

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

January 20, 2012

This week, President Obama paid tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by participating in a National Day of Service and stressing the importance of all Americans giving back and serving their communities to honor Dr. King's legacy. The President also convened a meeting of his Council on Jobs and Competitiveness, which focused on new ideas for strengthening the economy such as reforming the corporate tax system, expanding and expediting domestic fossil fuel production, and new regulatory reforms for business. And as part of his ongoing "We Can't Wait" push to create jobs and grow the economy, President Obama also announced a new strategy aimed at boosting tourism and travel, an important sector of the U.S. economy.

Meanwhile, while the Republican candidates for president took their fight to South Carolina this week in advance of Saturday's primary, the Democratic National Committee and state and local Democrats held a number of press conferences and media availabilities throughout the week to ensure that voters know the truth about Mitt Romney's real record – including his ongoing refusal to release his tax returns or run a transparent campaign. The DNC also built upon these efforts by releasing statements, a memo in advance of Thursday's Republican debate, and several web videos throughout the week.

President Obama Participates in National Day of Service to Honor Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

On Monday, President Obama and the First Lady volunteered at a local elementary school as part of a national day of service honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Kicking off the event, the President spoke to volunteers from Big Brothers, Big Sisters and Greater DC Cares and emphasized the importance of finding opportunities to serve others and making a difference in their communities. During his remarks, he said:

"There's nobody who can't serve. Nobody who can't help somebody else. And whether you're seven or six or whether you're 76, then you can find opportunities to make an enormous difference in your community. And at a time when the country has been going through some difficult economic times, for us to be able to come together as a community, people from all different walks of life, and make sure that we're giving back, that's ultimately what makes us the strongest, most extraordinary country on Earth, is because we pull together when times are good, but also when times are hard. And you guys all represent that.



"So on behalf of our family, we want to say thank you. I'm sure Dr. King, were he here, he'd want to say thank you."

You can watch video of the President's remarks [here](#).

The President Meets with Council on Jobs and Competitiveness

The President on Tuesday convened a meeting of the Council on Jobs and Competitiveness, a group of 27 leaders from business, labor and academia who over the past year have put forward a range of recommendations that foster growth, competitiveness, innovation and job creation. During the meeting, the council offered suggestions for



reform of the corporate tax system, expanding and expediting domestic fossil fuel production, and new regulatory reforms for business. The council also voted to approve a new report detailing recommendations to the President on strengthening our economy. President Obama opened and closed the meeting with remarks, in which he said:

"Education, innovation, streamlining regulations, energy, manufacturing -- all these are critical issues, and they're all interwoven and they impact each other.

"I recognize a lot of these issues are difficult. They've proven challenging for decades. The good news is on each of these fronts we've made progress this year. I feel confident in being able to say that every one of the agencies in this government has been focused on how do they improve, get smarter, get better, get faster, become more focused on delivering good value to the end user. And I believe that we've made genuine progress on all these fronts. We would not have made this progress without this Jobs Council. And I think it will pay off in terms of solidifying this recovery and allowing us to move forward in a way where it actually translates into jobs, which has obviously been our principal and primary focus: making sure that we're creating a fair shot for every American who wants to work hard and get out there and succeed in this economy."

Watch video of the President's remarks and the meeting [here](#).

As Part of "We Can't Wait" Push, President Obama Unveils Strategy to Boost U.S. Tourism and Travel

President Obama visited Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando on Thursday, where he laid out new initiatives that will offer significant aid in boosting tourism and travel, a key sector of America's economy. The President also directed the Administration to develop a new national tourism strategy focused on creating jobs. These efforts are the latest in a series of "We Can't Wait" executive actions that the President has taken to create jobs and grow the economy.

