### 2NC—Conditionality Good

We get \_\_ advocacies

Conditionality is good—

1. **Neg Flex**—multiple worlds are crucial to test the aff from every angle—it prevents us from being locked in to a strategy
2. **Innovation**—conditionality incentivizes risk taking—vital internal to argument research—prevents stale and repetitive debates
3. **Mixedscanning**—Argument introduction determines what warrants in-depth review—best middle ground between breadth and depth—key to priority-setting and high-pressure decision-making.
4. **Info processing**—more arguments teach students to process information—most portable skill

Now defense—

No skew—condo leads to more critical thinking—without it, being aff would be too easy

2NR means we have a stable advocacy

Err neg—the aff speaks first and last and infinite prep—voting on theory leads to substance crowd-out—if we don’t make debate impossible don’t vote us down

### O/V

#### They’ve read zero defense to this scenario – it’s external to hegemony because even limited Iranian retaliation causes the US to escalate and break the nuclear taboo – most likely scenario to extinction – it also means the collapse of US ability to have geopolitical leverage which turns both their heg and econ scenarios

#### AND default to timeframe if they’re conceding it escalates to extinction – Conceding Romney strikes means it outweighs long time-frame structural impacts like declining US hegemony and US economic decline

#### Romney will label China a currency manipulator – causes a trade war

Palmer 12 Doug is a Reuters trade reporter. “Romney would squeeze China on currency manipulation-adviser,” Mar 27, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/28/us-usa-romney-china-idUSBRE82Q0ZS20120328

(Reuters) - Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney is looking at ways to increase pressure on China over what he sees as currency manipulation and unfair subsidy practices, a Romney campaign adviser said on Tuesday.¶ "I think **he wants to maximize the pressure**," Grant Aldonas, a former undersecretary of commerce for international trade, said at a symposium on the future of U.S. manufacturing. Aldonas served at the Commerce Department under Republican President George W. Bush.¶ Romney, the front-runner in the Republican race to challenge President Barack Obama for the White House in November, has promised if elected he would quickly label China a currency manipulator, something the Obama administration has six times declined to do.¶ That would set the stage, under Romney's plan, for the United States to impose countervailing duties on Chinese goods to offset the advantage of what many consider to be China's undervalued currency.¶ Last year, the Democratic-controlled Senate passed legislation to do essentially the same thing.¶ However, the measure has stalled in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives, where leaders say they fear it could start a trade war, and the Obama administration has not pushed for a House vote on the currency bill.

#### That causes full-scale war

Landy 7 [Ben Landy, Director of Research and Strategy at the Atlantic Media Company, publisher of the Atlantic Monthly, National Journal, and Government Executive magazines April 3, 2007, <http://chinaredux.com/2007/04/03/protectionism-and-war/#comments>,]

The greatest threat for the 21st century is that these economic flare-ups between the US and China will not be contained, but might spill over into the realm of military aggression between these two world powers. Economic conflict breeds military conflict. The stakes of trade override the ideological power of the Taiwan issue. China’s ability to continue growing at a rapid rate takes precedence, since there can be no sovereignty for China without economic growth. The United States’ role as the world’s superpower is dependent on its ability to lead economically. As many of you will know from reading this blog, I do not believe that war between the US and China is imminent, or a foregone conclusion in the future. I certainly do not hope for war. But I have little doubt that protectionist policies on both sides greatly increase the likelihood of conflict–far more than increases in military budgets and anti-satellite tests**.**

#### Extinction

Straits Times 2K [June, 25, No one gains in war over Taiwan]

The US estimates that China possesses about 20 nuclear warheads that can destroy major American cities. Beijing also seems prepared to go for the nuclear option. A Chinese military officer disclosed recently that Beijing was considering a review of its "non first use" principle regarding nuclear weapons. Major-General Pan Zhangqiang, president of the military-funded Institute for Strategic Studies, told a gathering at the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars in Washington that although the government still abided by that principle, there were strong pressures from the military to drop it. He said military leaders considered the use of nuclear weapons mandatory if the country risked dismemberment as a result of foreign intervention. Gen Ridgeway said that should that come to pass, we would see the destruction of civilisation. There would be no victors in such a war. While the prospect of a nuclear Armaggedon over Taiwan might seem inconceivable, it cannot be ruled out entirely, for China puts sovereignty above everything else. Gen Ridgeway recalled that the biggest mistake the US made during the Korean War was to assess Chinese actions according to the American way of thinking. "

### Econ

#### Obama reelection key to solve sequestration cuts and the debt ceiling - otherwise economic collapse is inevitable

Lizza 6/18 Ryan is the New Yorker's Washington correspondent. "THE SECOND TERM," 2012, http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2012/06/18/120618fa\_fact\_lizza

Reëlected Presidents often enjoy a brief respite after their second campaign. The new Congress isn’t sworn in until January, and the interregnum is used to hire new members of the Administration and plot out a fifth-year agenda. But the aftermath of the 2012 election will be unlike any other transition in memory. Election Day is November 6th. Fifty-five days later, on New Year’s Eve, the size and the scope of the federal government are scheduled to be radically altered. Federal tax rates for every income group will shoot up to levels not seen since 2001. Payroll taxes for employees will jump by two percentage points. Unemployment benefits for some three million Americans will be cut off. The Pentagon will start the new year with a fifty-five-billion-dollar budget cut. The budget allocated to everything from the F.B.I. to the Park Service to meat inspections will be slashed by the same amount. Soon after, federal payments to doctors who treat patients using Medicare, the federal health program for the elderly, will be slashed by about a third.

