

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE WEEKLY UPDATE

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This week, the President hosted students from across the country at the White House Science Fair, where he announced new steps the Administration is taking to educate more students in the science, math and engineering fields. He also announced that the federal government and 49 state attorneys general reached a historic agreement with the country's five largest mortgage servicers that will help America's struggling homeowners and strengthen the housing market. Emphasizing that our students can't wait any longer for Congress to take action, President Obama declared that ten states have agreed to implement education reforms in exchange for waivers of the most burdensome mandates of No Child Left Behind. And he announced a policy that will accommodate concerns about religious freedom while still making sure that women have access to preventive health care, including contraception, at no additional cost – no matter where they work.

Additionally, with the Republican presidential candidates continuing to duke it out for the GOP nomination, the Democratic National Committee and Democrats across the country continued their efforts to hold Mitt Romney and the rest of the GOP field accountable for their failed policies – and, in particular, Romney's failed record on jobs, his out-of-touch positions and his extreme agenda that will do nothing to help America's working and middle-class families.

President Obama Hosts White House Science Fair, Announces New Initiatives to Educate More Students in Science, Math and Engineering Fields

On Tuesday, the President hosted the second-ever White House Science Fair, which celebrated the student winners of a broad range of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) competitions across the country. During the event, President Obama also announced key steps his Administration and its partners are taking to help a greater number of students excel in math and science, as well as earn degrees in these fields. After reviewing exhibits of the students' work – which ranged from groundbreaking research to new inventions – he delivered remarks on the importance of STEM education to America's long-term economic success. The President said:

"And that's why when I took office, I called for an all-hands-on-deck approach to science, math, technology and engineering. Let's train more teachers. Let's get more kids studying these subjects. Let's make sure these fields get the respect and attention that they deserve.



"But it's not just a government effort. I'm happy to say that the private sector has answered that call as well. They understand how important it is to their future. So today, led by the Carnegie Corporation, a group of businesses and foundations is announcing a \$22 million fund to help train 100,000 new science and math teachers. A coalition of more than 100 CEOs is expanding innovative math and science programs

to 130 sites across the country. And other companies are partnering from -- everybody from Will.i.am to Dean Kamen -- to make sure we celebrate young scientists and inventors and engineers, not just at the White House, but in every city and every town all across America.

"And many of these leaders are here today, and I want to thank them for doing their part. We're going to do everything we can to partner to help you succeed in your projects. And I'm proud to announce that the budget I unveil next week will include programs to help prepare new math and science teachers, and to meet an ambitious goal, which is 1 million more American graduates in science, technology, engineering and math over the next 10 years. That is a goal we can achieve. That's a goal we can achieve."

You can watch President Obama's speech [here](#).

The President Announces Historic Agreement to Help Homeowners and Strengthen Housing Market

President Obama on Thursday announced that the federal government and 49 state attorneys general reached a landmark agreement with America's five largest mortgage servicers -- Bank of America, JP Morgan, Citigroup, Wells Fargo, and Ally Financial -- that will help struggling homeowners and strengthen the housing market. As a result of this agreement, those financial institutions will provide at least \$25 billion to address mortgage loan servicing and foreclosure abuses. Not only will it help thousands of working families now, but it will also establish new protections for homeowners as we move forward. In remarks announcing the finalization of this agreement, the President said:

"So about a year ago, our federal law enforcement agencies teamed up with state attorneys general to get to the bottom of these abuses. The settlement we've reached today, thanks to the work of some of the folks who are on this stage -- this is the largest joint federal-state settlement in our nation's history -- is the result of that extraordinary cooperation.



"Under the terms of this settlement, America's biggest banks -- banks that were rescued by taxpayer dollars -- will be required to right these wrongs. That means more than just paying a fee. These banks will put billions of dollars towards relief for families across the nation. They'll provide refinancing for borrowers that are stuck in high interest rate mortgages. They'll reduce loans for families who owe more on their homes than they're worth. And they will deliver some measure of justice for families that have already been victims of abusive practices.

"All told, this isn't just good for those families -- it's good for their neighborhoods, it's good for their communities, and it's good for our economy."

Watch the President's remarks [here](#).

Emphasizing "We Can't Wait" