#### Iran strikes causes multiple scenarios for nuclear war, CBW use and terrorist attacks.

Russell 9 (James A. Russell, managing editor of Strategic Insights, the quarterly ejournal published by the Center for Contemporary Conflict at the Naval Postgraduate School, Spring 2009, Strategic Stability Reconsidered: Prospects for Escalation and Nuclear War in the Middle East, Security Studies Center)

Iran’s response to what would initially start as a sustained stand-off bombardment (Desert Fox Heavy) could take a number of different forms that might lead to escalation by the United States and Israel, surrounding states, and non-state actors. Once the strikes commenced, it is difficult to imagine Iran remaining in a Saddam-like quiescent mode and hunkering down to wait out the attacks. Iranian leaders have unequivocally stated that any attack on its nuclear sites will result in a wider war81 – a war that could involve regional states on both sides as well as non-state actors like Hamas and Hezbollah. While a wider regional war need not lead to escalation and nuclear use by either Israel or the United States, wartime circumstances and domestic political pressures could combine to shape decision-making in ways that present nuclear use as an option to achieve military and political objectives. For both the United States and Israel, Iranian or proxy use of chemical, biological or radiological weapons represent the most serious potential escalation triggers. For Israel, a sustained conventional bombardment of its urban centers by Hezbollah rockets in Southern Lebanon could also trigger an escalation spiral. Assessing relative probability of these scenarios is very difficult and beyond the scope of this article. Some scenarios for Iranian responses that could lead to escalation by the United States and Israel are: Terrorist-type asymmetric attacks on either the U.S. or Israeli homelands by Iran or its proxies using either conventional or unconventional (chemical, biological, or radiological) weapons. Escalation is more likely in response to the use of unconventional weapons in populated urban centers. The potential for use of nuclear retaliation against terrorist type attacks is problematic, unless of course the sponsoring country takes official responsibility for them, which seems highly unlikely. Asymmetric attacks by Iran or its proxies using unconventional weapons against U.S. military facilities in Iraq and the Gulf States (Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE, Qatar); • Long-range missile strikes by Iran attacking Israel and/or U.S. facilities in Iraq and the Gulf States: • Conventional missile strikes in and around the Israeli reactor at Dimona • Airbursts of chemical or radiological agents in Israeli urban areas; • Missile strikes using non-conventional weapons against US Gulf facilities such as Al Udeid in Qatar, Al Dhafra Air Base in the UAE, and the 5th Fleet Headquarters in Manama, Bahrain. Under all scenarios involving chemical/biological attacks on its forces, the United States has historically retained the right to respond with all means at its disposal even if the attacks come from a non-nuclear weapons state.82 • The involvement of non-state actors as part of ongoing hostilities between Iran, the United States, and Israel in which Hezbollah and/or Hamas became engaged presents an added dimension for conflict escalation. While tactically allied with Iran and each other, these groups have divergent interests and objectives that could affect their involvement (or non-involvement in a wider regional war) – particularly in ways that might prompt escalation by Israel and the United States. Hezbollah is widely believed to have stored thousands of short range Iranian-supplied rockets in southern Lebanon. Attacking Israel in successive fusillades of missiles over time could lead to domestic political demands on the Israeli military to immediately stop these external attacks – a mission that might require a wide area-denial capability provided by nuclear weapons and their associated PSI overpressures, particularly if its conventional ground operations in Gaza prove in the mid- to longterms as indecisive or strategic ambiguous as its 2006 operations in Lebanon. • Another source of uncertainty is the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) – referred to here as “quasi-state” actor. The IRGC manages the regime’s nuclear, chemical and missile programs and is responsible for “extraterritorial” operations outside Iran. The IRGC is considered as instrument of the state and reports directly to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei. So far, the IRGC has apparently refrained from providing unconventional weapons to its surrogates. The IRGC also, however arms and funds various Shiite paramilitary groups in Iraq and Lebanon that have interests and objectives that may or may not directly reflect those of the Iranian supreme leader. Actions of these groups in a wartime environment are another source of strategic uncertainty that could shape crisis decision-making in unhelpful ways. • The most likely regional state to be drawn into a conflict on Iran’s side in a wider regional war is Syria, which is widely reported to have well developed missile and chemical warfare programs. Direct Syrian military involvement in an Israeli-U.S./Iranian war taking the form of missile strikes or chemical attacks on Israel could serve as another escalation trigger in a nuclear-use scenario, in particular if chemical or bio-chem weapons are used by the Syrians, technically crossing the WMD-chasm and triggering a retaliatory strike using any category of WMD including nuclear weapons. • The last – and perhaps most disturbing – of these near-term scenarios is the possible use by Iran of nuclear weapons in the event of conventional strikes by the United States and Israel. This scenario is built on the assumption of a U.S. and/or Israeli intelligence failure to detect Iranian possession of a nuclear device that had either been covertly built or acquired from another source. It is possible to foresee an Iranian “demonstration” use of a nuclear weapon in such a scenario in an attempt to stop an Israeli/U.S. conventional bombardment. A darker scenario would be a direct nuclear attack by Iran on Israel, also precipitated by conventional strikes, inducing a “use them or lose them” response. In turn, such a nuclear strike would almost certainly prompt an Israeli and U.S. massive response – a potential “Armageddon” scenario.

