### Congress

#### Not answered no modeling globally also no internal link to complete collapse of democracy – past abuses of executive power like Iraq or the Patriot Act disprove the impact

#### Dosen’t solve war – it only seems like it because countries with the pre-requisites for peace tend to eventually transition to democracy – that’s Kaplan

**Prefer our evidence—backed by studies**

**Rosato 3** – PhD PolSci, Chicago; conclusion of a statistical survey of democracies (Sebastian, The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory, The American Political Science Review 97.4, AG)

The causal logics that underpin democratic peace theory cannot explain why democracies remain at peace with one another because the mechanisms that make up these logics do not operate as stipulated by the theory's proponents. In the case of the normative logic, liberal democracies do not reliably externalize their domestic norms of conflict resolution and do not treat one another with trust and respect when their interests clash. Similarly, in the case of the institutional logic, democratic leaders are not especially accountable to peaceloving publics or pacific interest groups, democracies are not particularly slow to mobilize or incapable of surprise attack, and open political competition offers no guarantee that a democracy will reveal private information about its level of resolve. In view of these findings there are good reasons to doubt that joint democracy causes peace.

#### No impact to failed states

### Overview

Romney strike iran – causes retal, great power involvement – also turns econ impact cuz iran will block strait of hormuz – their defense is about deterring Iran but they haven’t answered that Romney will pre-emptively strike

#### Strikes turn oil volatility and causes bio-attacks

Michael Moran, 8-20-2010; Foreign Affairs columnist for GlobalPost, covering global economics, politics and U.S. foreign policy from New York; Moran ran CFR.org, the website of the Council on Foreign Relations, Opinion: The war over war with Iran http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/middle-east/100820/iran-war-nuclear-proliferation-israel

Yet U.S. military planners concluded long ago that Iran’s nuclear program has already developed beyond the point where air strikes could destroy it. At best, air strikes push back the day when Iran attains nuclear capability (whether it actually “tests” a warhead is another question). During the early days of the Iraq war in 2003, perhaps, such a mission might have successfully set back Iran’s nuclear weapons program a few years (though destroying it, frankly, would always have required an invasion and a sustained UNSCOM-style inspections regime). Right now, the frustrating UN sanctions route appears the best of a bad set of options. Few claim the air strikes would do long-term damage to Iran’s program. A recent assessment by James Phillips, a senior defense analyst from the conservative Heritage Foundation, concluded that Israeli air strikes could only “buy a little time” at this point. Phillips goes on to argue that it would be better for Israel to buy some time now than fight a nuclear war with Iran later – as if these are the only two options on the table. But Phillips, like other analysts of various political leanings, also lays out a series of harrowing consequences from such an attack, including possible chemical and biological counterstrikes by Iranian missiles on Israel, the unleashing of Hezbollah and Hamas against Israeli and U.S. interests, the activation of Iranian agents in Iraq to foil the American withdrawal and, in the darkest scenario, the closing of the Straits of Hormuz and attacks on Saudi oil facilities – **in effect, precipitation of a global oil crisis like none ever seen**. The fact is, in every year subsequent to our misguided Iraq invasion, both the expansion and “hardening” of Iran’s program, plus the political atmosphere in the Middle East, has lessened the potential for a successful preemptive air strike against Iranian nuclear facilities. The United States, left to its own devices right now, certainly would not take this route. The stakes in Iraq and the global economy simply are too high. For the United States, the best-case scenario would be for the conflict to ossify into a standoff reliant on Israeli and U.S. nuclear deterrence. Sanctions would continue to give incentives for Iran to stay away from taking the final, fateful step – testing a weapon.

#### Extinction

**Singer 1** - professor of nuclear engineering and director of the Program in Arms Control, Disarmament, and International Security at the University of Illinois at Urbana (Clifford, Swords and Ploughshares, Volume XIII, Spring, http://www.acdis.uiuc.edu/Research/S&Ps/2001-Sp/S&P\_Sp-2001.html)

There are, however, two technologies currently under development that may pose a more serious threat to human survival. The first and most immediate is biological warfare combined with genetic engineering. Smallpox is the most fearsome of natural biological warfare agents in existence. By the end of the next decade, global immunity to smallpox will likely be at a low unprecedented since the emergence of this disease in the distant past, while the opportunity for it to spread rapidly across the globe will be at an all time high. In the absence of other complications such as nuclear war near the peak of an epidemic, developed countries may respond with quarantine and vaccination to limit the damage. Otherwise mortality there may match the rate of 30 percent or more expected in unprepared developing countries. With respect to genetic engineering using currently available knowledge and technology, the simple expedient of spreading an ample mixture of coat protein variants could render a vaccination response largely ineffective, but this would otherwise not be expected to substantially increase overall mortality rates. With development of new biological technology, however, there is a possibility that a variety of infectious agents may be engineered for combinations of greater than natural virulence and mortality, rather than just to overwhelm currently available antibiotics or vaccines. There is no a priori known upper limit to the power of this type of technology base, and thus the survival of a globally connected human family may be in question when and if this is achieved.

