December’s lame duck Congress – in which Obama won higher tax rates for the wealthy, but only after a bitter fight with Republicans – offers any lessons, it’s that **the GOP is** equally **committed to pursuing its own priorities, making compromise** just as **elusive** as before. **“**The **fiscal cliff fight will extend into this spring**, when the government hits a series of major deadlines to keep the government funded and prevent a default on the national debt. **That** bare-knuckled **fight could** make or **break** **Obama’s** hopes of accomplishing much else on his **agenda.** **“**I **don't believe** that **he can wait until the last minute to deal with** the **debt ceiling and sequestration.**” said Martin Frost, a former Democratic congressman from Texas. **“**That’s got to be worked out during February.” **“**That **fight would** threaten to **consume** much of the **political oxygen** in Washington in any normal year. And **Obama’s ability to pivot toward** his other major priorities, **gun violence and immigration, may** well **hinge** up **on** how quickly and cleanly he can dispense with **this** spring’s **spending fight.** **“**History suggests that many presidents cannot hope to accomplish much in the

last two years of their term, when the jockeying for the next presidential campaign begins. And **with midterm elections looming** in 2014, **lawmakers will inevitably turn at some point from governing to politicking.**¶ "There's kind of an arc of achievement in presidential administrations. Usually the first few months of a new administration is where most of the accomplishment takes place," **said** Ross **Baker, a presidential historian at Rutgers** University. "**It's hard to imagine** getting **another piece of legislation of the magnitude of the Affordable Care Act in the second term.**"¶ And Obama's hopes of significant reforms to immigration and gun laws might well depend upon how well (or how poorly) the spending fight with Congress proceeds.¶ The president last week laid out a series of measures intended to curb gun violence, most significantly proposals to limit the size of ammunition magazines, ban assault weapons and require universal background checks on firearm purchases. That plan won little praise from Republicans, and Obama might have to lean upon any reservoir of goodwill he has left after the spending fight to reach his goals.¶ Obama is practically obligated to attempt **immigration reform** after soothing the Latino community during last year's election about his inability to follow through with a pledge to accomplish immigration reform in his first term. If re-elected, Obama told Hispanic voters, he would make immigration reform a priority in this second term.¶ Both proposals **could engender significant Republican resistance**, a phenomenon familiar to any observers of Obama's first four years in office.¶

## Thumper – gun control

### Gun control

**Klein 1/14** (Rick, “Analysis: Gun Control Set to Crowd Out President Obama’s Second-Term Agenda,” 1/14/2013, <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2013/01/analysis-gun-control-set-to-crowd-out-president-obamas-second-term-agenda/>)

WASHINGTON — President **Obama is putting his chips on guns.** It wasn’t an issue he campaigned on — actually, it was almost the opposite of that. It did more to grab him than he did to grab it. But a month after the unfathomable tragedy at Sandy Hook, **the president has positioned himself to take on a fight with long odds as his biggest domestic-policy initiative** this side of the never-ending fiscal fights. The valuable run-up to the inauguration — traditionally a White House’s best chance to put forward a bold new policy initiative — is being dominated by the polarizing debate over **gun control.** The coming **fight has broad implications on virtually every other Washington priority** in 2013 and beyond. Vice President Joe **Biden’s guns task force is strongly signaling recommending a robust menu of policy options,** spanning executive actions and legislative initiatives. **Each piece is sure to require the full force of presidential leadership** to turn into action. “The public demands we speak to it,” Biden said last week, referencing the emotions that followed a tragedy involving young children. It may yet be a solid bet that this moment is different than past shootings. Powerful allies including New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords are lending their considerable political weight to the efforts, prodding action along. Already, the fact that Washington hasn’t lost interest bodes well for a major legislative push that includes more background checks and a renewed assault weapons ban. But **the gun lobby has been explicit that it won’t be giving in. The fight will consume valuable political oxygen,** perhaps all of what’s available to a reelected president whose party controls only half of Capitol Hill. **That means other ambitious subject areas — immigration reform, energy and environmental policy, a major infrastructure initiative — will have to wait.** Moreover, the coming **brinkmanship over spending and budget issues could further poison the chances of action,** potentially **grinding Washington to an effective halt.** President George W. Bush found out the hard way that **political capital doesn’t last long into a second term,** even if the president tries to spend it with a friendly Congress. Bush’s push for Social Security reform not only went nowhere, it helped sow the seeds of the Democratic takeover of Congress in 2006. This fight over guns has the potential to be more than that for Obama, though. After a campaign devoid of much inspiration, a passionate debate that gets to the heart of the nation’s culture may be what the recently reelected president needs. **The fight will mobilize and energize those on both sides — even if it tires everyone out before discussions begin in other areas.**