#### Obama will win – 538 modeling

Silver 9/21 (Nate, badass, Sept. 20: Obama’s Convention Bounce May Not Be Receding, http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/09/21/sept-20-obamas-convention-bounce-may-not-be-receding/)

President Obama’s position inched forward in the FiveThirtyEight forecast on Thursday. His chances of winning the Electoral College are 76.1 percent, according to the forecast, up from 75.2 percent on Wednesday. Mr. Obama’s projected margin of victory in the national popular vote also increased slightly, to 3.4 percentage points.¶ By and large, the story that Thursday’s polls told was the same one as on Wednesday. Mr. Obama continues to get very strong results in state polls that use industry-standard methodology, meaning that they use live interviews and place calls to mobile phones along with landlines.¶ In the 10 states that have generally been ranked the highest on our tipping-point list — Ohio, Virginia, Florida, Wisconsin, Colorado, Nevada, Iowa, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire and Michigan — there have been 21 such polls since the Democratic convention ended. Mr. Obama has led in all 21 of these surveys — and usually by clear margins. On average, he has held a six-point lead in these surveys, and he has had close to 50 percent of the vote in them.

#### Obama will win – job approval

Trende 9/19 (Sean, Senior Elections Analyst for RealClearPolitics, 2012, State of the Race, Part 1: Why Obama Wins, http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/ 2012/09/19/state\_of\_the\_race\_part\_1\_why\_obama\_wins\_115499.html)

1) Job approval. I wrote that “presidents rarely win many votes of those who disapprove of their performance in office. In other words, Obama probably needs to be pretty close to 50 percent approval on Election Day to secure re-election.” At the time, the president’s job approval was 46.8 percent.¶ Today, the president’s job approval stands at 49.2 percent. If this is true on Election Day, he’ll have a good chance of winning.¶ To be sure, we’re on the tail end of a convention bounce, and six of the nine polls in the RCP Average include some data from the weekend immediately following the Democratic convention -- the height of the bounce. So the tendency will probably be for this to come back to Earth some.¶ But there’s no denying that the president’s job approval has recovered since January overall. That month, he averaged 45.9 percent in the polls. In August, before the Democratic convention, that average was still 48.6 percent. Even if his bounce recedes to that level, he’d still be in pretty good position on Election Day.

#### Regardless of popularity, congressional approval of the plan disrupts Obama’s electoral strategy – he’s winning because of obstructionism

Williams 12 (Juan, Fox News Political Analyst, Juan, June 11, “Opinion: President Obama’s campaign takes a page from Truman’s playbook,” <http://thehill.com/opinion/columnists/juan-williams/231959-opinion-president-obamas-campaign-takes-a-page-from-trumans-playbook>, d/a 7-20-12, ads)