The huge increase in taxes and the precipitate drop in government spending would equal an economic contraction of more than five hundred billion dollars, more than three per cent of G.D.P. The impact could send a fragile economy back into a recession. **“It’s** **two to three times bigger in negative terms than even the biggest year of the stimulus was in positive terms,”** Austan Goolsbee, Obama’s former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, said. It is this frightening confluence of fiscal time bombs, starting on December 31, 2012, that has earned the name Taxmageddon.

What’s more, sometime in mid-February the government will reach the limit of its authority to borrow money. If Congress doesn’t raise the debt ceiling, the United States will default on its loans and will no longer be able to pay all its bills—to doctors, defense contractors, Social Security pensioners, Chinese bondholders, and almost anyone else who receives funds from the federal government.

Although the Presidential campaign seems to be dominated by absurd minutiae, such as Romney’s and Obama’s respective treatment of canines and Donald Trump’s theories about the President’s ancestry, at some point this year the debate will focus on the looming fiscal crash. When that happens, the election may end up being a referendum on what to do about it. Obama will need to beat back Romney’s charges that he’s a hapless economic steward, and somehow make the case—unpopular thus far—that the economy’s woes are best treated by raising taxes and spending. Yet, in a quirk of history, a reëlected Obama could suddenly find his best historical opportunity thrust upon him.

Here the arc of Obama’s Presidency begins to resemble that of Bill Clinton’s. Both pursued bold domestic agendas in their first two years before Republicans made large midterm gains in Congress, which led to repeated clashes over fiscal issues. The outcomes of Clinton’s battles, including the government shutdown of 1995, weren’t sorted out until after the 1996 Presidential election. An Obama Administration official told me, “The first year of Clinton’s second term was the resolution of the climactic moments of his third year. I suspect a similar opportunity will open up here.”

**Clinton’s reëlection victory made possible a breakthrough on the budgetary issues that had divided him and Republicans for two years. “The ideal conditions for both sides to come together and get something done are when you have a President who is at the peak of his power but is not going to benefit politically from it,”** the official said. Solving Taxmageddon would be a major policy achievement, and Obama could argue that he had fulfilled his promise from the 2008 campaign: that he would bring the two major parties together to forge bipartisan agreements.

Last year, though, offered a painful reminder of how simplistic that campaign theme was. By the end of 2011, five groups of bipartisan leaders had tried to negotiate a settlement on all the major tax, entitlement, spending, and deficit issues. Each one failed. First there was the Simpson-Bowles commission, created by the White House. Its report appeared in December, 2010, with a tough series of proposals of exactly the kind that Obama had asked for. But, as it turned out, the President was not about to trim Social Security benefits and end popular tax deductions without Republicans in Congress agreeing to do the same.

In May, 2011, shortly after a government shutdown was averted, Vice-President Joseph Biden and the House Majority Leader, Eric Cantor, two politicians opposed in ideology and temperament, held talks exploring whether a deficit deal was possible. This time, they had a major incentive to reach an agreement: the debt ceiling had to be raised by the end of the summer. The Cantor-Biden talks ended two months later, and Obama and Speaker John Boehner worked until July to reach a “grand bargain” of modest tax hikes, entitlement reforms, and spending cuts. A fourth group, consisting of three Republicans and three Democrats in the Senate, dubbed the Gang of Six, ended up torpedoing the Obama-Boehner negotiations when it came to light that they were negotiating a plan to raise far more revenue than the deal that Obama was ready to strike with Boehner.

Instead of a grand bargain, in late July the White House and Republicans agreed to raise the debt ceiling enough for about eighteen more months of government borrowing, and they created yet another bipartisan group to address the long-term fiscal issues. This group was called the Super Committee, and Obama and Congress agreed: if the committee could not find a solution, government spending in 2013 would automatically be reduced by a hundred and ten billion dollars, a cut known in Washington budgetese as “the sequester.” The Super Committee failed.

If Obama wins, his immediate task will be to settle more than a decade’s worth of deferred arguments about how big the government should be and who should pay for it. By this spring, the gamesmanship had begun. “It’s a discouraging day to talk to me,” a top White House official fumed. That afternoon, May 15th, Boehner had delivered a speech in which he insisted that Republicans would not raise the debt ceiling next year unless a dollar in government spending was cut for every dollar of new borrowing. “I just can’t believe somebody, even him, would say something that irresponsible again,” the official said.