### Gun control push will undermine immigration --- whether he succeeds or not

**Rauch 1/20** --- guest scholar at Brookings (Jonathan, “Tackle immigration first, Mr. President,” <http://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/tackle-immigration-mr-president-article-1.1242944?localLinksEnabled=false>)

Asked a few years ago whether George W. **Bush** had **made** any consequential mistakes in his second term, a senior official of Bush’s administration had to think for a moment. After all, Bush and his people were not known for regrets or introspection. Yes, he finally said, there had been **one serious mistake: putting Social Security reform ahead of immigration.** In 2005, the newly reelected President had two domestic policy goals. Immigration reform, a long-time objective of the former Texas governor, looked to the center. Social Security private accounts, prized by conservatives as a game-changing reform of the New Deal welfare state, looked right. Bush chose Social Security. The Democrats folded their arms and said no. Even many Republicans balked. **By the time the resulting wild goose chase had run its course, Bush’s second-term political capital, unreplaceable at that point in his presidency, was depleted.** Worse, the immigration debate had changed. In early 2005, not only Bush but many Democrats and such prominent Republicans as Sen. John McCain were ready to deal. More quickly than anyone expected, the Republican base moved right and the window closed. And so what should have been a historic policy achievement, and a political watershed for Republicans, never happened. Imagine how different Republicans might look to Hispanic voters today if a Republican President and Congress had led immigration reform. Bush probably still rues that misstep. And now President Obama looks set to repeat it. **Once again, a reelected but polarizing President begins his second term with political stars aligned for immigration reform.** Democrats need to do it, because their liberal and Hispanic base demands it. Republicans also need to do it, because they are desperate to shed their hard-won reputation for hostility to immigrants and Latinos. Obama needs to do it; he has been campaigning on it since 2008, when he said he would

“move that forward as quickly as possible.”¶ Not least important, the country sorely needs immigration reform. The current system has become not only a political thorn in the side of both parties but a drag on growth and innovation. Recent evidence shows that immigration, even low-skilled immigration, is a net economic and social plus.¶ Meanwhile, the current federal policy takes too little account of skill and talent, and admits fewer workers than the economy needs for the jobs it actually has. America’s current policy is to educate the next foreign-born generation of engineers and entrepreneurs and then expel most of them.¶ And the policy is inhumane as well as inefficient. Millions of otherwise law-abiding and productive people are driven underground, including many who would pay a reasonable fine or penalty to get right with the law; thousands of same-sex partners and spouses are vindictively shut out of the country.¶ These are not problems over which Washington has merely indirect influence, as it does with most social problems. They are problems that Congress could actually solve.¶ You say we should secure the borders before reforming immigration law? Though you would never know it from some of the political rhetoric, border control has been accomplished, at least as completely as it ever can be.¶ As Edward Alden of the Council on Foreign Relations noted in a Cato Journal article last year, over the last two decades, the government has more than septupled the size of the border patrol, built nearly 700 miles of fencing along the Mexican border, and deployed technologies ranging from cameras to drones.¶ “The U.S. borders are far harder to cross illegally than at any time in American history, and the number of people entering illegally has dropped sharply,” Alden writes. Border security is not perfect and never will be, but enough has been achieved so that even “security first” advocates should be willing to move on to legal reform.¶ **Immigration reform, then, offers the highest bang for the buck of any reform agenda now before Congress.** For Democrats, it also offers to cement the electoral loyalty of the growing Hispanic population for decades to come.¶ **So what does Obama do first? Gun control.¶ If ever there was a political sticky wicket, this is it.** “Gun Agenda Faces an Uphill Battle,” headlined the Washington Post the other day. You can say that again. On the merits, in a magic-wand world, it makes sense to tighten some gun regulations, especially by closing the so-called “gun show loophole,” which allows non-dealers to buy firearms without background checks.¶ But let’s not kid ourselves: In a country with perhaps 250 million firearms already in private hands, even the deftest regulatory improvements will bring only marginal reductions in violence. No one likes to hear this, but it is true: the mass murder at Sandy Hook Elementary School was an atrocity of the first magnitude, and even one such atrocity is too many — but mass shootings in schools are very rare, and way, way down the list of causes of violent deaths. Moreover, there is little the federal government can do to prevent them.¶ No doubt, Obama was distraught by those murders. We all were. But this was a case when his more characteristic cold-blooded realism would have served him better.¶ **None of what makes immigration so urgent and accomplishable is true of gun control. There is no bipartisan desire to get it done. In fact, not even Democrats are united. Republicans already smell blood: a chance to grind Obama down by stalling and obstructing in the usual way and to re-energize what has been, until now, a demoralized conservative base.** The National Rifle Association will provide plenty of assistance with that project, fattening its coffers along the way.¶ Now, Obama is more popular today than Bush was in 2005, and he won a stronger reelection victory; nor is gun regulation as quixotic as was Bush’s effort to reform Social Security with only one party’s support. Obama may yet succeed where Bush failed.¶ **Suppose he does succeed, though. What with the upcoming two (or is it three? four?) budgetary crises, the bandwidth for immigration was always narrow. It will be narrowed still further by diverting legislative time and energy toward guns. Gun control gives liberals a new crusade, but in doing so it opens an attention-distracting, resource-depleting two-front war.**¶ Meanwhile, the window of opportunity for immigration might stay open for a while, but it might not, especially if Obama is weakened and conservatives regroup.¶ **And if he loses on guns? Bush thought he could afford to lose on Social Security and move on to immigration.** He was wrong. In fact, **he never recovered.** His political strength and strategic credibility were shaken, and he spent the rest of his second term playing defense. Also, of course, the immigration-reform window closed. Republican moderates were marginalized by conservatives who had no interest in any reform that Democrats might accept.