President Obama is already blaming lack of action from Boehner’s Republican majority in the House of Representatives for the poor economy. And that campaign strategy is just getting started. The question is how much political power accusations of “Republican obstructionism” will have with voters in the final stretch of the campaign. What is certain is that as the House, Senate and presidential campaigns enter the summer months, every argument from now on will center on what the politically paralyzed Congress has failed to do on economic issues. The trend started last week with President Clinton’s declaration that President Obama should just go ahead and give Republicans in Congress another extension of the Bush tax cuts — though not permanently — in order to avoid an end of the year economic cliff. And Washington Post columnist Ezra Klein speculated last week that one reason to vote for a Republican president was that it would eliminate all excuses and force the GOP House majority to take action on the economy. The assumption at the heart of what Klein and Clinton are saying is congressional Republicans are currently playing politics while the economy burns. Stephanie Cutter, Obama’s reelection spokeswoman, said last week there are “a million [jobs](http://thehill.com/opinion/columnists/juan-williams/231959-opinion-president-obamas-campaign-takes-a-page-from-trumans-playbook) on the table in Congress right now that they could move on.” Mitt Romney and congressional Republicans are quick to point out that the GOP-controlled House has passed some 30 “jobs” bills that have not been acted upon in the Senate. But those “jobs” bills are loaded with political poison pills for Democrats. They are not serious proposals with potential to be the basis for a deal that could be worked out in conference. The best political defense of GOP inaction on Capitol Hill comes from Ed Gillespie, senior adviser to Romney’s campaign and former chairman of the Republican National Committee. He said Congress is right to do nothing because the Obama White House has created “a hostile environment for job creation in our economy and that’s why … the only thing that’s going to change it are changing the policies, and that means changing the person in the White House.” The Obama campaign team’s response to the Gillespie defense is straight out of Harry Truman’s political playbook. In the 1948 race, the Democrat ran against a do-nothing, obstructionist Republican Congress and stunned his opponent with an upset win. The Obama team is already showing signs of going beyond the Truman playbook. In a charge unprecedented in modern American presidential politics, they are accusing Republicans in Congress, working in coordination with Romney’s campaign, of not only “rooting for failure,” but of sabotaging the economy for political gain. A recent poll by ABC/Washington Post asked Americans who they thought was more responsible for the country’s current economic problems — President Obama or President Bush. The Republican president still gets 49 percent of the blame, while the Democrat who succeeded him is held responsible by 34 percent. But a November 2011 poll by a bipartisan group found 94 percent of Americans think congressional inaction is hurting the economy. That fits with Congress’s dismal job approval ratings. That is the opening for President Obama to play Harry Truman. Why is unemployment still so high? A big part of the reason is that public sector jobs are continually being lost at the federal, state and local level. Government payrolls dropped by 13,000 in May. By contrast, the private sector added 82,000 jobs. Yet the GOP Congress refuses to invest in public sector spending to steady the fragile economy. Obama has already cut taxes and reduced the number of public sector jobs since he took office. This is not a matter of opinion. It is an economic fact. But the GOP never acknowledges it and refuses to work on his plan for creating new jobs. The facts are there to build an argument. But is it enough for President Obama to stage a revival of the 1948 campaign, when the Democrat incumbent won reelection by attacking a do-nothing Congress? This time the chant will be, “Give ‘em hell, Barack!”

#### Republicans oppose clean coal – Ryan budget proves

Fees 12 (Melvin J., governmental relations committee director of the Cambria-Somerset Chapter of the Pennsylvania Association of Retired State Employees, June 11, “Romney hurts coal” www.altoonamirror.com/page/content.detail/id/561562/Romney-hurts-coal.html)

Mitt Romney is no friend of the coal industry. In 2003, he said,"Coal-fired power plants kill people. If the choice is between dirty power plants or protecting the health of the people, there is no choice in my mind, I will always come down on the side of public health." Romney has praised the Paul Ryan budget, which drastically cuts funding for research and development technologies, some funds of which would be used for clean coal technology research. The Obama administration under the Recovery Act has provided $3.4 billion to expand and accelerate the development of clean coal technology. The Ryan budget reverses that initiative. The coal industry is doing OK under the Obama administration. Employment in that industry reached a 15-year high in 2011, a year that under several safety initiatives witnessed the second fewest deaths in that industry's history. Romney will maintain subsidies to oil companies at the expense of the coal industry. Electing him will adversely affect the coal industry.

#### Voters across the political spectrum oppose efforts to limit the EPA’s power to regulate emissions – Michigan poll in conservative district proves

Geman 11 (Ben, writer for the Hill’s energy and environment blog, “Poll: Upton’s war against EPA climate rules unpopular at home”, 5/19, http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/162087-poll-uptons-war-against-epa-climate-rules-unpopular-at-home)

A poll commissioned by environmentalists shows that House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton’s (R-Mich.) bid to scuttle climate change regulations is unpopular among constituents and could weaken his support at the ballot box.¶ The late-April polling for the NRDC Action Fund finds that 54 percent of his constituents oppose Upton’s proposal to block the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from limiting greenhouse gases, while 32 percent support it.¶ The survey of 611 people – conducted by the Democratic firm Public Policy Polling – finds that 49 percent said Upton’s effort makes them less likely to support him in the next election, while 29 percent were more likely to back him and 22 percent were unsure.¶ Upton is leading a GOP charge to strip EPA’s power under the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from sources such as power plants, refineries and factories.¶ His legislation passed the House in early April with 19 Democrats joining Republicans in support. The same plan fell short in the Senate, but Upton has repeatedly vowed continued efforts in this Congress to thwart EPA rules.¶ Upton, who was first elected in 1986, was easily reelected in 2010 with 62 percent of the vote. The nonpartisan Cook Political Report lists his southwest Michigan seat in the “Solid Republican” camp – Cook’s designation for the safest seats – heading into 2012.¶ But the polling memo obtained by The Hill shows that 48 percent believe Upton’s vote to “alter the Clean Air Act” shows that he is more concerned with special interests, while 31 percent say he is more concerned for his constituents.