Notwithstanding Boehner’s antics, there is a possibility that a second Obama term could begin with major deficit reduction and serious reform of taxes and entitlements. A similar opportunity arose in the second terms of Reagan (who in 1986 signed into law a historic tax-reform bill) and Clinton (who in 1997 reached a significant budget deal with Republicans). Although both victories occurred when the two parties were less polarized, many White House officials regard the successes as encouraging precedents. Several senior Clinton officials involved in the 1997 deal now work for Obama, including Jacob Lew, Obama’s chief of staff, and Gene Sperling, the head of the National Economic Council.

“You have a dynamic that is similar to the nineteen-nineties,” one White House official said. “There are a number of areas where a Republican Congress and a Democratic Administration sat down, couldn’t get an agreement, and eventually said, ‘No, we’re going to have to take this to the country. We’ll see how the country resolves that.’ ” He added, “Who knows what the new landscape will be? It really depends on who controls Congress.”

Almost every permutation of government control is possible after November. There are plausible scenarios in which either party could be in charge of the House, the Senate, or the White House. If the election were held today, the Democrats likely would gain some seats in the House and lose some seats in the Senate, and Obama would be narrowly reëlected. Under these conditions, the White House is cautiously optimistic that a compromise could be reached.

“If both chambers are more evenly divided, it could be a recipe for actually getting some things done,” David Plouffe, Obama’s senior adviser, said. “Because of the closeness, neither party’s going to be able to do anything on its own, so either zero gets done for two years or there is kind of a center.” He argued that, despite the failures of the five bipartisan groups that had tried to negotiate a budget deal last year, there was movement on the toughest issues. For Democrats, the most painful decision is how far to go in making changes to entitlements like Medicare and Social Security. For Republicans, the biggest hurdle is agreeing to higher government revenues. “By the end, more Republicans said they’re open to revenue than at the beginning,” Plouffe said. “And at the beginning Democrats were very cool to any entitlement reform. By the end, they were willing to do something. That’s what we learned.”

Clearly that’s an optimistic spin, given Boehner’s recent remarks. Yet Plouffe and other Obama officials who were involved in the talks insist that the G.O.P. caucus in the House is not as monolithically opposed to a deal as one might think. Last year’s talks taught the White House that there are divisions between the hard-right Tea Party faction that is unilaterally opposed to any tax hikes and more traditional Republicans who are so concerned about the long-term deficit that under some circumstances they would vote for higher taxes. Plouffe said that the key will be whether Boehner is prepared to alienate the Tea Party bloc.

“All the paperwork’s done!” he said. “We know what the options are. It’s all been done! It’s not like they’re starting from scratch.”

Over in the Senate, there is a hint that the ice could thaw if Obama wins. Several senators from both parties have begun to meet behind closed doors to address the looming fiscal crisis, with the aim of delivering a tax-and-budget package by September. “Everyone is kind of holding their cards, because we realize that it’s not game time yet,” the Tennessee Republican Bob Corker told Politico last week. In late May, Mitch McConnell, an architect of the G.O.P. strategy of non-coöperation since 2009, also told Politico, “I think we have plenty of members in the Senate on both sides of the aisle who fully understand that we weren’t sent here just to make a point—that we were sent here to make a difference.”

### Heg

#### Romney victory destroys hegemony – multiple reasons

Kupchan and Jentleson 8/30 Bruce W. Jentleson is professor of public policy and political science at Duke University. Charles A. Kupchan is professor of international affairs at Georgetown University and senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. “A Dangerous Mind,” Foreign Policy, 2012, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/08/30/a\_dangerous\_mind\_mitt\_romney

The speeches at this week's Republican National Convention, on top of those that Mitt Romney has been giving during the campaign, make clear that Americans face as stark a choice on foreign policy as on domestic policy. Whereas President Barack Obama has claimed the middle ground and crafted a strategy based on principled pragmatism, Romney is following in the footsteps of George W. Bush, relying more on bluster than strategy and veering to ideological extremes.

Contrary to the rebuttal to this article written by our colleague Peter Feaver, there is much good to be said about Obama's foreign policy. In this piece, timed to coincide with the Republican Convention, our focus is on what's wrong with Romney's approach. We'll respond to Feaver's critique of Obama next week as attention turns to the Democratic Convention.

It's not just Romney's positions on particular issues, however vague they may be, that are cause for concern. It's his core world view. Guided by a Republican Party virtually devoid of moderate centrists, Romney has embraced a global assessment distorted by ideological excess, pledged to wield power in a way that will leave the nation weakened and isolated, and demonstrated a failure to appreciate the key linkages between strength at home and influence abroad.

Romney's view of the changing global landscape rests not on a sober assessment of the world that is emerging, but on the same neoconservative myths that led George W. Bush astray. Like Bush, Romney seems to fixate on the wrong threats -- and dangerously inflate them. He has, for example, identified Russia as America's chief geopolitical foe. But with the Cold War long over, terrorists still planning attacks against Americans, Iran seeking nuclear weapons, and China flexing its muscles, it is a flight of fancy to see Moscow as the nation's top threat.