## Gun control first

Chris Weigant, 1/23/2013 (staff writer, “Handicapping Obama's Second Term Agenda,”

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/chris-weigant/obama-second-term\\_b\\_2537802.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/chris-weigant/obama-second-term_b_2537802.html)

Budget battles are going to happen no matter what else does -- that’s another safe bet. What is more interesting, though, is handicapping which of Obama’s agenda items will actually see some action. **There are three major initiatives that Obama is currently pushing: action on global warming, comprehensive immigration reform, and gun control.** Obama did mention other issues in his speech, but these are the big three for now. Gay marriage, for instance, is in the hands of the Supreme Court right now, and no matter how they rule it’s hard to see any legislative action (good or bad) happening on it immediately afterwards.¶ **Gun control will likely be the first of these debated in**

**Congress.** Vice President Biden laid out a wide array of possible actions Congress could take on the issue, all of which Obama then backed. While the Newtown massacre did indeed shift public opinion dramatically on the overall issue, the biggest initiative is not likely to become law. An assault rifle ban is very important to some Democrats, but the way I read it is that this was included to have something to “trade away” in the negotiations. If Obama gets most of the other gun control initiatives -- closing loopholes on background checks, much better tracking of weapons, and all the other “small bore” (sorry about that pun) ideas -- then he will at least be able to say he accomplished something at the end of the day. Perhaps this is pessimistic, but the mechanics of banning “assault weapons” become very

tricky, when you have to actually define what they are in legal language. And such a ban may not get universal Democratic backing anyway, so I fully expect this will be shelved at some point in exchange for support for all the other initiatives. Without such a ban, the prospects for other meaningful gun control legislation get a lot better, though, and I think that a bill will eventually pass.

## XO solves

### Unilateral action solves

**Rich Web News 13** ("Obama's new rule eases path to residency for immigrants with US relatives", 1/3m <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/13727441-obama-new-immigration-rule-makes-residency-easier-for-immigrants-with-us-relatives>, CMR)

President **Obama continues to reiterate his deep commitment to** fixing the broken **immigration** system **by signing an executive order** that makes it easier for illegal immigrants to obtain permanent residency if they have immediate relatives who are US citizens, according to the final rule posted in the Federal Register on Wednesday. Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano announced the change yesterday through department release of the final rule to support family unity during the visa waiver process. It allows certain individuals to apply for a provisional unlawful presence waiver before they depart the United States to attend immigrant visa interviews in their countries of origin. "This final rule facilitates the **legal immigration** process and reduces the amount of time that US citizens are separated from their immediate relatives who are in the process of obtaining an immigrant visa," said Napolitano. According to the release, under current law, immediate relatives of US citizens, who are not eligible to adjust status in the United States to become lawful permanent residents, must leave the US and obtain an immigrant visa abroad. Individuals who have accrued more than six months of unlawful presence while in the United States must obtain a waiver to overcome the unlawful presence inadmissibility bar before they can return to the United States after departing to obtain an immigrant visa. It also states that immediate relatives cannot file a waiver application until after they have appeared for an immigrant visa interview abroad and the State Department has determined that they are inadmissible. The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will publish a new form, Form I-601A, Application for a Provisional Unlawful Presence Waiver, for individuals to use when applying for a provisional unlawful presence waiver under the new process. "The law is designed to avoid extreme hardship to US citizens, which is precisely what this rule achieves," USCIS Director Mayorkas said. "The change will have a significant impact on American families by greatly reducing the time family members are separated from those they rely upon." Furthermore it says that, under the new provisional waiver process, the immediate relatives must still depart the United States for the consular immigrant visa process; however, they can apply for a provisional waiver before they depart for their immigrant visa interview abroad. The new procedures could reduce a family's time apart to one week in some cases, officials said. Individuals who file the Form I-601A must notify the Department of State's National Visa Center that they are or will be seeking a provisional waiver from USCIS. Details on the process changes are available at