During his remarks announcing this new strategy, President Obama underscored the fact that a greater rate of travel and tourism in America means more jobs for Americans who are looking for work. He said:

"Every year, tens of millions of tourists all over the world come to visit America. Makes sense. You got the greatest country on Earth -- people want to come. As folks in Orlando know, that's good for our economy. It means people are renting cars and they're staying in hotels and they're eating at restaurants and they're checking out the sights. It means people are doing business here in the United States. In 2010, nearly 60 million international visitors helped the tourism industry generate over \$134 billion. Tourism is the number-one service that we export. Number one. And that means jobs.

"More money spent by more tourists means more businesses can hire more workers. This is a pretty simple formula. And that's why we're all here today -- to tell the world that America is open for business. We want to welcome you, and to take concrete steps to boost America's tourism industry so that we can keep growing our economy and creating more jobs here in Florida and all across the country.

"Now, here's the good news: We've got the best product to sell. I mean, look at where we are. We've got the most entertaining destinations in the world. This is the land of extraordinary natural wonders -- from the Rocky Mountains to the Grand Canyon; from Yellowstone to Yosemite."



You can go [here](#) to watch video of President Obama's remarks.

Holding Republicans Accountable

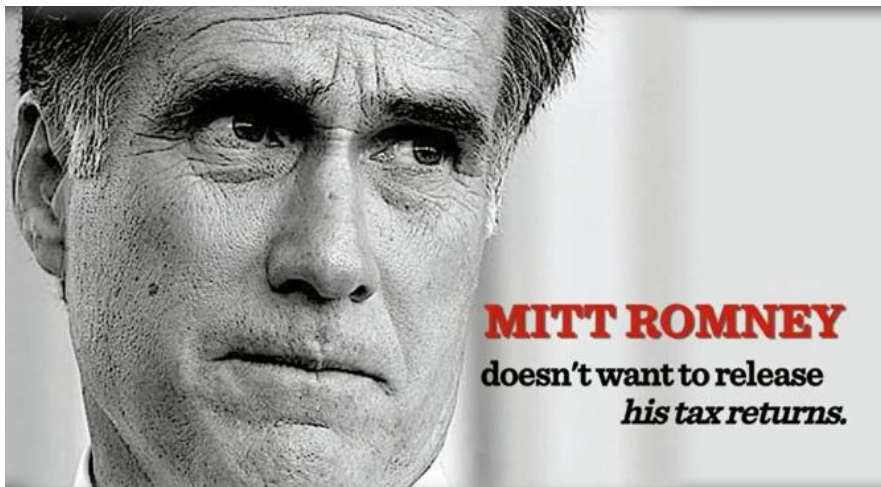
With the Republican presidential candidates in South Carolina to duke it out in advance of the state's primary on Saturday, the Democratic National Committee as well as state and local Democrats held a number of press conferences and media availabilities throughout the week to ensure that voters know the truth about Mitt Romney's real record. The DNC expanded on these efforts with statements, a memo in advance of Thursday's GOP debate and several different web videos.

On Monday, Democratic Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley and South Carolina State Rep. Terry Alexander held a press conference setting the record straight on Mitt Romney's job creation record -- emphasizing that while he claims to be a job creator, he was a corporate raider for Bain Capital who laid off American workers and made millions of dollars with his business partners while companies were bankrupted and workers were laid off. Following the Republican debate held that night in South Carolina, after attempts by Romney to distort both his own jobs record and the President's as well as dodging questions about his refusal to release his tax returns, DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz released a statement which said:

"With every passing moment, Mitt Romney finds a new opportunity to distort the facts and try to tell voters what he thinks they want to hear. He even discovered a new position tonight on releasing his tax returns, saying he'd 'probably' agree to do it in April even though he has repeatedly refused to do so—defying a practice that every Republican and Democratic nominee for President has adhered to for decades. Romney can't continue to play by a different set of rules and expect voters to trust him—but as tonight's debate demonstrated once again, Mitt Romney doesn't place a very high premium on being straightforward with the American people."