On Afghanistan, Romney regularly bashes Obama for his scheduled withdrawal of U.S. troops -- but without providing a clear rationale for extending the U.S. mission. Absent more capable partners in Afghanistan and cooperation from Pakistan, U.S. forces have limited ability to bring stability. To pretend otherwise is to fritter away American lives and resources. American forces have accomplished their main objective -- dismantling al Qaeda and eliminating Osama bin Laden; it is now up to local parties to find their way to peace. Good statecraft aims at the achievable, not impossible maximums.

Romney's worldview also reveals a basic misunderstanding of the role of power in international affairs. The Republican Convention has been one long paean to American Exceptionalism. In speech after speech, Romney and his entourage invoke "leadership" and "resolve" as if all the United States has to do is take a stand and flex its muscles -- others will get in line, get out of the way, or pay the price.

The United States unquestionably occupies a unique role in history of which it should be plenty proud, and American security and leadership ultimately rest on the nation's economic strength and military superiority. It's also true that most threats can best be met and problems best be solved if the U.S. plays a leadership role.

Leadership, however, is much less about chest-thumping and self-congratulation than building partnerships and taking effective action with like-minded nations. Brute force and national self-confidence certainly have their place, but they can do more to invite resistance than acquiescence unless wielded with care. How the United States deploys its power and influence is key to its success as the world's dominant country. Judicious diplomacy, the fashioning of coalitions, engagement with international institutions -- these are the critical elements of good statecraft.

These guidelines will preserve strong relations with traditional allies like Europe, Japan, and Israel. They also need to be applied when dealing with emerging powers like India, Turkey, and Brazil that are seeking partnerships with Washington based on mutuality and respect, not hierarchy and deference. And the Middle East is in the midst of political transformation, defying the neoconservative penchant for putting nations into neat democratic/nondemocratic, secular/Islamist, for us/against us camps. American diplomacy must adjust nimbly to a world in flux.

It is worrying that Romney pledges to reinstate a foreign policy of reflexive toughness just four years after Bush's § Marked 17:55 § assertive unilateralism left the United States mired in Iraq and estranged from much of the world. In Tampa this week, Senator John McCain put his bellicosity on full display and Secretary Condoleezza Rice glossed over her role in the errant war in Iraq. The Republicans would do better to heed the wisdom of their own Robert Gates, the former defense secretary, who has warned that a president who wants to take the nation into another major war that is not absolutely necessary should "have his head examined."

To be sure, Americans don't want a president who is too gun shy. Against bin Laden, in drone attacks on terrorists, in Libya, and in developing a NATO-backed missile defense system, President Obama has shown that he is not. Polls show that only 38 percent of Americans believe Romney would be a good commander-in-chief, indicative of anxiety that he and his team might be too trigger happy.

As to Romney's pledge to return the United States to the vocation of democracy promotion, Obama has hardly dropped the ball on that front -- as made clear by the intervention in Libya, diplomacy with Egypt, and other efforts to shepherd unrest in the Middle East in the right direction. And in contrast to neoconservative preferences for spreading democracy through preaching, hammering, or occupying, Obama has shown the payoffs of persistent diplomacy that has finally brought political change to Burma, and of the careful, quiet negotiations that freed the Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng.

Finally, Romney seems oblivious to the intimate connection between America's strength at home and its mission abroad. His pledge to increase defense spending belies his commitment to restore the nation's fiscal solvency. Indiscriminant defense cuts must be avoided, but it is not credible to exempt the military budget from the hard fiscal choices before the nation.

And oddly, especially for someone who touts himself as a savvy businessman, Romney refuses to realistically address how to right the U.S. economy. The outsourcing of jobs, the stagnating income of America's middle class, growing inequality -- correcting these ills requires more than cutting taxes and federal spending while maximizing corporate profits. The private sector will of course be the engine of economic recovery. But orchestrating that recovery will require a balanced mix of revenue increases and spending cuts, coupled with strategic investment in infrastructure, education, and job creation. In a globalized world economy, enhancing competitiveness, reclaiming a prosperity broadly shared among all Americans, and restoring the economic foundations of U.S. power will require more than business as usual.

Pulling off an economic rebound that reduces inequality and redresses the economic plight of the middle class is essential to restoring not just economic strength, but also the steady conduct of U.S. diplomacy. The United States is today deeply polarized, bereft of the bipartisan consensus that long anchored its statecraft. That consensus, which emerged after World War II, rested in part on the rising economy's dampening effect on partisan cleavages. Today, economic pain and growing inequality are rekindling ideological confrontation. Romney's abandonment of centrism in favor of the far right, coupled with his disregard for the needs of average Americans, promises only to exacerbate the political divisions that compromise American power and purpose.

Romney is poised to take the United States down a dangerous path on foreign policy. But at least he is doing Americans a service by clarifying their choices in November.

#### Just the perception from Obama losing destroys foreign policy leadership

Walt 11 Stephen M., Prof @ Harvard, "Foreign Policy: What Happens If Obama Is Toast?" 9/7 www.npr.org/2011/09/07/140244194/foreign-policy-what-happens-if-obama-is-toast

The prospect of a one-term Obama presidency is bound to have important effects on foreign policy **too**. I'll bet **other countries** are **already starting to think about the possibility**, and starting to **factor that into their calculations**. The obvious implication is that any governments who have serious differences with the Obama administration are going to dig in their heels even more and § Marked 17:55 § hope for better after 2012. It's possible that some governments who fear a more hard-line U.S. response under the GOP might be tempted to cut deals while they can, **but I don't think that's very likely** because they would also have **to wonder if a lame-duck administration could** deliver on any deal it made**.** The absurd length of the U.S. presidential campaign season will compound all these problems, by burning up even more of the president's time and attention over the next year or so.