<http://www.regulations.gov/>. Immigration reform **advocates greeted the** Obama administration **policy shift as a welcome step toward** an eventual **overhaul of** federal **immigration** laws. "The change will have a significant impact on American families by greatly reducing the time family members are separated from those they rely upon," said Alejandro Mayorkas, director of US Citizenship and Immigration Services, as reported by the L.A. Times. "We're hopeful that all of this portends a bigger improvement to the immigration system," said Lisa Koop, a managing attorney with the Chicago-based National Immigrant Justice Center. Opinion: In his next four years, President **Obama will keep pushing Congress** to reach a consensus on fixing the broken immigration laws for the 21st century, **but if Congress dodges the issue again, we can expect more executive orders like this in the future even though it means bypassing Congress.**

### It's guaranteed – empirics prove

**Examiner 1/2/13** ("Examiner Editorial: A year of 'fiscal cliff' crises coming up", <http://washingtonexaminer.com/coming-up-a-year-of-sslqfiscal-cliff-crises/article/2517381#.UOcFEXdXtkY>,

If his first term is any indication, **Obama will retaliate against congressional resistance by acting alone, as he already has** by using executive power to make policy in education, welfare, labor law, the environment and **immigration**. He will test legal limits with new **administrative changes, executive orders, memoranda and creative regulatory rulings**. This will further alienate Congress and prompt still more lawsuits against his administration, like the one currently underway to unseat "recess" appointees whom he installed without confirmation last year when the Senate was not in recess.

### Multiple tools solve

**Uribe 1/22** (Sarahi, "Immigration reform: Obama needs to close gap between rhetoric and reality", 2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jan/22/immigration-reform-obama-rhetoric-reality>,



In his second term, **Obama could implement a number of administrative policies** even as Congress takes up **federal immigration reform**. **The president** last year **proved** **he could use his executive powers** when **he suspended the deportations** of undocumented youth and allowed them to apply for work permits under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. A sign of his **renewed commitment** to immigration reform **would be** the **expansion** of this program to cover undocumented adults. **Obama could** also **administratively terminate the "secure communities" program**, a controversial deportation policy that became emblematic of the president's broken promise to legalize undocumented immigrants.

## 2ac skilled workers inev

### **Obama losing immigration still results in high-skill reform**

Matthew Yglesias, Slate, 1/15/13, How the GOP Can Roll Obama on Immigration, [www.slate.com/blogs/moneybox/2013/01/15/immigration\\_reform\\_will\\_obama\\_get\\_rolled.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/moneybox/2013/01/15/immigration_reform_will_obama_get_rolled.html), Of the major policy issues under discussion in Washington, "immigration reform" stands out for having unusually undefined content. **For** the major **immigration-advocacy groups, the goal is** clear, **a comprehensive bill that includes a path to citizenship** for the overwhelming majority of unauthorized migrants already living in the United States. **But** many other aspects of immigration law are in the mix as part of a proposed deal, and it seems to me that **there's a fair chance that a nimble Republican Party could** essentially **roll the Democratic coalition and** pass an "immigration reform" bill **that doesn't offer the path Latino advocacy groups are looking for.**

Elise Foley has the key line from her briefing on the administration's thinking about immigration, namely that a **piecemeal approach "could result in passage of the less politically complicated pieces, such as** an enforcement mechanism and **high-skilled worker visas, while leaving out** more **contentious items** such as a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants."