#### Plan is unpopular with the public – they see renewables as more viable

[Dorn](http://grist.org/author/jonathan-g-dorn/) 9 (Jonathan, Earth Policy Institute Former Research Associate, April 1, “Closing the door on building new coal-fired power plants in America,” <http://grist.org/article/2009-03-31-closing-the-door-on-building/>, d/a 7-20-12, ads)

Power companies and utilities are responding to the increasing regulatory uncertainty and mounting public opposition by backing away from coal and turning to clean, renewable sources of energy, such as wind, solar, and geothermal. Dynegy Inc., a wholesale power provider serving 13 states, announced in January 2009 that it will no longer continue its joint venture with LS Power Associates, L.P., to build up to seven new coal-fired power plants. On the day that Dynegy made the announcement, its stock price rose 19 percent. Several weeks later, Arizona’s largest electric utility, Arizona Public Service Co., submitted a Resource Plan to the Arizona Corporation Commission indicating that it will not build any new coal-fired power plants because the carbon risk is too high. In late February, Oklahoma Gas & Electric released a plan to turn to renewable energy and defer building any fossil-fired power plants until at least 2020. The notion that the United States needs additional coal-fired electricity generation to meet electrical demand is misguided. Simply using electricity more efficiently could reap large energy gains. A recent study by the Rocky Mountain Institute found that if the 40 least energy-efficient states raised their electric productivity — the dollars of gross domestic product generated per kilowatt hour of electricity consumed — to the average level of the 10 most efficient states, 62 percent of coal-fired power generation in the United States could be shut down — roughly 370 coal plants.

#### Momentum goes neg – public opposition is shutting down coal plants across the country

Market Watch 12(April 25, “Challenges Face U.S. Coal-Fired Power Plant Projects, an Industrial Info News Alert,” <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/challenges-face-us-coal-fired-power-plant-projects-an-industrial-info-news-alert-2012-04-25>, d/a 7-20-12, ads)

Throughout the U.S., coal-fired power projects are being cancelled or put on hold indefinitely due to increasing emissions regulations and public opposition. However, with increasing power demand, electric utilities must build new baseload plants, such as coal-fired or nuclear plants, to meet future demand. Many of these new coal-fired projects come with their own sets of unique challenges. Examples of major coal-fired projects under construction include plants belonging to American Electric Power Company [AEP -0.17%](http://www.marketwatch.com/investing/stock/AEP?link=MW_story_quote) in Arkansas and Peabody Energy Corporation[BTU -0.61%](http://www.marketwatch.com/investing/stock/BTU?link=MW_story_quote) in Illinois.

#### Widespread local public opposition to coal plants because of pollution risks

Walsh 12 (Bryan, senior writer at Times “War on Coal: Why Polluting Plants are Shutting Down Nationwide,” Times, http://science.time.com/2012/03/01/war-on-coal-activists-help-shut-down-polluting-plans-in-chicago-and-around-the-u-s/)ip