### Obama Win – Electoral College

#### Obama will win---electoral college proves but the next 55 days are critical

Cillizza and Blake 9/12 Chris and Aaron, Washington Post, "President Obama's electoral college edge", 2012, www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/wp/2012/09/12/president-obamas-electoral-college-edge/

President Obama maintains an edge in the race for 270 electoral college votes, according to a state-by-state Fix analysis, even as national polling suggests the race remains tight between the incumbent and former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney.¶ Since we last analyzed the national map in July, and despite the fact that Romney has picked his vice president and both parties have held their nominating conventions, there’s been no polling data or spending decisions compelling enough to move any state from its current rating of toss-up, lean Obama or lean Romney.¶ That means that Obama can count on 196 solid electoral votes and another 41 — in New Mexico, Pennsylvania and Michigan — that lean his way for a total of 237. Romney has 170 solid electoral votes and 36 — Arizona, Missouri and North Carolina — leaning his way for a total of 206.¶ Among the states, then, that seem unlikely to move either way over the next 55 days, Obama starts with a 31-electoral-vote edge. But it’s in the eight states we rate as toss-ups where the incumbent’s current advantage makes itself clearer.¶ Relying solely on the Real Clear Politics poll of polls in each state — the most reliable apples-to-apples comparison we know of — there are seven swing states (Nevada, Colorado, Iowa, Wisconsin, Ohio, Florida and New Hampshire) where Obama currently leads and one (Virginia) where Romney holds the lead.¶ Going by those polls, Obama would take 82 of a possible 95 swing-state votes and win reelection with 319 electoral votes.¶ Remove states where either candidate leads by a single point or less — that’s Iowa (Obama + 0.2) and Virginia (Romney + 0.8) — and Obama takes 76 of the swing-state electoral votes, giving him 313 — and a second term.¶ Now, to be clear, where polling in these swing states stands today isn’t a direct indicator of where the race will end up. Obama is the incumbent and, history shows, isn’t likely to win large swaths of voters who haven’t made up their minds yet. (If they’re not for him now, why would they be in six weeks time?)¶ And, in many of the genuine toss-up states, the Obama campaign thus far has heavily outspent Romney even when spending by conservative outside groups is added into the mix. Once GOP spending begins to assert itself, there’s a reasonable case to be made that many of these close states — Obama is ahead by no more than 3.4 points in any of the Fix’s eight toss up-states, according to RCP — could tilt Romney’s way.¶ As of today, however, it’s clear that Obama has more paths to 270 electoral votes than Romney. If Obama starts at 237 electoral votes — and that seems to be the case, as there is scant evidence that Michigan, Pennsylvania and New Mexico are regarded as seriously in play — then he could lose all but Florida and New Hampshire among the Fix’s eight swing states and still get to 270.¶ Win Ohio, Wisconsin (where no Republican has won since 1984) and either Nevada or Iowa, and Obama gets to 271 electoral votes. Obama could lose Virginia, Ohio and Florida and still be re-elected if he carried the other five Fix toss-up states.¶ We could go through electoral college scenarios all day. (Seriously.) But they almost all add up to the same thing: Obama remains in the driver’s seat when it comes to winning the 270 electoral votes he needs to claim a second term.¶ The next 55 days are (obviously) critical, as undecided voters begin paying attention (finally), but Obama has built himself a not-insignificant electoral college cushion to ward off any momentum won by Romney.

### Obama Win – Swing States

#### Obama’s leading in all key swing states

Konish 9/12 Lorie, On Wall Street, 2012, "Obama Will Win Election That Portends "Status Quo," UBS Predicts", www.onwallstreet.com/news/ubs-says-obama-will-win-election-2680840-1.html

Obama currently has an advantage in the 10 states that will likely decide the election, where polls show he is mostly even or leading for most of them, according to Ryan. Those states include: Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin.

### Obama Win – Polls

#### Obama leading---polls post-convention

Silver 9/8 Nate, NYT Political Blogger and Statistical Genius, 2012, "Sept. 8: Conventions May Put Obama in Front-Runner’s Position", fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/09/08/sept-8-conventions-may-put-obama-in-front-runners-position/