That same day, the DNC also released a new web video, "It's All Still True," highlighting the criticisms leveled against Mitt Romney by Jon Huntsman – saying Romney lacked a core, couldn't be trusted, was a "weathervane" and was making himself "unelectable" – before Huntsman decided to drop out of the race on Monday and endorse Romney. You can watch it [here](#).

Heading into Tuesday, the DNC unveiled a web video with key moments from Monday night's debate – it's titled, "Mitt Romney: Still Hunting for a Straight Answer," and can be viewed [here](#). Later that day, DNC Communications Director Brad Woodhouse and Florence Mayor Stephen J. Wukela held press availabilities to continue pushing back on Romney's lack of transparency and distortions of his own record. While Mitt Romney traveled to New York for a



campaign fundraiser, New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman and DNC Vice Chair Mayor RT Rybak held a press conference call to welcome Romney to the state and discuss the extreme lengths he has gone to in order to hide information from the public.

On Wednesday, Democrats in South Carolina – including former Governor Jim Hodges; State Senate Democratic Leader John C. Land III; State Reps. Bakari Sellers, Mia Butler Garrick and John R. King; and Greenville City Councilwomen Jil Littlejohn

and Lillian Brock Flemming as well as County Councilwomen Xanthe Norris & Lottie Gibson – continued to hold Romney's feet to the fire with press conferences, media availabilities and statements on Romney refusing to disclose his tax returns and hiding the truth about his record. The DNC also released a web video, "A Very Taxing Day for Mitt Romney," which can be viewed [here](#).

As the GOP candidates met for their second South Carolina debate of the week on Thursday, DNC Chair Wasserman Schultz, former DNC Chair Don Fowler and State Rep. Sellers held a press conference holding Romney accountable for refusing to disclose his tax returns, hiding his real job creation record and trying to hide his offshore investments in the Cayman Islands from voters. The DNC released a pre-debate memo, "Questions Mitt Romney Needs to Answer at Tonight's Debate," which said:

"Tonight, as the Republican presidential candidates meet in South Carolina for their final debate before the state's Saturday primary, voters still have a number of unanswered questions about Mitt Romney and his campaign. That's because throughout the course of Romney's presidential bid, he has continued to run a campaign based on secrecy and a fundamental lack of transparency with the American people, who deserve to know the truth about Mitt Romney before they head to the polls.

"From refusing to release his tax returns despite overwhelming precedent for presidential candidates doing so, to repeatedly shifting his position on Super PACs, Mitt Romney has been dodging the issues left and right. Will he finally come clean tonight?"

Following the debate, DNC Chair Wasserman Schultz released a statement:

"For anyone hoping to get a straight answer from Romney on whether or not he will finally come clean with the American people and run a transparent campaign, tonight was a disappointment. Romney ducked and dodged on whether or not he would agree to follow the precedent set by President Obama and previous presidential candidates by releasing his previous comprehensive federal income tax returns for multiple years. Even Romney's father, George Romney, released twelve years of his tax returns when he ran for president. Mitt Romney, it seems, doesn't want the American people to know more about the details of the roughly 15 percent rate he pays in taxes – a far lower rate than what is paid by the typical working family. And with news reports this week that Romney has millions of dollars invested in overseas accounts – tax havens like the Cayman Islands – it raises further questions about why Romney is dodging the issue

altogether. So dissembling and disjointed was Mitt Romney's response tonight that he was actually booed by the audience."

Additionally, to hit back on the ludicrous claims by Romney comparing his record at Bain to President Obama's bold decision to rescue the U.S. auto industry and save more than 1.4 million jobs, the DNC released a new web video titled, "Bain vs. Detroit." It can be viewed [here](#).

On Friday, the DNC released a new web video on Romney's performance during Thursday night's debate, where he continued to dodge giving a concrete answer on releasing his tax returns. The video is titled "Maybe" and can be viewed [here](#). And Democrats in South Carolina continued to hit Romney for his lack of transparency and failed record with two events – a media availability from the Charleston War Room with Assistant Democratic Leader Jim Clyburn and State Rep. J. Seth Whipper, and a press conference from the Columbia War Room with former Governor Hodges and DNC Executive Director Patrick Gaspard.