#### Romney win would collapse the economy

Robert Reich 8-20-2012; Chancellor’s Professor of Public Policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley. The Ryan-Romney Economic Plan Would Be A Disaster For America http://www.businessinsider.com/the-five-reasons-why-the-ryan-romney-economic-plan-would-be-a-2012-8

Mitt Romney hasn’t provided details so we should be grateful he’s selected as vice president a man with a detailed plan Romney says is “marvelous,” “bold and exciting,” “excellent,” “much needed,” and “consistent with” what he’s put out. So let’s look at the five basic features of this “marvelous” Ryan plan. FIRST: It would boost unemployment because it slashes public spending next year and the year after, when the economy is still likely to need a boost, not a fiscal drag. It would be the same austerity trap now throwing Europe into recession. According to the Economic Policy Institute, Ryan’s plan would mean 1.3 million fewer jobs next year than otherwise, and 2.8 million fewer the year after. SECOND: Ryan would take from lower-income Americans and give to the rich – who already have the biggest share of America’s total income and wealth in almost a century. His plan would raise taxes on families earning between 30 and 40 thousand dollars by almost $500 a year, and slash programs like Medicare, food stamps, and children’s health What would Ryan do with these savings? Reduce taxes on millionaires by an average of over $500,000 a year. THIRD: Ryan wants to turn Medicare into vouchers that won’t keep up with the rising costs of health care – thereby shifting the burden onto seniors. By contrast, Obama’s Affordable Care Act saves money on Medicare by reducing payments to medical providers like hospitals and drug companies. FOURTH: He wants to add money to defense while cutting spending on education, infrastructure, and basic research and development. America already spends more on defense than the next five biggest military spenders put together. Our future productivity depends on the public investments Ryan wants to cut. FIFTH: And finally, Ryan’s budget doesn’t even reduce the federal budget deficit – not for decades. Remember: He’s adding to military spending, giving huge additional tax cuts to the very rich, and stifling economic growth by cutting spending too early. The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities estimates Ryan’s Roadmap would push public debt to over 175 percent of GDP by 2050. So there you have it. The Ryan – Ryan-ROMNEY – economic plan. And the five reasons why it would be a disaster for America.

### Uq

#### Obama is winning but it’s close - prefer our Brownstein evidence –

* He holds a narrow margin that is consistently reflected in all major polls among likely voters in swing states
* It depends on Obama not screwing up expectations of his job performance – if he falls below 50% he could lose

#### --Most recent polls in swing states and he’s leading among independents

**Schulters, 9/21**/12 – reporter at Politico (Emily, “Purple Poll: Obama gains momentum in swing states” Politco,

<http://www.politico.com/blogs/burns-haberman/2012/09/purple-poll-obama-gains-momentum-in-swing-states-136287.html?hp=r9>

From the latest Purple Poll numbers out today, President Obama gets his biggest swing-state lead so far this cycle -- as well as a lead among independents:

In our last poll, conducted in August immediately following the Paul Ryan announcement, Romney had a narrow 1-point lead over Obama in the race (47% to 46%). Today, Obama holds a 5-point lead across the 12 Purple States (49% to 44%), which is the largest lead either candidate has held since the PurplePoll began one year ago. ...

...While it is difficult to tease out the direct effects of each of these individual events, one important change is clear: President Obama now leads among independents across Purple states. Today, he holds a 5-point margin (48% to 43%). This is the first time he has held a lead among independents across Purple States in 7 months.

The poll shows a mixed picture in individual swing-state numbers: Obama leads in Colorado (by 3), North Carolina (by 2), Ohio (by 4) and Virginia (by 3), while Romney leads in Arizona (by 3) and Florida (by 1). Those numbers are fairly consistent with the trends we've seen in other polls lately -- Obama is picking up several-point leads in states like Ohio and Virginia, while Florida remains close. It's also one of the first times recently that we've seen a lead for Obama in North Carolina, which has generally run very close or given Romney a slight lead.

#### Obama leads in every poll since the convention in every swing state

**Silver, 9/21**/12 – statistician, editor of the NYT Fivethirtyeight blog (Nate, “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.

#### And even accounting for worst-case estimates of polling bias, Obama has a 76% chance of winning – taking polls at face value gives him a 95% chance

**Silver, 9/21**/12 – statistician, editor of the NYT Fivethirtyeight blog (Nate, “Presidential Race Changes, but Swing States Stay the Same” <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/09/21/sept-21-presidential-race-changes-but-swing-states-stay-the-same/#more-34851>)

Mr. Obama’s chances of winning the presidential election are listed at 76.9 percent by the forecast model, an incremental improvement from 76.1 percent on Thursday.

The trend over the last three days is clearer: Mr. Obama’s forecast is up from a 72.9 percent chance of winning the Electoral College on Tuesday. However, he remains off his highest point in the forecast early last week, when he topped out at 80.8 percent.

Emblematic of Mr. Obama’s good-but-not-great polling day were a set of polls from the firm Purple Strategies, which had him ahead in four of the five swing states: Ohio, Virginia, Colorado and North Carolina. However, Mr. Obama still trailed Mr. Romney by one point in Florida, according to the poll.

Purple Strategies had polled all of these states but North Carolina previously, and Mr. Obama’s standing improved on average by three percentage points from the polls they conducted in August.

This is consistent with the post-convention bounce that we’ve seen for Mr. Obama on the whole. The FiveThirtyEight “now-cast” estimates that if an election were held today, Mr. Obama would have a 95 percent chance of winning it. Additionally, he is projected to win the national popular vote by almost five points – up from about two points before the conventions. The three-point gain is the same as in the average Purple Strategies poll.

Our Nov. 6 forecast continues to be more conservative, however, as we still need to account for the possibility that Mr. Obama’s numbers are inflated by the aftereffects of his party’s convention. By this time next week, it will be safer to conclude that Mr. Obama’s gains are permanent, and the forecast will move toward Mr. Obama if Mr. Romney does not make some tangible improvement.

#### And Electoral College math means Romney’s path to victory is too narrow- err on the side of Obama winning - he has greater momentum

**Burns, 9/19**/12 – reporter for Politico (Alexander, “Mitt Romney needs poll vault to win”, Politico, <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0912/81392.html>)

Mitt Romney faces an increasingly daunting path to victory in the 2012 presidential race, as a wave of national and state-level polling suggests that President Barack Obama has cemented a small but meaningful lead across the battleground states.

Individual polls show varying snapshots of the Obama-Romney race: NBC News and the Wall Street Journal gave Obama a 5-point national lead in a survey published Tuesday night, while an AP-GfK poll released Wednesday morning pegged the president’s lead at just 1 point. Gallup’s tracking poll, meanwhile, showed Obama’s post-convention polling bounce fading to a 1-point lead.