Good news has been hard to come by for environmentalists, especially during an election year with potentially record-breaking gas prices. (Yes that was former President Bill Clinton at the ARPA-E summit on Wednesday telling greens they should “embrace” the controversial Keystone XL oil sands pipeline.) But there was good news to be had on Wednesday: two aging coal-fired plants in Chicago—blamed for respiratory illnesses in the city—will be closing down years earlier than expected in a deal that was brokered between energy companies, environmental groups and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel.¶ Nor is Chicago the only city pushing to close coal plants. On the same day, the power generator GenOn Energy announced that it would be closing 7 coal plants in the mid-Atlantic region, retiring 3,140 MW of electricity generating capacity by 2015. Altogether 106 coal plants have been moved towards premature retirement since the beginning of 2010, the result of tougher federal air pollution regulations and a determined campaign by environmental groups like the Sierra Club to organize local opposition to plants. The shift away from coal—by far the biggest single cause of man-made global warming and a major source of traditional air pollutants—is a signature success for the environmental movement at a time when global action on climate change has been hard to come by. “City by city, town by town, communities are standing up and saying no to coal, and saying yes to clean energy,” wrote Mary Anne Hitt, the director of the Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal campaign, in the Huffington Post. “This milestone demonstrates that a shift is well underway across the country, and we will not power our future with the energy sources of the 19th century.”¶ Well, it’s definitely true that communities across the U.S. are saying no to coal—but less clear they’re saying yes to clean energy with the same volume. Still, the end of the Fisk and Crawford coal plants in Chicago have been a long time coming. I visited the city on a broiling hot day in July to profile the local opposition to the plants:¶ On a 99F July Sunday, there’s no cooler place to be in Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood than the public pool in Dvorak Park, where you can catch a fleeting breeze in this working-class, heavily Latino community. Unfortunately, the air in Pilsen isn’t very cool–and it isn’t very clean. Chicago’s air on July 17 was so polluted that the government recommended that children and people with respiratory ailments–too common in a city that has nearly double the national asthma-hospitalization rate–limit their time outdoors. “People are getting sick in Chicago because of the air,” says Brian Urbaszewski, director of environmental-health programs at the Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago. “And it’s people who are living in neighborhoods like Pilsen that are getting the worst of it.”¶ That’s due in part to the 450-ft. brick smokestack that looms over Dvorak Park–the one the kids call “the cloudmaker.” It belongs to the Fisk Generating Station, a 326-MW station just a couple of blocks from the park that’s one of the oldest coal-fired power plants in the country. Its corporate owner, Midwest Generation, says it has reduced pollution from the plant in recent years and that closing the facility would cost jobs, but Fisk is still viewed by environmentalists and activists in the city as a major health hazard.¶ Indeed, one report by the Clean Air Task Force estimated that toxic emissions from the Fisk plant were responsible for 15 premature deaths a year. And then there’s the issue of environmental justice—both of these plants were located near low-income, mostly Hispanic neighborhoods. Chicago gets the electricity, but they get the bad air:¶ More people live within a mile of Fisk than any other coal plant in the country. Schools and playgrounds sit within sight of the smokestack. “You can feel it in your lungs when you live here,” says Leila Mendez, a longtime Pilsen resident. “My hope is that it will just be closed.”¶ Mendez got her wish. Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel brokered an agreement with Midwest Generation—the company that owns both the Fisk and Crawford plants—to shut them down early, with Fisk closing by the end of the year and Crawford by the end of 2014. The Chicago Sun Times reported:¶ Midwest Generation blinked in response to Emanuel’s threat to put his political muscle behind a long-stalled “Clean Power Ordinance” that would have given the Crawford and Fisk power plants a longer timetable to either clean up or shut down.¶ The mayor has now accomplished that goal — and the corresponding health benefits to area residents forced to breathe polluted air — without a City Council ordinance that could have been challenged and possibly overturned in court.¶ “It’s a lot cleaner. We don’t have to go through City Council meetings with more protests outside. It was just good to sit down and come to a workable solution together,” said a top mayoral aide, who asked to remain anonymous.¶ It’s a bit ironic that Emanuel brokered the deal to shut the plants, since during his time as White House chief of staff he was often blamed by environmentalists for standing in the way of tougher climate legislation. But it’s amazing what sustained grassroots pressure—plus a few legal threats—will do even to political leaders who don’t much care for the environment. And that’s really where the anti-coal campaign has succeeded—not so much by appealing to the climate risk of coal power, but rather by focusing on the local pollution and health problems that can be traced back to older plants.¶ That was the main reason why New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg gave $50 million to the Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal campaign last year: Coal has long been the archenemy of environmentalists, largely because of its role in adding to climate change; the carbon-heavy fuel is responsible for about 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions. But as climate politics become increasingly polarized and the chance of any national action on greenhouse gases evaporates, environmentalists are going back to their old playbook, focusing on health issues instead — a case that’s far easier to make and far harder for non-greens to dismiss. Think soot and asthma, instead of carbon dioxide and warming. “This is a public health issue, just like our efforts to stop smoking or help with malaria,” says Bloomberg. “The pollutants and the toxins are a big problem.”¶

#### Democrats oppose restriction reductions

Duncan 12 (Ian, “Senate rejects GOP bid to lift EPA coal plant regulations,” LA Times, June 20, <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/20/nation/la-na-senate-mercury-20120621>.) EP

WASHINGTON — Senate Democrats blocked a Republican-backed move Wednesday to scrap EPA regulations on mercury and toxic chemical emissions from coal power plants, not swayed by the contention that the rules are killing jobs, not saving lives.¶ The measure, sponsored by Sen.James M. Inhofe(R-Okla.), failed, 53 to 46.¶ Picking an election-year fight over the wisdom of instituting new environmental regulations in a weak economy, Republicans argued that the rules would force older power plants to close, putting people out of work, and would drive up the cost of electricity.¶ Inhofe warned senators that by voting against his measure "you are effectively killing coal in America."¶ Opponents of the measure said the regulations were needed because of the hundreds of thousands of Americans made ill by toxic chemicals spewed by coal-fired plants.¶ The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that the rules will prevent 11,000 premature deaths a year.¶ Environmental groups praised the regulations when they were announced in December as a historic step that was more than two decades in the making.