And indeed it could. But how can they stop it? **The last House GOP effort to split the high-tech visas question from** the path to **citizenship** question was an absurd partisan ploy. If Republicans want to get serious about it they should be able to make it work. **The centerpiece would be** something on **increased immigration of skilled workers. That's something the tech industry wants** very much, it's a great idea on the merits, **and few influential people have any** real **beef with it.** High tech visas will easily generate revenue to pay for some stepped-up enforcement. **Then instead of adding on a poison pill so Democrats will block** the bill, **you need to add a sweetener.** Not the broad path to citizenship, but something small like the DREAM Act. **Now you've got a package that falls massively short of what Latino groups are looking for, but** that I think **Democrats will have a hard time actually blocking.** After all, **why would they block it? It packages** three **things**—more skilled immigration, more enforcement, and help for DREAMers—they say **they want.** Blocking it because it doesn't also do the broad amnesty that liberals want and conservatives hate would require the kind of fanaticism that is the exact opposite of Obama's approach to politics.

## 1ar skilled workers inev

### High-skilled workers will slide through

**Ferenstein 1/28** (Gregory, “A Congress That Does Things? Immigration Reform Makes Huge Bipartisan Progress”, 2013, <http://techcrunch.com/2013/01/28/a-congress-that-does-things-immigration-reform-makes-huge-bipartisan-progress/>,

**The new Congress is showing signs that it may finally leave behind its old habit of doing nothing: A gang of eight senators from both parties has outlined a framework for comprehensive immigration reform.** While progress could get bogged down in details as the legislation comes together, **the bipartisan love fest bodes**

**well for tech companies eager to hire more high-skilled immigrants.** ¶ Four Democrats and four Republicans, including conservative immigration reform powerhouse Marco Rubio, released a general outline for comprehensive reform. In short, the plan promises to create a path to citizenship for undocumented workers, incentivize high-skilled immigrants, protect new workers’ rights and create a “strong” employment verification system. ¶ Political junkies may recall that, last year, high-skilled immigration took an unceremonious nosedive after Republicans and Democrats split on whether 55,000 new visas for science and math graduates should come at the cost of denying immigrants from underrepresented nations. Silicon Valley wasn’t getting more brilliant foreign minds until the immigration situation was resolved for low-skilled workers, as well. ¶ **The high-skilled portions** of the new plan **are uncontroversial**, if generic. The plan promises to: ¶ “Award a green card to immigrants who have received a PhD or Master’s degree in science, technology, engineering, or math from an American university.” ¶ “Reduce backlogs in the family and employment visa categories so that future immigrants view our future legal immigration system as the exclusive means for entry into the United States.” ¶ Green cards for STEM graduates and a streamlined process for their families had already been agreed upon in last year’s ill-fated STEM Jobs Act. ¶ There is no language, however, about developing a separate startup visa for foreign-born entrepreneurs who want to build their own company without needing the sponsorship of a company. Considering that some of America’s most successful companies were built by the children of immigrants, such as Google Co-Founder, Sergey Brin, it’s desirable to encourage the world’s brightest to venture out on their own. ¶ **Why the sudden compromise?** The Washington Post’s Ezra Klein explores some compelling numbers on how conservatives lost big with minority voters last election and, unless they gain the favor of this growing demographic, it could spell permanent electoral trouble. So, there’s good reason to believe that immigration reform may happen soon.

### Separate legislation solves high-skilled workers – insulated from broader fights

**Fox 2/5** (“The Hill Report: Immigration reform”, <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2013/02/05/house-republicans-immigration-changes/>