The rosiest picture of the race for Obama came this afternoon from the Pew Research Center, which found Obama drawing 51 percent of the vote to Romney’s 43 percent, leading on nearly every issue question and fighting his challenger to a draw on who would better handle the economy.

From the fog of survey data available on the 2012 race, some consistent, post-convention trends have clearly begun to emerge. In the most credible national polls, Obama rarely leads Romney by more than a few points. But the president is almost invariably in the lead.

These polls were taken after the parties’ conventions, but mostly before the release this week of a controversial video of Romney this week in which he says that 47 percent of people don’t pay income taxes and are dependent on the government for services. Some data was collected before the attacks on U.S. diplomatic outposts in North Africa; some was collected afterward.

More problematic for Romney is the state-level data that gives Obama a slight edge in more than enough states to block his challenger from amassing 270 electoral college votes. Because of the makeup of the electoral map, Romney has to win nearly all the swing states on the table, while Obama only has to win a handful.

Of the biggest prizes up for grabs — Ohio, Virginia, Florida and North Carolina — Obama is the favorite in two, according to public surveys. NBC/Wall Street Journal polling and the Democratic firm Public Policy Polling gave Obama an edge in Ohio in the mid-to-high single digits. In Virginia, one survey from the Washington Post and another from Quinnipiac University, CBS News and the New York Times placed Obama at or above the 50 percent mark.

There has been little public polling in Florida — without which it becomes much harder for Romney to win — and strategists on both sides say the race there remains close. Only in North Carolina is Romney believed to have a slim edge.

In the bigger picture, it would take a national shift of several percentage points or the flipping of more than a few major swing states to put Romney back in the lead, and the momentum — with less than two months to go, doesn’t seem to be moving in the challenger’s direction.

Even if Romney were to win Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, Iowa, Colorado and New Hampshire — all states Obama won in 2008 — the Republican would still be three electoral votes short of victory.

And right now, Romney is not leading in many of those states, leaving him well short of the threshold he needs to clear and under urgent pressure to reshuffle the race’s dynamics.

#### And Obama has major advantages:

####  – fundraising, the ground game, base mobilization and momentum

**Vogel, 9/21/12 –** Politico reporter(Kenneth, Politico, “President Obama flips money script on Mitt Romney,” <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0912/81499.html>)

Mitt Romney was expected to use a billionaire-fueled fundraising juggernaut to crush President Barack Obama’s once vaunted small-donor army.

But things haven’t gone according to plan.

Headed into the home stretch of the 2012 presidential race, it is Obama who looks to have an edge, thanks to an awakening donor base, aggressive summer spending on ads and ground game, and a Romney hoarding strategy that left him with plenty of cash in the bank, but not much to show for it.

Through the end of August, Romney’s campaign and the party committees and super PAC supporting it had raised $736 million, compared to $774 million raised by Obama’s campaign and its party and super PAC allies, according to a POLITICO analysis of voluntary disclosures and Federal Election Commission reports filed Thursday.

While Romney’s side boasted a nearly $50 million edge in cash on hand — $175 million to $126 million — headed into the final two months, it also had $10 million more in debt, as Romney’s campaign took out a $20 million loan to address cash flow issues.

Team Obama has the momentum at the right time. Big Democratic donors are rallying to the Priorities USA Action super PAC, which is devoted to helping him and raised $10.1 million last month — its best month ever. And overall, for the first time in months, Obama’s campaign, the Democratic National Committee and the joint DNC-Obama Victory Fund outraised Romney’s campaign, the Republican National Committee and Romney Victory — $114 million to $111.6 million.

The shifting fortunes mark yet another reversal of a conventional wisdom that has lagged the rapid evolution of campaign finance in the first presidential campaign of the Citizens United era.

First, the thinking was that Obama’s massive base of small donors would make the president the first $1 billion candidate and would simply overwhelm Romney. Then, as Obama struggled to fire up his base to the fever pitch of 2008 and Romney and his outside allies began reaping the fruits of a robust big donor operation, it appeared the Obama era of fundraising preeminence may have passed.

But, as the contours of the 2012 cash race harden, Obama and his allies have been able to adapt to some of the big-donor-driven aspects of fundraising which they purport to abhor, while emphasizing new techniques, such as text message donations, to reach small donors. Romney, on the other hand, has seen his small donor fundraising wane, while the super PAC devoted to him, Restore Our Future, in August reeled in fewer new big fish.

Romney’s selection of Rep. Paul Ryan as his running mate was expected to energize small donors, but that wasn’t evident in August. Their campaign reported $9.4 million in “unitemized” donations — those of $200 or less — about one-seventh of the $67 million it raised from donors last month and a notable drop from July, when the campaign received nearly $11.8 million in such donations.

Obama for America, meanwhile, raised more than $25 million of its $84.7-million August haul from contributions of $200 or less.

Team Obama seems to be relishing the shift as a kind of tactical victory, while simultaneously spurring its donors with suggestions that things could turn at any moment if a conservative billionaire decides to write an 8-figure check, ala Sheldon Adelson or Joe Ricketts.