#### Repealing the ACA would drive up health care costs – that kills jobs, destroys innovation and slows wage growth and consumer spending

Cutler 11 (David M. Cutler is Otto Eckstein Professor of Applied Economics, Harvard University, and a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress., January 7th, Repealing Health Care Is a Job Killer¶ It Would Slow Job Growth by 250,000 to 400,000 Annually, http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/healthcare/report/2011/01/07/8887/repealing-health-care-is-a-job-killer/)

A successful repeal of health care reform would revert us back to the old system for financing and delivering health care and lead to substantial increases in total medical spending. The consequences of this spending increase would be far reaching. It would hurt family incomes, jobs, and economic growth.¶ Repealing health reform would:¶ Increase medical spending by $125 billion by the end of this decade and add nearly $2,000 annually to family insurance premiums¶ Destroy 250,000 to 400,000 jobs annually over the next decade¶ Reduce the share of workers who start new businesses, move to new jobs, or otherwise invest in themselves and the economy¶ This memo will review these effects in more detail with a particular focus on jobs.¶ High medical spending harms employment and economic growth¶ Before getting to the effects of repeal let’s look at how health costs affect the economy. Health insurance costs are a major issue for Americans. Family health insurance premiums have increased 80 percent in the past decade after adjusting for inflation, while median income has fallen by 5 percent. This is among the reasons why American families are increasingly uneasy about the economy. Businesses are worried as well. Small businesses have consistently ranked the cost of health insurance as their number one problem since 1986. Finally, rising medical costs are the major contributor to the long-run federal deficit, and they hamper state and local governments, too.¶ These costs affect four aspects of economic activity. First, increasing costs reduce net income for workers. The increase in the premiums that employees pay for coverage is most noticeable, but family income is affected in other ways as well. The first response of employers to rising health insurance costs is to reduce salary increases. Salaries for high-income workers have grown less rapidly than productivity as health insurance costs have accounted for a growing share of total compensation.¶ Less rapid growth of wages is not possible for all workers—many of whom have already experienced stagnant or declining take-home pay. For those workers the only viable response to rising medical costs is reduced employment—both involuntary part-time work and layoffs. Several studies show that health insurance costs and employment are negatively related.¶ Neeraj Sood, Arkadipta Ghosh, and José Escarce recently compared employment growth across industries in the United States that differ in how likely they are to provide health insurance. They compared employment in the same industries in the United States and Canada, where medical costs are lower and not paid for by businesses. The study found that every 10 percent increase in excess health care cost growth (cost growth above GDP growth) led to 120,000 fewer jobs. In other words, the high and growing cost of health care means that American firms that offer health coverage create fewer jobs than Canadian firms who need not offer these benefits. These results are consistent with a recent study by Katherine Baicker and Amitabh Chandra, as well as estimates from the president’s Council of Economic Advisers.¶ Beyond the impact on employment, high health insurance costs discourage long-term investments in economic growth. Fear of losing health insurance deters people from moving to new entrepreneurial jobs, from retiring when their health deteriorates, or from switching to part-time work as family needs arise. In the public sector, high medical spending crowds out investment in education, transportation, and electronic infrastructure, which translates into slower growth over time.¶ Health care reform aims to bring rising health costs down, but repealing it would do the opposite and make the above problems worse. The alternative proposals conservatives are offering would lead to continued cost increases as well. I focus primarily on how employment would be affected by health care repeal in this analysis. But the other effects of repeal on the economy are certainly important.¶ Medical spending is rapidly increasing¶ Health care analysts are virtually united in their view that medical spending is higher than it should be. They also agree that the approach taken in the Affordable Care Act is the right one to reduce this excessive spending.¶ Excessive medical spending is seen in several areas. A large literature shows that spending on acute and post-acute care exceeds appropriate levels. To take just a few examples, rehospitalization rates in the nation as a whole average twice what they are in the areas with the best care. Imaging has increased rapidly with little sense of whether prior rates were too low or that current rates are right. And care at the end of life is far more intensive than people and their families desire. Estimates suggest that about 30 percent of acute and post-acute care could be eliminated with no adverse health impact, and in many cases health improvements.¶ Prevention is also limited. Medications to control hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, depression, and other chronic conditions have been available for decades. Yet no more than one in three people with chronic disease are successfully treated. Lack of access to care, high out-of-pocket costs, and an excessive focus on acute illness over prevention are all factors in this poor performance. The result is too many people becoming sick and needing the expensive armamentarium of the medical system.¶ Finally, administrative costs eat up significant resources that would better be directed elsewhere. Insurance companies’ administrative expenses are widely noted. But they are only the tip of the iceberg. Providers incur costs verifying enrollment, adjudicating claims, and ensuring appropriate reimbursement. Estimates suggest that such costs account for as much as 15 percent of overall medical spending.