On Friday, we began to see reasonably clear signs that President Obama would receive some kind of bounce in the polls from the Democratic convention.¶ Mr. Obama had another strong day in the polls on Saturday, making further gains in each of four national tracking polls. The question now is not whether Mr. Obama will get a bounce in the polls, but how substantial it will be.¶ Some of the data, in fact, suggests that the conventions may have changed the composition of the race, making Mr. Obama a reasonably clear favorite as we enter the stretch run of the campaign.¶ On Saturday, Mr. Obama extended his advantage to three points from two points in the Gallup national tracking poll, and to four points from two in an online survey conducted by Ipsos. He pulled ahead of Mitt Romney by two points in the Rasmussen Reports tracking poll, reversing a one-point deficit in the edition of the poll published on Friday.¶ A fourth tracking poll, conducted online by the RAND Corporation’s American Life Panel, had Mr. Obama three percentage points ahead of Mr. Romney in the survey it published early Saturday morning; the candidates had been virtually tied in the poll on Friday. (The RAND survey has an interesting methodology — we’ll explore it more in a separate post.)¶ The gains that Mr. Obama has made in these tracking polls over the past 48 hours already appear to match or exceed the ones that Mr. Romney made after his convention. The odds, however, are that Mr. Obama has some further room to grow.¶ The reason is that the tracking polls are not turned around instantaneously. The Gallup poll, for instance, now consists of interviews conducted between Saturday, Sept. 1, and Friday, Sept. 7. That means that many of the interviews in the poll still predate the effective start of the Democratic convention on Tuesday night.¶ That Mr. Obama has made these gains in polls that only partially reflect the Democratic convention suggests that his bounce could be more substantial once they fully do so. Mathematically, Mr. Obama has to have been running well ahead of Mr. Romney in the most recent interviews in these surveys to have made up for middling data earlier in the week.

### Link

#### Cross-x concedes that current regulations alone aren’t enough – its about any future regulation that may come—they don’t read a single card that says the additional regulations which would drive away voters come before the election – Obama will obviously not do that

#### Fracking regulations are key to capture the environmental vote which is key, especially in Pennsylvania and Ohio

- note: this card is written before the fracking regs were announced in April. Obama has done what the Penn/Ohio voters were asking for but the plan rolls it back

Lotoro 12 Alexander is a writer for We Are Power Shift. “To Win Ohio and Pennsylvania, Obama Must Oppose Fracking,” Jan 23, http://www.wearepowershift.org/blogs/win-ohio-and-pennsylvania-obama-must-oppose-fracking