Key Issues in the News and Background

Huntsman Endorses Romney, But Just Recently Called Him Untrustworthy, Unelectable

Key Point: Jon Huntsman just recently said Mitt Romney can't be trusted and is unelectable.

- Jon Huntsman announced today that he is ending his campaign and endorsing Mitt Romney.
- To hide his recent attacks on Romney, Huntsman pulled down his anti-Romney ads from YouTube and redirected his anti-Romney websites to Yahoo so voters couldn't see how Huntsman was one of Romney's worst critics.
- Unfortunately, his personal feelings on Romney are already part of the permanent record:
 - He said Romney lacked a core and had a "trust problem," calling him a "perfectly lubricated weathervane" for flip-flopping on the "important issues of the day."
 - He criticized Romney's economic record as a so-called "job creator" – especially his 47th-out-of-50 job creation record and raising taxes by \$750 million as governor of Massachusetts.
 - He said Romney failed to show "any kind of leadership" after Romney didn't take a stand on Libya, last summer's debt ceiling negotiations or Ohio's attempt to repeal unions' collective-bargaining rights.
- While he might be doing what he deems necessary politically right now, Huntsman was right on the facts about Mitt Romney.

###

Romney Should Level with South Carolina Voters on His Record of Killing Jobs There

Key Point: As South Carolinians examine Mitt Romney's record, they'll find it doesn't hold up and that he can't be trusted.

- Mitt Romney claims his business experience is his chief qualification to be President of the United States, having staked his candidacy on a self-described record as a "job creator." Independent fact-checkers and his Republican opponents have responded by reporting the truth about exactly what kind of businessman Romney is.
- Although some of the businesses in which he took a stake created some jobs, neither Romney's campaign nor any independent fact checker has supported his claim of producing a net increase of 100,000 American jobs – or even anything close to it.

- Romney insists that any criticism of his business record is an assault on “free enterprise” itself, but he’s really trying to evade legitimate scrutiny of the record on which he says he’s running.
- No one is challenging Romney’s right to run his business as he saw fit. The question is rather whether the American people, especially struggling middle-class families and those trying to make it there, want someone in the Oval Office who represents the same economic values that in large measure caused the economic crisis.
- Voters deserve straight answers about Romney’s record, so they can know how his perspective would influence his decisions and actions if he were President of the United States.
- Mitt Romney should tell voters the truth about how he made millions in South Carolina by closing down a Holson Burnes plant in Gaffney just four years after it opened, firing 150 workers whose jobs were eliminated and many shipped overseas. This came after the state gave them more than \$5 million in industrial bonds as an incentive to locate there.
- South Carolina invested its own money to bring the plant to the state and get those jobs in the community. But when workers lost, Romney gained. The company doubled its investment while the state saw jobs move north to New Hampshire.
- That’s the legacy of job destruction that Mitt Romney doesn’t want to talk about and has been fighting all week from his rivals. As South Carolinians take a closer look at his record, they’ll quickly find it doesn’t hold up and he simply can’t be trusted.

###

Romney Dodges Questions, Inflates His Jobs Record and Distorts the President’s

Key Point: Mitt Romney again proved in Monday night’s debate in South Carolina that he will say and stand for anything to get elected.

- Each debate, Mitt Romney proves all over again that he will say and stand for anything to get elected. And on Monday night Romney was the [worst of a weak field](#).
- On the most important issue of the day – jobs – Romney just can’t level with the American people: he fabricated his own jobs record and lied about the President’s.
 - Romney recently claimed to have created more than 100,000 jobs, only to revise it to just thousands after being called out. Last night Romney invented a new number, saying he created 120,000 jobs in his time as a corporate raider. He can’t back up any of these numbers for a simple reason: his goal was never job creation – it was creating profits even while bankrupting companies, outsourcing jobs and laying off workers.
 - Romney also inexplicably claimed the President – who [addressed a joint session of Congress](#) and [toured the country discussing his jobs plan](#) – has no jobs plan. In fact, Romney is on record [opposing the President’s proposals](#), which draws from bipartisan ideas to put people back to work and put more money in people’s pockets.
 - As governor, Romney sank Massachusetts to [47th in the nation in job creation](#), and independent economists know his cut, cap and balance plan [“is likely to push the economy back into](#)

[recession.](#)” And Romney again distorted the President’s record on job creation, which includes [more than 3 million new private-sector jobs](#) over 22 straight months of growth.