¶ The Affordable Care Act takes steps to bring costs down¶ The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act takes steps to address each of these cost drivers. On the administrative end, the legislation establishes insurance exchanges, mandates minimum loss ratios for insurance companies, and streamlines transactions between medical care providers and insurers. Together, these provisions will significantly reduce the administrative costs of medical care.¶ By far the most changes are in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. The philosophy underlying the Affordable Care Act is to make Medicare and Medicaid smarter purchasers of medical care so that providers are rewarded for creating value—not just for providing additional services.¶ The specific changes that promote this philosophical viewpoint include:¶ Payment innovations including greater reimbursement for preventive care services and patient-centered primary care; bundled payments for hospital, physician, and other services provided for a single episode of care; shared savings approaches or capitation payments that reward accountable provider groups that assume responsibility for the continuum of a patient’s care; and pay-for-performance incentives for Medicare providers¶ An Independent Payment Advisory Board with the authority to make recommendations that reduce cost growth and improve quality in both the Medicare program and the health system as a whole¶ A new Innovation Center within the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, or CMS, charged with streamlining the testing of demonstration and pilot projects in Medicare and rapidly expanding successful models across the program¶ Profiling medical care providers on the basis of cost and quality and making that data available to consumers and insurance plans, and providing relatively low-quality, high-cost providers with financial incentives to improve their care¶ Increased funding for comparative effectiveness research¶ Increased emphasis on wellness and prevention¶ The exact amount that will be saved from these provisions is uncertain. Partly as a result of this uncertainty, the Congressional Budget Office, or CBO, and the Office of the Actuary at CMS assume only minor savings. CBO, for example, estimated that the major parts of the law including these provisions will cost $10 billion over the 2010–2019 period, while the Office of the Actuary determined savings of only $2 billion.¶ Other studies suggest much larger changes. Melinda Beeuwkes- Buntin and I estimate a 1.5 percentage point reduction in cost increases annually from significant health care reform.9 Similarly, Peter S. Hussey, Christine Eibner, and M. Susan Ridgely in the New England Journal of Medicine estimate that savings of more than 10 percent are possible largely from payment reforms like bundled-payment systems. Realizing these savings over a decade implies cost reductions of nearly 1.5 percentage points annually. Finally, a Commonwealth Fund report indicates that provisions like these will slow annual growth in national health expenditures from 6.5 percent to 5.6 percent over the 2010–2020 period.¶ Taking all these studies into consideration, Karen Davis, Kristof Stremikis, and I estimate that the Affordable Care Act will reduce medical spending by 1.0 percentage points annually, beginning in 2014.¶ Repealing the law would increase medical spending¶ Accordingly, repealing health reform would increase spending by the same amount. I also consider a scenario where repeal would increase cost growth by 1.5 percentage points annually to account for the higher estimates in some studies.¶ National health spending would continue to balloon¶ The implications of repealing health care for national medical spending (public and private) are shown in Figure 1. Repealing health reform would add $25 billion to spending in 2014 and $185 billion to spending in 2019. The impact on family premiums will be equally large (see Figure 2). Repealing health reform would add 9 percent or nearly $2,000 annually to family health insurance premiums in 2019.¶ Families would continue to pay more for health insurance¶ How health reform repeal would affect jobs¶ Any proposal that adds $200 billion to our medical spending after a decade will have enormous economic implications. The employment impacts of health care repeal will be particularly severe because many of these costs will fall on businesses. As we’ve already seen, employers facing higher health costs will hire fewer people, lay workers off, and pay lower wages.¶ A total of 250,000 jobs will be lost annually if health reform is repealed¶ To estimate these employment impacts, I followed the methodology of myself and Neeraj Sood. That paper took estimates of the medical spending change associated with health reform and combined that with the econometric model of Sood, Arkadipta Ghosh, and José Escarce that estimated the employment impacts of changes in medical costs. I use the model to estimate the employment impact of repealing reform.¶ Figure 3 shows the net impact of repealing health reform on total employment. The baseline estimates show that 250,000 jobs will be lost annually if health reform is repealed. Annual job losses would average 400,000 using the greater estimate of 1.5 percentage point cost increases annually resulting from repeal. Figure 4 shows the estimated employment change by industry in 2016 (omitting health care, which will have more employment). More than 200,000 jobs will be lost in manufacturing and nearly 900,000 jobs will be lost in nonhealth care services.¶ Repeal will lead to more than 200,000 jobs lost in manufacturing and nearly 900,000 jobs lost in nonhealth care services¶ These job losses are not the only impact of repealing health reform, however. Family incomes would fall by as much as $2,000 annually as medical costs increase beyond forecasted levels. Federal deficits also would rise. The Congressional Budget Office has predicted that repealing health reform would add $230 billion to federal deficits in the next decade because provisions in the law intended to bring down costs would be repealed.¶ Job transitions would also be affected. Millions of people are “locked” into their current job because they fear becoming uninsured or underinsured if they were to change. Repealing health reform would thus stifle job transitions, new business startups, and movements into and out of the labor force. Millions more workers would be affected.¶ Conclusion¶ Medical care accounts for one-sixth of the economy, which means that any health reform that improves the efficiency of medical care will boost economic performance. Conversely, legislation that raises medical spending will be a job killer.¶