#### --New economic optimism

**Cook, 9/20**/12 – Editor and Publisher of The Cook Political Report, and political analyst for National Journal, where he writes two weekly columns . He also writes a regular column for Washington Quarterly, published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and is a political analyst for NBC News. Widely regarded as one of the nation's leading authorities on U.S. elections and political trends, Cook has appeared on the ABC, CBS and NBC evening news programs, as well as on Good Morning America (Charlie, “Obama’s Uptick” National Journal, <http://www.nationaljournal.com/columns/cook-report/the-cook-report-obama-s-uptick-20120920>)

Three sets of numbers in other questions might explain the uptick. In the key “right direction/wrong track” question, called the “Dow Jones indicator of American politics” by the late Dick Wirthlin, President Reagan’s pollster, the “right direction” jumped up 7 points since August, from 32 percent to 39 percent; the “wrong track” dropped 6 points, from 61 percent to 55 percent. Obama’s job approval on handling the economy ticked up 3 points to 47 percent, while disapproval dropped 3 points, to 51 percent, perhaps driven by stock-market gains and more optimism about housing. In other words, Obama went from a net minus 10 points in August to a net minus 4 points in September. When asked, “During the next 12 months, do you think that the nation’s economy will get better, get worse, or stay about the same?” the percentage of respondents saying they expected the economy to get better increased 6 points, to 42 percent; the “get worse” remained the same at 18 percent; and the share saying “stay about the same” declined to 32 percent. In another question, 51 percent said they thought that the economy is recovering (up a point from August) and those saying that it isn’t dropped a point, so the net responses citing economic recovery shifted slightly from a net 4 to a net 6 points. These aren’t big changes, but they are an improvement on what had been Obama’s biggest liability: the state of the economy and the public’s perception of his stewardship of it.

While all of this modestly good news for the president was occurring, however, his approval rating on handling foreign policy dropped 5 points in a month, from 54 percent to 49 percent, with his disapproval number rising from 40 percent to 46 percent. Clearly, what is happening abroad is making an impression on voters, but it is being offset by a cautiously improving view of where the country and economy are going.

Central to Mitt Romney’s challenge is that too many Americans either don’t like him or can’t figure out if they do. Only 38 percent of registered voters had a positive view of Romney (the same as last month), while 43 percent had a negative view, 1 point down from August. Romney’s underwater ratings—minus 6 points in August, minus 5 points in September—compare with Obama being plus 5 points in August and plus 6 points this month.

Equally dispiriting for Republicans are the responses to questions about which candidate would be better in dealing with three subjects: Medicare, taxes, and the economy. On Medicare, 47 percent said that Obama would be better, while 37 percent chose Romney. On taxes, Obama had a 6-point edge, 45 percent to 39 percent. And on the economy, the two men are now tied at 43 percent, compared with a 6-point Romney edge in July.

With six weeks to go before the election, this contest is certainly not over. But it is becoming increasingly clear that Romney needs something to happen to change the trajectory of this race. Right now, it isn’t heading in a good direction for him.

#### --Framing and get out the vote efforts

**Vogel, 9/21/12 –** Politico reporter(Kenneth, Politico, “President Obama flips money script on Mitt Romney,” <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0912/81499.html>)

Perhaps more important than the numbers themselves, Obama and his allies appear to have gotten more bang for their buck, building a robust get-out-the-vote operation that some conservatives worry out-classes their own, while unleashing a barrage of negative ads that left Romney struggling to shake Democrats’ portrayal of him as a cold-hearted businessman who can’t identify with the average voter’s struggles.

“We’re winning the election in large measure because we’ve framed it,” Priorities USA strategist Paul Begala told POLITICO this month.

#### --Advertising – and this answers their outside PACs argument

**Vogel, 9/21/12 –** Politico reporter(Kenneth, Politico, “President Obama flips money script on Mitt Romney,” <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0912/81499.html>)

Meanwhile, Romney’s campaign explained that it took out the $20 million loan last month ($5 million of which it had already paid back by the end of the month) because it wanted to keep up aggressive spending before election rules allowed it to spend cash raised for the general election.

At the same time, Romney’s campaign also paid out more than $200,000 in bonuses to some senior officials.

Yet, it hasn’t kept pace with Obama’s aggressive advertising clip, leaving Restore Our Future and other conservative outside groups struggling to fill the gap.

In the last week of August and the first week of September, for instance, Obama and his allies aired 40,000 television ads — 37,200 of which were paid for by the Obama campaign at a cost of $19.6 million — compared with 18,000 aired by Romney and his allies, according to a study by the Wesleyan Media Project.

It showed that the Romney campaign paid for only 4,500 ads (at a cost of $3.3 million), while the overwhelming majority of the pro-Romney ads were aired by outside groups including Restore Our Future, the Rove-conceived American Crossroads and the Koch brothers-affiliated Americans for Prosperity.

Part of the reason for Romney’s tight-fistedness seems to be the fact that not all campaign money is equal.

The bulk of the cash his campaign has banked likely was raised in checks as large as $75,800 by the Romney Victory joint account, which is obligated to divide that cash between Romney’s campaign (which gets only $5,000 from each max donation), the RNC and other party committees.

The party committees are able to use the cash to help Romney, but they don’t qualify for the so-called “lowest unit charge” rate, which entitles candidates to less expensive air time. Super PACs and other unlimited-money outside groups also don’t qualify, so their buying power may be limited down the stretch, which could cut into the tremendous conservative advantage in outside cash.

#### Obama’s polling numbers are stronger than any candidate since Clinton – and better for him than in 2008

**Pew Research Center, 9/19**/12 (“Obama Ahead with Stronger Support, Better Image and Lead on Most Issues” <http://www.people-press.org/2012/09/19/obama-ahead-with-stronger-support-better-image-and-lead-on-most-issues/>)

At this stage in the campaign, Barack Obama is in a strong position compared with past victorious presidential candidates. With an eight-point lead over Mitt Romney among likely voters, Obama holds a bigger September lead than the last three candidates who went on to win in November, including Obama four years ago. In elections since 1988, only Bill Clinton, in 1992 and 1996, entered the fall with a larger advantage.

Not only does Obama enjoy a substantial lead in the horserace, he tops Romney on a number of key dimensions. His support is stronger than his rival’s, and is positive rather than negative. Mitt Romney’s backers are more ardent than they were pre-convention, but are still not as enthusiastic as Obama’s. Roughly half of Romney’s supporters say they are voting against Obama rather than for the Republican nominee. With the exception of Bill Clinton in 1992, candidates lacking mostly positive backing have lost in November.