The vast grassroots organizing efforts to stop fracking, despite being largely unfunded by traditional Big Green environmental groups that have promoted natural gas as a bridge fuel to a clean energy future for years, have **carried their weight in the pitched battle against drilling and are going to** play a major part **in 2012 kingmaking** **in swing states like Ohio and Pennsylvania.**¶ The fracking process requires up to 15 acre well sites, one to nine million gallons of water per well per frack, pipeline right of ways, smoggy compressor stations, processing facilities, thousands of truck trips, and fracking fluid cocktails made of up to 596 different chemicals. Thousands of violations related to environmental health and safety have been documented by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the head of which, Secretary Michael Krancer, is admiittedly pro-drilling. An analysis from 2010 by the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association puts these violations in perspective:¶ DEP records show a total of 1614 violations of state Oil and Gas Laws due to gas drilling or other earth disturbance activities related to natural gas extraction from the Marcellus Shale in this 2.5-year period. The Association identified 1056 violations as having or likely to have an impact on the environment. ¶ There is no such thing as "safe" fracking. See the movie Gasland to learn more.¶ Stephen Cleghorn, an organic farmer from Jefferson County, PA, has been speaking out for a moratorium on drilling in Pennsylvania, most notably after his wife Lucinda Hart-Gonzalez' lost her battle with cancer in November with a powerful speech at the DRBC protest the day of the canceled vote. From his recent TruthOut piece:¶ Her joy was in sustaining our farm against the threat of fracking. After Lucinda's ashes become a part of this piece of the good earth, it becomes sacred ground to me, and the company that owns the so-called "rights" to the gas in the shale below our farm is advised to keep their hell away from this place.¶ This morning, I asked Stephen for a comment on Obama's campaign this year. He responded, "Lucinda and I hosted campaign workers in our farm home for three months. I am very disappointed that he cannot see the need to stop fracking, but the Republicans will be even worse. I will vote for Obama, to be sure, but I am not as likely to have campaign workers here this year."¶ **The grassroots organizing the Obama campaign relied on for the 2008 campaign is waning as rural Pennsylvanians** like my mom and Mr. Cleghorn **lose enthusiasm.**¶ **This situation poses a problem for the Obama for America campaign,** especially regarding the latest news reported by the usually-Obama-friendly liberal blog, Daily Kos:¶ Situation Normal, All Fracked Up: Obama embraces fracking¶ ¶ Last week, the Obama administration gave what may be its first formal statement favoring hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, of natural gas in a report, Investing in America (pdf).¶ [From the Obama administration:]¶ "Since the mid‐2000s, however, the discovery of new natural gas reserves, such as the Marcellus Shale, and the development of hydraulic fracturing techniques to extract natural gas from these reserves has led to rapidly growing domestic production and relatively low domestic prices for households and downstream industrial users. Appropriate care must to be taken to ensure that America's natural resources are extracted in a safe and environmentally responsible manner with the safeguards in place to protect public health and safety. Provided these precautions are taken, the potential benefits to the U.S. economy are substantial.¶ Of the major fossil fuels, natural gas is the cleanest and least carbon‐intensive for electric power generation. By keeping domestic energy costs relatively low, this resource also supports energy intensive manufacturing in the United States. In fact, companies like Dow Chemical and Westlake Chemical have announced intentions to make major investments in new facilities over the next several years. In addition, firms that provide equipment for shale gas production have announced major investments in the U.S., including Vallourec’s $650 million plant for steel pipes in Ohio. ¶ An abundant local supply will translate into relatively low costs for the industries that use natural gas as an input. Expansion in these industries, including industrial chemicals and fertilizers, will boost investment and exports in the coming years, generating new jobs. In the longer run, the scale of America's natural gas endowment appears to be sufficiently large that exports of natural gas to other major markets could be economically viable."¶ President Obama has a very important question to answer about fracking before Pennsylvanians like my mom, and Ohioans turn away from working his campaign in 2012. Namely, the old coal miners' union slogan, "Which side are you on?"¶ The future isn't very bright for us. President Obama has had an opportunity to halt the practice of hydraulic fracturing every single day of his presidency. Instead he has pursued the following pro-fracking policies that must be ceased immediately:¶ - President Obama initiated the Global Shale Gas Initiative under his State Department “in order to help countries seeking to utilize their unconventional natural gas resources to identify and develop them safely and economically.” Through this program, Obama has met with leaders of at least India, Poland, and China to speak in favor of fracking, making his administration the largest lobbying firm for shale gas drilling in the world.¶ - President Obama has ordered his Army Corps of Engineers representative on the Susquehanna River Basin Commission to repeatedly authorize water withdrawals from the basin by natural gas drillers, enabling the expansion of drilling in rural Pennsylvania that has caused thousands of environmental violations.¶ - President Obama has remained silent on the Delaware River Basin Commission’s ongoing effort to authorize fracking in the Delaware River Basin, drinking water for 15.6 million people, including my high school.¶ - President Obama’s Department of Interior office in State College, PA, under authorization of the Endangered Species Act, regularly permits gas drilling operations and infrastructure without sending government surveyors to identify endangered species habitat at the sites, instead relying on the paid contractors of the gas industry and the outdated, incomplete, Pennsylvania National Heritage Program.¶ - President Obama’s Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has authorized the construction of numerous natural gas pipelines, upgrades, and compressor stations that enable further development of gas drilling by moving the produced gas to market.¶ **In Ohio, “Seventy-two percent of voters polled said there should be a halt in hydraulic fracturing, or simply fracking, in Ohio** until more was known about the impact of the process, Quinnipiac found,” according to a recent Reuters report.¶ Ohio has been watching fracking expand at an exponential pace, with 156 permits issued for drilling in the Utica shale that underlies portions of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, Tennessee, West Virginia and Virginia. Ohio issued 80 of those permits during the last three months of the year, including 32 in November.¶ Ohio has also been the recipient of fracking waste sludge, hosting controversial Class III injection wells where drillers come from out of state to dump. The big problem? They are suspected of causing earthquakes. Activists young and old have been rallying against and even blocking access to the injection wells. ¶ Here in Dingmans Ferry, PA, in Pike County where gas leases have been signed within a few hundred feet of the Delaware River and in Promised Land State Park, with thousands more leases upriver in Wayne County, natural gas drilling is on our doorstep.¶ The river is the drinking water supply for 15.6 million people from New York to Delaware.¶ Industrial-scale drilling hasn't started here yet because the Delaware River Basin Commission has yet to pass a set of regulations that would permit the use of fracking. A handful of exploratory Marcellus wells in the river basin have already yielded one well casing failure in Wayne County at the Davidson well in Scott Township. Well casings are meant to protect aquifers that provide well water to rural homes from contamination.¶ The industry states that they are seeking to drill 10,000 to 20,000 Marcellus wells in the Delaware River Basin.¶ The DRBC is a federal commission made up of President Obama governors of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware and requires a majority vote to allow drilling.¶ In November, thousands of brave people planned to protest the final vote on the regulations in Trenton, NJ, causing a last minute dissent of Governor Markell of Delaware. Governor Markell's decision to vote "no" on the regulations was based on his concern that New York has not issued their state's regulations for the process. President Obama remains silent.¶ In a worse case scenario if New York issues their regulations this spring, the DRBC could vote to approve drilling on the Delaware River as shale gas development scales up quicking in New York as well. That is, of course, if President Obama allows that to happen.¶ Long story short, the Obama campaign can expect further protests, like the one we held in Scranton when he dropped in for a visit in December.¶ The anti-drilling protesters were the most numerous, as well as the most visible and the most vocal.¶ Dingmans Ferry resident Alex Lotorto, an organizer with the Energy Justice Network, said he expects the president to protect rural Pennsylvanians from the harms caused by drilling and hydraulic fracturing, or fracking - a point that will be driven home at every campaign stop he makes in the state next year.¶ "He needs to keep his promises about clean air and clean water," Mr. Lotorto said.¶ I expect that anti-fracking activists will visit his campaign offices, campaign stops, and campaign websites to encourage his supporters join in the call, "No Fracking Way!"¶ It is President Obama’s decision alone whether or not he will lose the key states of Pennsylvania and Ohio by remaining supportive of the gas industry that is pillaging us here. Please inform him of this, starting with his Facebook page. It would do him good to pay attention, act on fracking, and fix what's already broken.