While some on Capitol Hill are pushing for a comprehensive immigration reform package, **several House Republicans homed in** Tuesday **on a handful of policy changes they argued should take priority** -- including improving **the visa system** for immigrants who graduate from American schools and dealing with illegal immigrants who came to the U.S. as children. ¶ House Republican Leader Eric Cantor, during a policy speech Tuesday at the American Enterprise Institute, called for helping the youngest illegal immigrants while saying the debate must balance “respect for the rule of law and respect for those waiting to enter this country legally.” ¶ “A good place to start is with the kids,” the Virginia congressman said. “One of the great founding principles of our country was that children would not be punished for the mistakes of their parents.” ¶ Cantor also said he supports the Senate plan to make border security, employment verification and a workable guest-worker program part of the reform legislation. ¶ Meanwhile, the House Judiciary Committee held a lengthy hearing, marking Congress’ first public debate on the issue since President Obama’s re-election and his second-term pledge to make comprehensive immigration reform a top priority. ¶ “We can save the economy, and immigration is one of the ways to make it happen,” said Vivek Wadhwa, director of research at Duke University’s Pratt School of Engineering, during the hearing. ¶ While the House held its hearing, Obama held separate White House meetings with labor and business leaders to discuss a wide range of issues, including immigration reform and how it fits into the broader economic picture. ¶ “We had a great conversation with the president about immigration,” said Arne Sorenson, president of Marriott International. “We’ve got 11 million people in this country who are not sufficiently documented. They are not going home. We have got to do what we can quickly to make them contributing members of our economy and our society. It’ll be good for our economy. ... It will be good for their lives.” ¶ Among the most high-profile speakers at the House hearing was Julian Castro, the Democratic mayor of San Antonio, Texas. He urged Congress to help those brought to the United States illegally by their parents and businesses that are helping train highly skilled immigrants, only to see them deported. ¶ “The reforms that you have on the table are ... pro-family and pro-business,” Castro testified. “Every year as competition increases, American companies throw up their hands, watch those trained in American universities leave in frustration.” ¶ He also said visa laws that separate husbands and wives for years are “outdated” and “make no sense.” ¶ While Obama and other Democrats have called for expedient and comprehensive reform, Republicans on Tuesday cautioned against passing legislation without a thorough debate. ¶ “We all agree that our nation’s immigration system is in desperate need of repair,” said committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte, R-Va. “But before we rush to judgment, we need to carefully look at the current laws on the books to see what is and isn’t working. Reforming our nation’s immigration laws is a massive undertaking and is too important to not examine each piece in detail.” ¶ His

comments were followed those of Alabama Republican Rep. Spencer **Bachus**, who **suggested passing separate legislation, instead of one comprehensive bill, that would first deal with** getting **high-skilled people** working legally in this country. **"It's going to be a much easier lift** to solve the problem of high-skilled workers," said Bachus, a subcommittee chairman. **"We could pass a bill that would take that off the table**. When you take **compressive, full citizenship, that's a more toxic contentious issue**.... Let's not let the more contentious issue prevent us from this year, this month, passing something to address what is a horrible situation -- training people to go back to their countries and compete against us."

## PC not key

### **PC's not key**

**Nakamura, '12** (David, "Advocates fear gun control agenda will divert Obama from immigration reform, December 22, [www.washingtonpost.com/politics/advocates-fear-gun-control-agenda-will-divert-obama-from-immigration-reform/2012/12/22/2725d3d0-4acc-11e2-b709-667035ff9029\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/advocates-fear-gun-control-agenda-will-divert-obama-from-immigration-reform/2012/12/22/2725d3d0-4acc-11e2-b709-667035ff9029_story.html))

"As we line up a path to gun control and the response to Connecticut, **everybody expects Congress**, just like the rest of the American people, **will be able to take on more than one thing**," said Clarissa Martinez de Castro, director of civic engagement and immigration for the National Council of La Raza. "There is a **real premium** for Republicans moving forward on immigration. It's **less about their position with Democrats** than with **making inroads with** a section of **the electorate** that they will not see the inside of the White House without. **That's their biggest motivation.**"

## PC bad – poison the well

### Obama's backing off immigration now – presidential push makes it not pass

#### Koppelman 1-29

[Alex, The New Yorker, "WILL OBAMA SAVE IMMIGRATION REFORM OR KILL IT?", <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/newsdesk/2013/01/will-obama-save-immigration-reform-or-kill-it.html>]