- Please watch [this video](#) that the DNC released today highlighting Romney’s debate dodges from Monday night. Clearly, he’s still hunting for straight answers.

###

Romney Runs to Tea Party Right, Loses Support from Moderate and Independent Voters

Key Point: Mitt Romney’s chances in the general election aren’t looking good as he runs to the right to win the Republican nomination.

- Public Policy Polling yesterday released their [first national poll of the year](#). It shows that Mitt Romney’s run to the Tea Party right has already started to hurt his chances in the general election.
- Romney’s been making promises to the Tea Party, hoping it wins him the Republican nomination. But he’s alienating regular Americans, losing support from 54 percent of independents and 57 percent of moderates.
- A month ago, only 46 percent of independents didn’t support Romney. But as he’s been running to the right of the Tea Party hoping to win the Republican nomination, that number has skyrocketed up.
- Though moving to the extreme right may help Romney win the Republican nomination, it’s clearly giving him baggage that will weigh him down in the general election.

###

Romney Should Follow Precedent and Release Tax Returns

Key Point: Mitt Romney thinks he can play by a different set of rules than everyone else and not release his tax returns.

- Mitt Romney is still refusing to release his income tax returns, defying a practice that previous presidential candidates – including his own father when he ran for president in 1968 – have adhered to for decades.
- Romney dodged another question about his tax returns in Monday’s debate so much so that Fox News couldn’t even record viewers’ distrust of Romney’s answer. Yesterday, *The New York Times* said his continued refusal is [“impossible to defend.”](#)
- New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, Romney’s own surrogate, said today that Romney should release his tax returns [“sooner rather than later.”](#)
- Romney said yesterday he might release his income taxes [“for the most recent year”](#) – but that won’t get him off the hook. His predecessors’ releases have been much more complete:
 - President Obama released the previous eight years of tax returns when he first ran in 2008.
 - President Bush released every tax return since 1991.
 - Senator Kerry released his tax returns every year.
 - When Romney’s own father ran for president in 1968, he released his tax returns going back 12 years. It’s time Romney played by the same set of rules as every other presidential candidate, and released his tax returns.

- Why is Romney refusing to release his taxes? Two reasons:
- First, because yesterday he finally admitted that he pays taxes “closer to the 15 percent rate,” which is lower than most middle-class families. Romney made his millions from Bain Capital investments that are [taxed at a far lower rate](#) than the wages of middle-class Americans.
- Second, because he doesn’t want voters to know how he made his millions. As a corporate raider in South Carolina Romney doubled his investment by closing down a Holson Burnes plant in Gaffney just four years after it opened, firing 150 workers whose jobs were eliminated and many shipped overseas. When workers lost, Romney gained, paying lower taxes than most Americans whole time.

###

Republican Extremism Doesn’t Fool Voters, Who Care About Economic Security

Key Point: Voters aren’t fooled by extremist Republican attacks; they care about how the President is restoring economic security.