#### **The plan angers coal state voters – they’re key to the election**

Handley 8/21 Meg is a writer for U.S. News and World Report. “3 Energy Issues No One's Talking About,” 2012, http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/08/21/3-energy-issues-no-ones-talking-about

The coal industry. ¶ Though it might seem like a business from a bygone era, coal mining and its use to produce energy are still key issues for many states, **including some that could go either way come the November election**.¶ That isn't lost upon Mitt Romney, who visited eastern Ohio in a campaign stop last week. Surrounded by some 75 miners, the Republican challenger pledged his support for the industry and dinged the Obama administration's tight regulation of coal plants.¶ But regulation of coal plants isn't the only thing that's squeezing the industry. Plentiful natural gas reserves have made the United States the largest natural gas producer in the world, according to the Institute for Energy Research, and that's made deposits of the resource in Texas, Alaska, and Wyoming increasingly attractive.¶ "Neither candidate's position [on the future of the coal industry] has been terribly well defined," says Mike Lynch, president and director of global petroleum service at Strategic Energy & Economic Research. "The big challenge right now is that **coal is being clobbered by cheap natural gas not so much by regulation**, and neither [Romney] nor Obama has addressed that."¶ Although coal is relatively cheap, it hasn't been able to compete with the flood of cheap natural gas recently. Coal is also harder to transport, dirtier, and the modern plants needed to produce electricity from coal are costly. A recent report also shows that carbon-dioxide emissions from the energy sector dropped to their lowest levels in 20 years, a feat many experts credit to the increased use of natural gas.¶ As a result, natural gas has been creeping up on coal's market share of energy production, which is bad news for jobs supported by the coal industry in some swing states.¶ "Natural gas prices have shocked everyone," Lynch continues. "I don't think either candidate knows what they're going to do about coal mining."

#### The plan fractures the Democratic base and environmentalists – causes Obama loss

Geraghty 12 Jim is a reporter for the National Review. “Fracking: The Wedge Issue of 2012?” March 19, http://www.nationalreview.com/campaign-spot/293864/fracking-wedge-issue-2012

Unsurprisingly, some Americans aren’t familiar with fracking, but among those who are, support is fairly widespread. It’s an issue that pits Republicans, independents, and conservative and moderate Democrats on one side, against liberal Democrats on the other.¶ Among those who have heard about fracking, there is more support than opposition. About half (52%) favor fracking, while 35% are opposed to the process. As with opinions about many other energy policies **there is a wide partisan gap in views of fracking**: 73% of Republicans who have heard of fracking favor it, compared with 54% of independents and just 33% of Democrats . . .¶ Republicans whou have heard at least a little about fracking are far more likely than Democrats to favor the process (73% vs. 33%), and there is little difference in opinion among Republicans. But among Democrats who are aware of fracking, there is a wide ideological gap. Conservative and moderate Democrats are split about evenly — 39% favor fracking while 43% are opposed. By contrast, liberal Democrats oppose fracking by a 64% to 26% margin.¶ Fully 89% of Republicans favor allowing more offshore oil and gas drilling while only half of Democrats agree. A majority of independents (64%) support increased drilling off the U.S. coast.¶ **It’s a perfect** wedge issue **to separate Democratic officeholders from their** liberal base.¶ Obama offered some praise for fracking, even though he didn’t use that particular term, in his State of the Union address (even though he exaggerated the government’s role in developing the technology).¶ The EPA’s final report on the safety of fracking will be completed in 2014. **Environmentalists are hoping Obama will take a tougher line**, and the oil and gas industries argue that existing state regulations on hydraulic fracturing techniques are sufficient, as more than one million wells have already been developed with this method. Obama’s Interior Secretary has indicated a desire to establish a system of federal regulations for fracking as well. Industry leaders say they have “repeatedly requested” that the Department of the Interior utilize the existing state-operated reporting system “instead of attempting to create a different, costly and unnecessary new reporting process.”

#### Alienating the green base depresses youth turnout – key to reelection

Geman 11 Ben is an environment and energy writer for The Hill. “Obama faces big green tests in 2012,” 8/20, http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/177607-obama-faces-big-green-tests-heading-into-2012

“He still has the opportunity to regain some footing with young people,” said Hight, the Obama campaign’s Florida youth vote director in 2008. “By all means, everybody is hungry for leadership.”¶ According to the Pew Research Center, Obama scored a whopping 66 percent of the vote among voters under 30 in 2008. Next year, he needs young voters to turn out in large numbers again in what is expected to be a tighter election. ¶ Polls show other issues – notably the economy – are a bigger priority than the environment, but **the president still** can’t afford **widespread political disenchantment in the green movement that could suppress turnout.** ¶ “The risk he has in turnout is environmental issues tend to play the strongest among voters under 30,” said political analyst Ron Faucheux, who is president of the Clarus Research Group and teaches at George Washington University.