There's one other thing that's different, though: now, thanks in large part to the Hispanic vote, Barack Obama is President. That will make working for a bill harder for the Republicans who want to see something passed. **It's one thing to give up on some of the same principles** the G.O.P.'s base fought so hard for just a few years ago, **but doing so in partnership with Obama is something else entirely. The President's endorsement—his very presence—can suddenly make almost any proposal toxic for a great many Republicans, and anyone who works with him may have some explaining to do** come primary season. As a result, before Obama had so much as landed in Las Vegas to deliver his speech, **even those Republicans who are in favor of reform were criticizing him for what he would say** in it. "The President has an important decision to make... when he gives his speech," Senator Marco Rubio, the Florida Republican, said during an appearance he made on Rush Limbaugh's radio show on Tuesday. "He can either decide that he wants to be part of a solution or he can decide he wants to be part of a political issue and try to trigger a bidding war. I'm not gonna be part of a bidding war to see who can come up with the most lenient path forward.... if he's gone to Las Vegas to give a speech and try to trigger a bidding war, then, no, it doesn't bode well. There won't be a solution." **It's not often that you see a politician building the explanation for why he might come to oppose his initiative just one day after he announced it**, but that is exactly what Rubio, who was part of the group of eight senators who released their ideas for reform, seemed to be doing. This may be bluster on Rubio's part, an attempt to provide himself some cover in case he does decide to run for President in 2016 and needs to explain to Republican primary voters why he essentially sided with Obama. Or it might not be: what Rubio was referring to are some very real differences between the senators' proposal and Obama's on the question of border security, and whether it has to be a precursor to citizenship for illegal immigrants. By all indications, though, and despite Rubio's preemptive fighting stance, **it seems that Obama might be ready to compromise in order to get something done, and not just on policy. The White House knows that the President's involvement could harden the opposition, and it appears to be working to minimize that effect.** His critics will note the campaign-esque appearance of his big speech, delivered in a swing state to a cheering crowd, and in passionate tones. They won't be wrong to do so, but that's form, not substance, and on substance he's given up serious ground. **Reform has been a priority of Obama's ever since the 2008 campaign, but he's not taking the lead—he let those eight senators do that, and then he largely adopted their proposal instead** of putting out a detailed one of his own. **Simply diminishing the number of Obama's fingerprints that are on this initiative does not ensure that it will pass**, of course. **Even if it does pass, it's hardly a guarantee of good policy, as we saw all too clearly when the President stepped back during the fight over the stimulus and let Congress dictate terms on purely political grounds. But if immigration reform is to be done, this may be the only way to do it.**

### Congress will do immigration alone – Obama's involvement is a kiss of death

**Weingarten, 1-16-13** (Elizabeth, New America Foundation, "President Obama's Next Steps on Immigration" <http://inthewalk.newamerica.net/blog/2013/01/president-obamas-next-steps-immigration>)

Tamar Jacoby, the president of ImmigrationWorks USA, **hopes** President Obama doesn't introduce a comprehensive immigration reform bill in the next few months, as The New York Times reported he would. Why? **"If this is seen [in Congress] as President Obama's project alone, you won't get enough Republicans voting to pass it,"** explained Jacoby, also a New America Schwartz Fellow. But to Jacoby's relief, **a group of senators from both sides of the aisle are also seizing the reins on immigration reform.** The senators, including Republican Sen. Marco Rubio, are meeting behind-the-scenes to draft a comprehensive bill that will likely share many of President Obama's policy tenets. The story behind this crew: Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Senator Lindsay Graham (R-SC) started talking about a bipartisan bill early in President Obama's first term. But talks stalled after issues like the tanking economy took legislative precedence. The senators resumed discussions after this year's election. To Jacoby, it's critical the group

succeed because of the divisive atmosphere in Congress today. **"In the olden days, a President from one party could propose a bill, and you could get enough members from another party to pass it,"** Jacoby said. **"It doesn't work that way anymore"** – not for now, anyway." Regardless of party affiliation, any successful legislation must share a few key sweet spots, Jacoby said: A path to citizenship or legal status for the 11 million illegal immigrants currently living in the country, an easier way for high-skilled workers to enter and stay in the country, and better immigration enforcement both on the border and in the workplace. But legislators often leave out what Jacoby thinks are two of the most important pieces of the puzzle: a way for unskilled workers to enter the U.S. legally, and a better integration strategy once immigrants are here. The economy needs those unskilled workers, but they have no legal pathway to enter the U.S. And once immigrants are inside the U.S. – we do a poor job of teaching them English and how to become an American, says Jacoby. Of course, various members of Congress have agitated for comprehensive immigration reform for years. What makes 2013 any riper for change? As anyone who cast a vote or read a newspaper during the 2012 election season knows - the Latino vote propelled the issue to the forefront of public discourse and debate. Though Latinos alone didn't elect President Obama and defeat Gov. Mitt Romney, both parties finally recognized that it was a huge and growing voting bloc. But immigration reform isn't just about shoring up the Latino vote or providing a pathway to legalization, Jacoby cautions. "That's one of the biggest misconceptions – this isn't a favor we're doing for Latinos. This is for us – for all Americans. It's about the U.S. economy and U.S. competitiveness." **Her advice for President Obama: Keep up the pressure to advance legislation, but don't take over the process.** "That could potentially **be the kiss of death,**" she said.