- Newt Gingrich recklessly called President Obama the “food stamp president” in Monday’s debate in South Carolina. *The New York Times* today called comments like these as [“attacks with racial themes.”](#)
- Millions of hardworking and responsible families are struggling due to economic conditions they can’t control. Americans want to hear about restoring economic security for the middle class, and they recognize this divisive language for what it is: Republican presidential candidates pandering to the most extreme elements of their party.
- The truth is that the increased need for nutrition aid is temporary, driven by economic conditions and began under President Bush – two years before the President took office. Nutrition aid is helping [keep food on the table](#), lifting [4.4 million Americans out of poverty in 2010](#).
- From day one the President took decisive action to help Americans with the Recovery Act, [lifting 6.9 million Americans out of poverty in 2010](#). At the same time, the President is making sure hard work pays off by cutting taxes for every working American and helping them get the skills they need to succeed in a 21st century economy.

###

Romney Should Release Tax Returns, Disclose Tax Payments on Offshore Investments

Key Point: Mitt Romney thinks he can play by a different set of rules and not release his tax returns, hiding whether he receives financial advantages by investing his money in offshore tax havens.

- Mitt Romney thinks he can play by a different set of rules than everyone else: He still refuses to release his tax returns – long a standard disclosure for a presidential candidate that could show whether he is taking advantage of loopholes to avoid paying his fair share.
- If the American people could see what Mitt Romney is trying to keep secret, they would be appalled to learn that:
 - Romney has invested millions of dollars in funds set up in a [“notorious Caribbean tax haven.”](#)

- Romney, a quarter-billionaire, pays a [lower rate than most middle-class families](#).
 - Romney made his fortune closing plants, driving companies into bankruptcy, laying off workers and shipping their jobs overseas.
- Romney keeps as much as \$8 million in at least 12 funds in the Cayman Islands, not including another fund valued between \$5 million and \$25 million.
 - Investing money in offshore tax havens can allow investors like Romney to gain business and tax advantages, and these tax havens cost the federal government about \$100 billion every year.
 - If Mitt Romney believed in America as much as his campaign slogan suggests, he wouldn't have shipped American jobs overseas or stashed his fortune offshore.
 - The *Washington Post* has called Romney's dodges "[unacceptable](#)," and *The New York Times* has called his lack of transparency "[impossible to defend](#)" – and that's before this tax-haven story even broke.

###

Romney Still Refuses to Level with the American People and Release His Tax Returns

Key Point: Mitt Romney thinks he can play by a different set of rules than everyone else and refuse to level with the American people about it.

- Mitt Romney thinks he can play by a different set of rules than everyone else: he refuses to give the American people a straight answer on his tax returns.
- When reminded in last night's debate that his father set the standard for presidential candidates' disclosures – releasing multiple years' records to prove that one return is not a fluke – and asked if he'd follow suit, Romney could only muster an awkward "[Maybe](#)."
- If the American people could see what Mitt Romney is trying to keep secret, they would learn that:
 - Romney, a quarter-billionaire, pays a [lower rate than most middle-class families](#).
 - Romney made his fortune closing plants, driving companies into bankruptcy, laying off workers and shipping their jobs overseas.
 - Romney has invested millions of those dollars in funds set up in the Cayman Islands, a "[notorious Caribbean tax haven](#)" that can afford investors business and tax advantages costing taxpayers about \$100 billion a year.
- This is what we know without seeing Romney's taxes. What else will we find out when, and if, he finally releases them?
- Unlike the American people, Romney doesn't believe we all have a responsibility to do our fair share. Despite all the breaks he already takes, his plan to permanently extend the Bush tax cuts for the wealthiest would cut his own taxes almost in half while exploding the deficit and making middle-class families pay more than their fair share.
- And while he rails against government, he neglects to mention that his firm, Bain Capital, repeatedly maximized profits by seeking government subsidies and loans.

- Romney gives voters plenty of reasons not to trust him, and he's made plenty of far-right promises to the Tea Party that will weigh him down in the general election. Put those two together, and it's easy to see why Romney is hemorrhaging support from moderate and independent voters.
- *The Washington Post* has called Romney's dodges "[unacceptable](#)," and *The New York Times* has called his lack of transparency "[impossible to defend](#)."
- It's time for Mitt Romney to understand that he can't play by a different set of rules. It's time for Mitt Romney to level with the American people.

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