### Link

1nc ev – environmentalism is widespread and will decide the election – plan pisses off key voters across all states

#### environmental vote will decide the election

**Lehrer, 12** (Eli, “How Mitt Romney can win the environmental vote”, 6/11, Huffington Post,

<http://rstreet.org/op-ed/how-mitt-romney-can-win-the-environmental-vote/>

Since the (few) positives in Obama’s record and the incumbency are unalterable, the Romney camp can only win by shaving parts of Obama’s base.

And environmentalists are one place big place where it could work. Stanford University researchers have found that about 38 million Americans care a lot about the environment and might vote on it. Assuming that environmental voters turn out at roughly the same rate as other citizens who can vote, this means that somewhere between 15% and 19% of the electorate will vote partly on environmental issues.

Although there’s no current, detailed polling, it’s likely that Obama currently stands to get around 75% of this group — taking 50% of it would probably be enough to put Romney over the top. So how can he do it?

#### Unique link – Obama is holding off on controversial decisions about energy policy – any move is politically controversial, only maintaining the status quo policy of environmental deference is key to re-election

Schnur 12 – director of the Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics at the University of Southern California; he served as the national communications director of Senator John McCain’s presidential campaign in 2000. (Dan, April 9, “The President, Gas Prices and the Pipeline” <http://campaignstops.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/04/09/the-president-gas-prices-and-the-keystone-pipeline/>) Jacome

Like every president seeking re-election, Barack Obama walks the fine line every day between the discordant goals of motivating his party’s strongest loyalists and reaching out to swing voters for their support. A few weeks ago, that pathway took him to a tiny town in Oklahoma, where, caught between the [anti-drilling demands of the environmental community](http://www.credoaction.com/campaign/keystone_obama/index.html) and the [thirst for more affordable gasoline](http://www.people-press.org/2012/02/23/auto-bailout-now-backed-stimulus-divisive/) from unions, business owners and drivers, the president announced his [support for building half of an oil pipeline](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/23/us/politics/in-oklahoma-obama-declares-pipeline-support.html).

The economic impact of rising energy prices in itself is considerable, but the psychological toll on voters is just as significant, as tens of millions of motorists are reminded by large signs on almost every street corner of the financial pain of filling their gas tanks. Obama and his political lieutenants are acutely aware that this growing frustration has the potential to complicate an election year that otherwise seems to be shifting in the incumbent’s favor.

As a result, Obama has been hitting the energy issue hard in recent weeks, at least as hard as a candidate can hit when forced to navigate between two almost mutually exclusive political priorities. The result is a president who talks forcefully of the [benefits of wind and solar power](http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/02/17/obama-signs-stimulus-packed-with-clean-energy-provisions/) while also [boasting about the amount of oil the nation produces](http://content.usatoday.com/communities/theoval/post/2012/03/obama-oil-drilling-up-on-my-watch/1#.T4I5A45btFU) under his leadership.

There are times when this gets slightly uncomfortable. Obama recently called for [increased exploration along the Atlantic Coast](http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/03/obama-oks-oil-exploration-along-atlantic-coast-but-not-drilling/) but stopped short of calling for expanded drilling in that region. This is the energy policy equivalent of admitting to an [experiment with marijuana but not inhaling](http://www.nytimes.com/1992/03/30/news/30iht-bill_1.html).

Where the issue becomes more tangible and therefore trickier for Obama is when the multiple choices become binary. The debate over the proposed [XL Keystone Pipeline](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/k/keystone_pipeline/index.html) that would transport Canadian oil through the nation’s heartland to the Gulf of Mexico crystallizes the choices involved and forces a shades-of-gray conversation into starker hues of black and white.

Obama recognizes that the devoted environmentalists who represent a critical portion of the Democratic party base need some motivation to turn out for him in the fall. But he also understands that centrist voters who support him on a range of other domestic and foreign policy matters could be lured away by a Republican opponent who either promises relief at the gas pump or who can lay blame at the White House doorstep for those higher prices. Even more complicated is the role of organized labor, which has poured immense amounts of support into Obama’s re-election but also prioritizes the [job-creation potential of the pipeline](http://www.tauc.org/blog/?fa=article&id=1654).

The result of these competing political and policy pressures brought Obama to Ripley, Okla., where he tried to satisfy the needs of these various audiences without alienating any of them. First, the president endorsed the southern portion of the Keystone project in order to relieve the glut of domestically drilled oil that is now unable to make it to refineries near the Gulf of Mexico in a timely manner. This had the effect of irritating his environmental allies but failed to mollify the project’s advocates, who pointed out that the review process that the president called for was already underway.

He then reiterated the administration’s antipathy toward the northern section of the pipeline, which would allow Canadian-drilled oil to be transported into this country. This provided some comfort to [drilling opponents](http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/13/study-warns-of-economic-damage-in-a-keystone-spill/), but infuriated both the pro-oil forces and the Canadian government. The most likely outcome is that Canada will still build a pipeline, but rather one that goes westward to the Pacific Ocean north of the United States border and then ships [Canadian oil to China](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/07/opinion/nocera-the-poisoned-politics-of-keystone-xl.html) instead of into this country.

Even in deep-blue California, where Obama wins hypothetical general election [match ups against the Republican candidates](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-poll-presidential-20120325%2C0%2C7993161.story) by margins approaching voice vote, this is an issue that points to potential difficulties for the president’s re-election campaign. Californians who swooned for Obama in 2008, and who seem poised for a re-swoon this fall, told a recent [USC Dornsife/LA Times statewide poll](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-poll-presidential-20120325%2C0%2C7993161.story) that they were dissatisfied with the president’s handling of the issue of the cost of gasoline by a 29-62 margin. California’s unemployment rate remains around 11 percent, but the state’s residents still give Obama positive marks on his work on job creation, the economy and taxes. They approve of his work on health care and by even larger margins on women’s health issues. But highway-dependent West Coasters, even while they advocate for broader use of solar, wind and other alternative energies, don’t like $4 per gallon gasoline and they will like paying $5 per gallon even less.