## No impact – watered down

### **Doesn't solve – the GOP will water it down**

**Yglesias, 1-15-13** (Matthew, Slate, "How the GOP Can Roll Obama on Immigration")

[http://www.slate.com/blogs/moneybox/2013/01/15/immigration\\_reform\\_will\\_obama\\_get\\_rolled.htm](http://www.slate.com/blogs/moneybox/2013/01/15/immigration_reform_will_obama_get_rolled.htm)

Of the major policy issues under discussion in Washington, "immigration reform" stands out for having unusually undefined content. For the major immigration-advocacy groups, the goal is clear, a comprehensive bill that includes a path to citizenship for the overwhelming majority of unauthorized migrants already living in the United States. But many other aspects of immigration law are in the mix as part of a proposed deal, and it seems to me that **there's a fair chance that a nimble Republican Party could essentially roll the Democratic coalition** and pass an "immigration reform" bill that doesn't offer the path Latino advocacy groups are **looking for**. Elise Foley has the key line from her briefing on the administration's thinking about immigration, namely that **a piecemeal approach "could result in passage of the less politically complicated pieces**, such as an enforcement mechanism and high-skilled worker visas, **while leaving out more contentious items** such as a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants." And indeed it could. **But how can they stop it?** The last House GOP effort to split the high-tech visas question from the path to citizenship question was an absurd partisan ploy. **If Republicans want to get serious about it they should be able to make it work. The centerpiece would be something on increased immigration of skilled workers.** That's something the tech industry wants very much, it's a great idea on the merits, and few influential people have any real beef with it. High tech visas will easily generate revenue to pay for some stepped-up enforcement. **Then instead of adding on a poison pill** so Democrats will block the bill, **you need to add a sweetener**. Not the broad path to citizenship, but something small like the DREAM Act. **Now you've got a package that falls massively short** of what Latino groups are looking for, **but that** I think **Democrats will have a hard time actually blocking**. After all, **why would they block it?** It packages three things—more skilled immigration, more enforcement, and help for DREAMers—they say they want. Blocking it because it doesn't also do the broad amnesty that liberals want and conservatives hate would require the kind of fanaticism that is the exact opposite of Obama's approach to politics.

### **Comprehensive reform fails – passage forces compromises that prevent solvency**

**Morrison 12-9** – Bruce Morrison, a former U.S. Representative from Connecticut, was the chairman of the House immigration subcommittee and the author of the Immigration Act of 1990. December 9th, 2012, "One Bill of Compromises Isn't the Answer"

[www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/12/09/understanding-immigration-reform/one-immigration-bill-of-compromises-isnt-the-answer](http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/12/09/understanding-immigration-reform/one-immigration-bill-of-compromises-isnt-the-answer)

To many, **"comprehensive immigration reform" means "fix it and forget it."** But **doing it all in one bill reprises what got us in the current mess in the first place.** After major reform bills in 1986 and 1990, the failing employment verification scheme and the clogged green card process were allowed to go unattended. The **"enforcement only" 1996 law only froze the mess** in place. Save the 'punishment' for those that do not comply with a system that works, not those ensnared in the current system that does not. **A huge compromise of all competing immigration fixes larded into one bill will involve compromises that do not serve the nation's interests.** Instead we need to assemble the votes to do the two things that must be done — a broad earned legalization program for the 11 million now illegally resident in the country in conjunction with the assurance that this problem will not happen again. That assurance will come from a universal, electronic, identity-authenticating screening of all workers to ensure that they are authorized to work in the U.S. Because almost all who make unauthorized entries and overstays do so to seek and accept employment, no other tool will get the result we need to make legalization politically and philosophically justified — that we have fixed the source of the problem. And this also means using the employment relationship to roll-in legalization while rolling out universal verification. The key point is that prevention of illegal presence is the goal. **Save the "punishment" for those that do not comply with a system that works, not those ensnared in the current system that does not.** Our legal immigration system needs lots of fixing, like the increase of STEM green cards passed by the House last week and much more. But these fixes, including all future flows beyond the current one million annual immigrants and the millions who will be legalized, will get much easier to negotiate when the legalization-prevention barrier is removed.



## Best-case is weak reform

Reuters 1/4/13 ("Fiscal Fallout Bruises Obama's Second-Term Agenda",

<http://www.foxbusiness.com/government/2013/01/04/fiscal-fallout-bruises-obama-second-term-agenda/>,

But Kessler said he was **skeptical** that Obama and Congress can find common ground on a comprehensive immigration measure that provides a **long-term solution** for the country's 12 million illegal immigrants. ¶ "Will something get done on immigration? Probably. But a major deal that addresses all undocumented immigrants in a comprehensive way? We're **much less confident** than we were two weeks ago," Kessler said. ¶ "The question now is, do they even know how to make deals with each other?" he said.