### CP

#### Nuclear power is key to prevent blackouts – California proves that alternatives cannot solve quickly enough.

Carroll, Reuters, ‘12

[Rory, “California power outages? Summer heat will be key factor”, MSNBC, 6-15-12,

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/47829072/ns/weather/t/california-power-outages-summer-heat-will-be-key-factor/#.UFQYoY1lQpA>, RSR]

SAN FRANCISCO — California officials responsible for the state's electric grid are scrambling to avoid blackouts in southern California this summer following news that a major nuclear power plant will be offline indefinitely. The effort to avoid a repeat of the costly power outages that plagued the state in 2000 and 2001 includes bringing old plants back online, commissioning new transmission lines and activating a multipronged emergency response system to cut power demand at peak times. "We're not forecasting blackouts, but during very hot periods, either a very hot day or an extended heat wave, there are going to be challenges in southern California," said Steven Greenlee, a spokesman for the California Independent System Operator, which manages the power grid that serves 30 million people. The problem stems from breakdowns at the San Onofre nuclear power plant, located between Los Angeles and San Diego, which normally produces about 8 percent of the state's electricity.

#### Nuclear power’s cost stability makes it important to power grids.

Whitman 7 (Christine Todd, EPA Administrator, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20730356/)

The cost of failing to meet these needs will be steep. The global economy relies on world-class power grids to trade stocks, to communicate instantly, and to buy and sell around the clock. If anything points to the frustrating effect that a failed power grid can have on profits, it's the San Francisco power outage that took down Silicon Valley enterprises like Craigslist and Netflix in July. Although it only cost them two hours of online business, that minor power blip illustrates how a lack of electricity can render even a tech-savvy company impotent. Nuclear power also provides a valuable tool for businesses: cost stability. Unlike other power suppliers, nuclear plants buy their uranium at set prices three years in advance. And uranium prices comprise just 26 percent of production costs at nuclear plants; by comparison, coal accounts for 78 percent of costs at coal-fired plants. So despite big increases in uranium prices over the past three years, industry production costs have remained low, at less than 2 cents per kilowatt-hour (a quarter of those at gas-fired plants).

#### Nuclear power is key to solve for warming – top economist concedes, renewables can’t compete and tech is not moving fast enough.

Harvey, Environment Correspondent, ‘12

[Fiona, “Nuclear power is only solution to climate change, says Jeffrey Sachs”, The Guardian, 5-3-12,

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/may/03/nuclear-power-solution-climate-change>, RSR]

Combating climate change will require an expansion of nuclear power, respected economist Jeffrey Sachs said on Thursday, in remarks that are likely to dismay some sections of the environmental movement. Prof Sachs said atomic energy was needed because it provided a low-carbon source of power, while renewable energy was not making up enough of the world's energy mix and new technologies such as carbon capture and storage were not progressing fast enough. "We won't meet the carbon targets if nuclear is taken off the table," he said. He said coal was likely to continue to be cheaper than renewables and other low-carbon forms of energy, unless the effects of the climate were taken into account.