Obama won’t actually lose California in November, of course. Gas prices would have to hit $10 a gallon for Mitt Romney to win the state this fall. And the [same poll](http://dornsife.usc.edu/usc-dornsife-los-angeles-times-poll/) shows that voters blame oil companies, rather than either the president or Congress, for those high prices. However, the dissatisfaction that emanates from even a heavily Democratic patch of electoral turf such as California carries much more significant consequences in Ohio, Florida and other swing states. For the time being, Obama is gambling that [directing popular anger toward the oil companies](http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/29/obama-repeats-his-call-to-end-oil-subsidies/) — a convenient villain if there ever was one — will allow him to keep the price of gasoline from becoming a roadblock for his campaign.

But if gas prices keep rising and voter unhappiness continues to build, look for the administration to find a way to accelerate the review process that would allow the northern leg of Keystone to move forward more quickly. Obama has been careful not to come out in absolute opposition to the pipeline, but only to call for a more meticulous examination of its possible environmental impact. A more closely competitive election than what is now expected, though, could easily lead the president to decide that his administration’s review has been quite thorough enough and that the time for additional drilling has arrived.

An [energy strategy](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/24/us/politics/obama-will-try-to-blunt-attacks-on-gas-prices.html) that Obama now refers to as an “all of the above” approach is unlikely to turn into a “[drill, baby drill](http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/10/14/in-scranton-palin-talks-of-coal/)” refrain between now and November. But maintaining a balance between dissatisfied but docile environmentalists on one hand and drivers whose unhappiness stops just short of violence on the other will be a key to his re-election. If his poll margins begin to narrow, a somewhat longer pipeline than the one he has already endorsed could become a very tempting insurance policy.

#### Dirty energy policy is massively unpopular – hurts Obama’s green image and alienates voters

Zubryd 11 – science-writing intern at the Woods Institute for the Environment at Stanford University (Sascha, July 7th, “Talking 'Green' Can Help Candidates Win Votes, Study Finds” http://woods.stanford.edu/research/climate-politics.html) Jacome

Political candidates get more votes by taking a “green” position on climate change - acknowledging that global warming is occurring, recognizing that human activities are at least partially to blame and advocating the need for action - according to a June 2011 study by researchers at Stanford University.

Among Democratic and Independent voters, a hypothetical United States Senate candidate gained votes by making a “green” statement on climate change and lost votes by making a “not-green” statement - expressing skepticism about global warming - compared to making no statement on climate, the study found. Among Republican voters, the hypothetical candidate neither gained nor lost votes by taking either position.

The results suggest that candidates of either party can gain the votes of Democrats and Independents without losing Republican votes, said lead author Jon Krosnick, professor of communication and of political science at Stanford, and senior fellow at the Woods Institute for the Environment.

“These results are powerful because they suggest what might be **clear winning strategies for candidates running for office**,” said Krosnick, who has been conducting national surveys of public opinion on climate change for more than a decade.

A policy issue like climate change does not typically influence the votes of all citizens, he explained. Instead, only people who pay close attention to the issue and consider it to be of extreme personal importance are likely to base their votes on it. Of the 38 million Americans who fall into that category, he said, the vast majority hold “green” views on global warming - they believe that the average global temperature has been increasing and that human activities are at least part of the cause, and they believe that government action is needed to mitigate the effects.

The new study was based on a nationwide telephone survey of a representative sample of American adults between Nov. 1 and Nov. 14, 2010 - around the time of the most recent national election - and statewide telephone surveys conducted in Florida, Maine and Massachusetts in July 2010.

Survey interviewers read different quotes about global warming from a hypothetical Senate candidate to survey respondents. “Some respondents heard the candidate say nothing about climate,” said Krosnick. “Other respondents heard the candidate take a green position on climate. And, in the national survey, some respondents heard the candidate take a not-green position on climate.”

All respondents also heard the candidate take positions on a series of issues other than climate change, he added.

Results: Who cares about climate?

According to the results of the nationwide survey, 77 percent of all respondents said they would vote for the hypothetical candidate who took a green position on climate change, while 65 percent supported the candidate who was silent on the topic. “Among respondents who heard the candidate take a not-green position on climate, only 48 percent said they would vote for him or her,” said Krosnick.

Krosnick also examined how people with different political party affiliations responded to the candidates‘ statements on climate change.

The majority of Democrats and Independents said they would vote for the hypothetical candidate with a “green” stance on climate - 74 percent and 79 percent respectively. By comparison, a candidate who said nothing about climate received support from 53 percent of Democrats and 63 percent of Independents. Only 37 percent of Democrats and 44 percent of Independents said they would vote for the candidate whose quotes conveyed disbelief in global warming - a statistically significant decline for both groups of voters.

In contrast, the hypothetical candidate‘s views on global warming had no significant impact on Republican survey respondents, according to Krosnick, with 83 percent of Republicans saying they would vote for the candidate who was silent on climate, 78 percent for the “green” candidate and 76 percent for the “not-green” candidate.

The researchers found similar results in the three statewide surveys conducted in Florida, Maine and Massachusetts in July 2010.

“The results suggest that by taking a green position on climate, candidates of either party can gain the votes of many citizens,” said Krosnick.

Assuming that Independent voters play an especially important role in determining the outcomes of elections, “our results suggest that candidates would do best to take green positions on climate change and would **hurt their electoral chances by taking not-green positions**,” he added.

### At: jobs l/t

#### Aff creates jobs long term – the next two weeks are key

**Lombardo, 9/12**/12 - Global CEO, StrategyOne (Steve, “Why This Election Comes Down to Two Days in October,” Huffington Post, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/steve-lombardo/election-monitor-why-this_b_1877815.html>)

Look for a higher level of advertising spend from the Romney campaign in key battleground states over the next two weeks. History has shown that the candidate who is clearly in the lead by mid to late September will likely be the winner in November. That doesn't mean things can't change in October -- they can. But sentiment will start to firm up in the next two weeks. The Romney campaign has a $60 million cash-on-hand advantage, and they should use it now. Team Obama defined Romney in the spring using their cash advantage; the Romney campaign should not wait until October. They need to change the dynamic before October 1.

#### We control uniqueness on the link turn – the economy is recovering now

Rick Newman 8-21-2012; US News, author of Rebounders: How Winners Pivot from Setback to Success and the co-author of two other books: Firefight: Inside the Battle to Save the Pentagon on 9/11, and Bury Us Upside Down: The Misty Pilots and the Secret Battle for the Ho Chi Minh Trail. “Bailing Out Obama: How the Economy Could Help the President Win the Election” <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/rick-newman/2012/08/21/bailing-out-obama-how-the-economy-could-help-the-president-win-the-election>

A housing turnaround. After six years of falling prices, it seems clear that the housing market has begun to recover. "Housing, once the Achilles' heel of the U.S. economy, is starting to look like a source of strength," writes economist Celia Chen of Moody's Analytics. "Housing is about to turn from being a drag on the broader economy to being a driver." Another big housing boom is unlikely, but stabilizing prices will bring out more buyers and ease the gloom of homeowners watching their biggest asset plunge in value. Stronger retail sales. The latest monthly figures showed a healthy 0.8 percent gain in July, the biggest jump in four months. Nobody expects a sudden spending binge, but a modest pickup in spending shows that consumers are feeling more confident about job security and the overall economy. Robust industrial production. This, too, has picked up after slowing earlier in the year, a sign that producers anticipate healthy demand for goods over the next several months. A pickup in hiring. The latest jobs report showed that employers added 163,000 jobs in July, better than economists expected. The July report could be a fluke, pushed artificially higher by temporary or seasonal factors, and it will take a few more upbeat reports to indicate that hiring is truly ramping up. But other data shows that there are more new job openings and fewer people filing for unemployment benefits, factors consistent with an improving job market. Low inflation. Gas prices are well below the troublesome $4-per-gallon threshold and higher food prices—one possible effect of the devastating droughts in the Midwest—haven't materialized yet. The latest figures show inflation is running at a very tame 1.4 percent. A booming stock market. This may be the biggest summer surprise of all. The stock market has brushed off worries about a European recession, the "fiscal cliff" approaching at the end of the year—when Congress must make some momentous decisions on taxes and spending—and plenty of other problems to post a gain of about 8 percent over the last three months. And so far this year, stocks are up about 13 percent. Many analysts are scratching their heads, since economic fundamentals have supposedly been weak. Yet a rising stock market sometimes foretells better times ahead. "Stocks could be poised for further upside," says Doll.

#### And, that’s sufficient for Obama to get re-elected

Rick Newman 8-21-2012; US News, author of Rebounders: How Winners Pivot from Setback to Success and the co-author of two other books: Firefight: Inside the Battle to Save the Pentagon on 9/11, and Bury Us Upside Down: The Misty Pilots and the Secret Battle for the Ho Chi Minh Trail. “Bailing Out Obama: How the Economy Could Help the President Win the Election” <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/rick-newman/2012/08/21/bailing-out-obama-how-the-economy-could-help-the-president-win-the-election>

Anybody looking for downward trends that could overpower these modest upticks won't have trouble finding them. Corporate profits are slowing, confidence remains close to recessionary levels, and business leaders worry that political turmoil could cause another recession. As Mitt Romney and his fellow Republicans will no doubt remind voters over the next 10 weeks, there are still 5 million fewer working Americans than there were at the start of 2008. Obama, however, doesn't need a tidal wave of hiring to get re-elected. Most likely, he needs only enough of an improvement in the economy to convince voters that this time, the recovery might be real. Sooner or later, it has to be.

### Polls bad

#### Election models pick the winner 85% of the time

**Sides 3/29**/12 (John Sides. Associate Professor of Political Science. Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley. “In Defense of Presidential Forecasting Models,” <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/29/in-defense-of-presidential-forecasting-models/>)

Second, as Nate acknowledges but doesn’t fully explore (at least not in this post), the models vary in their accuracy. The average error in predicting the two-party vote is 4.6 points for Ray Fair’s model, but only 1.72 points for Alan Abramowitz’s model. In other words, some appear better than others — and we should be careful not to condemn the entire enterprise because some models are more inaccurate. Third, if we look at the models in a different way, they arguably do a good enough job. Say that you just want to know who is going to win the presidential election, not whether this candidate will get 51 percent or 52 percent of the vote. Of the 58 separate predictions that Nate tabulates, **85 percent of them correctly identified the winner** — even though most forecasts were made two months or more before the election and even though few of these forecasts actually incorporated trial heat polls from the campaign.

### Russia

#### Romney win would crush US-Russian cooperation

Mark Adomanis, 4-17-2012; analyst for Forbes, Mitt Romney's Incoherent Russia Policy http://www.forbes.com/sites/markadomanis/2012/04/17/mitt-romneys-incoherent-russia-policy/

According to his campaign’s own words, Romney will basically ignore Central Asian authoritarianism, which literally everyone agrees is far nastier, more brutal, and more open than anything the Russians are guilty of, while simultaneously focusing on democracy promotion and regime change in Russia. That is to say Romney’s Russia policy will, to a large extent, be based on relentlessly confronting the Kremlin. But won’t the Kremlin react extremely poorly to an American policy that seeks not only to co-opt its longtime allies in Central Asia and but to depose the current regime? According to Romney, the answer is no: the Kremlin will be so impressed by the bravery and willpower of this American effort that it will more actively support American goals (though precisely why it would react positively to an open challenge to its authority is left unsaid). Despite the endless accusations of Obama’s “double standards” and his “moral relativism” Romney is quite openly embracing his own set of double-standards. As the campaign’s website itself says, one set of moral values will be applied to the Central Asians while a completely different, and much more exacting, set of values will be applied to the Russians. It goes almost without saying that this is the sort of bad-faith posturing that really drives the Russians batty and that they react very poorly to this sort of thing. While I personally am of a strongly realist orientation, and have little patience for the attempt to inject “values” into an international system that naturally tends to be amoral and anarchic, I understand that there is a coherent case to be made for the neoconservative position. Very intelligent people, including many of my friends and acquaintances, hold views similar to the ones Romney espouses towards, and while I can’t say I find them convincing I’m not nearly egotistical enough to think that my own views are the only “correct” ones. However Romney’s mix-and-match approach, a dollop of realism here, a large dose of neoconservatism there, a dash of accommodation here and a big helping of confrontation there, will not be a sober-minded attempt to appeal to everyone, but will instead be a disjointed mess that will simultaneously alienate and antagonize almost everyone in the region. While the foreign policy of any American president will never be perfectly within the bounds of a single school of thought, Romney’s entire Russia policy is a case study in avoiding hard choices. It quite openly attempts to be all things to all people: realists can look at it and see parts of their ideology, and neoconservatives can look at it and see parts of their ideology too. Romney will both openly confront the Russians and get more concessions from them, support democracy and work hand-in-hand with some of the world’s most repressive regimes, pursue missile defense and get Russian cooperation on Afghanistan, expand NATO and convince Russia to stop arming Syria, work to undermine Russia’s energy interests and get it to isolate Iran. There are no hard choices, no nasty compromises, and no trade-offs between values and interests: there is just the unapologetic exercise of American power and the positive consequences inevitably associated with it. Obama is himself very(!) far from being perfect, but at least his foreign policy seems to be a reasonably coherent attempt to advance America’s interests while avoiding, to the greatest extent possible, needless antagonism. As far as I can tell Romney’s main position is that Obama is bad, that everything he’s done is bad too, and that Romney would do better because… he said he will that’s why! There’s a deeper lesson in there about how this campaign is going to be waged, and a rather troubling one at that.

#### Cooperation solves nuclear war

**Allison and Blackwill 10-31**, Graham, director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard’s Kennedy School and a former assistant secretary of defense in the Clinton administration, Robert, Henry A. Kissinger senior fellow for U.S. foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations and served as U.S. ambassador to India and as deputy national security adviser for strategic planning in the Bush administration [“10 Reasons Why Russia Still Matters,” <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/1011/67178_Page2.html>]

That central point is that Russia matters a great deal to a U.S. government seeking to defend and advance its national interests. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin’s decision to return next year as president makes it all the more critical for Washington to manage its relationship with Russia through coherent, realistic policies. No one denies that Russia is a dangerous, difficult, often disappointing state to do business with. We should not overlook its many human rights and legal failures. Nonetheless, Russia is a player whose choices affect our vital interests in nuclear security and energy. It is key to supplying 100,000 U.S. troops fighting in Afghanistan and preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Ten realities require U.S. policymakers to advance our nation’s interests by engaging and working with Moscow. First, Russia remains the only nation that can erase the United States from the map in 30 minutes. As every president since John F. Kennedy has recognized, Russia’s cooperation is critical to averting nuclear war. Second, Russia is our most consequential partner in preventing nuclear terrorism. Through a combination of more than $11 billion in U.S. aid, provided through the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, and impressive Russian professionalism, two decades after the collapse of the “evil empire,” not one nuclear weapon has been found loose. Third, Russia plays an essential role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and missile-delivery systems. As Washington seeks to stop Iran’s drive toward nuclear weapons, Russian choices to sell or withhold sensitive technologies are the difference between failure and the possibility of success. Fourth, Russian support in sharing intelligence and cooperating in operations remains essential to the U.S. war to destroy Al Qaeda and combat other transnational terrorist groups. Fifth, Russia provides a vital supply line to 100,000 U.S. troops fighting in Afghanistan. As U.S. relations with Pakistan have deteriorated, the Russian lifeline has grown ever more important and now accounts for half all daily deliveries. Sixth, Russia is the world’s largest oil producer and second largest gas producer. Over the past decade, Russia has added more oil and gas exports to world energy markets than any other nation. Most major energy transport routes from Eurasia start in Russia or cross its nine time zones. As citizens of a country that imports two of every three of the 20 million barrels of oil that fuel U.S. cars daily, Americans feel Russia’s impact at our gas pumps. Seventh, Moscow is an important player in today’s international system. It is no accident that Russia is one of the five veto-wielding, permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, as well as a member of the G-8 and G-20. A Moscow more closely aligned with U.S. goals would be significant in the balance of power to shape an environment in which China can emerge as a global power without overturning the existing order. Eighth, Russia is the largest country on Earth by land area, abutting China on the East, Poland in the West and the United States across the Arctic. This territory provides transit corridors for supplies to global markets whose stability is vital to the U.S. economy. Ninth, Russia’s brainpower is reflected in the fact that it has won more Nobel Prizes for science than all of Asia, places first in most math competitions and dominates the world chess masters list. The only way U.S. astronauts can now travel to and from the International Space Station is to hitch a ride on Russian rockets. The co-founder of the most advanced digital company in the world, Google, is Russian-born Sergei Brin. Tenth, Russia’s potential as a spoiler is difficult to exaggerate. Consider what a Russian president intent on frustrating U.S. international objectives could do — from stopping the supply flow to Afghanistan to selling S-300 air defense missiles to Tehran to joining China in preventing U.N. Security Council resolutions. So next time you hear a policymaker dismissing Russia with rhetoric about “who cares?” ask them to identify nations that matter more to U.S. success, or failure, in advancing our national interests.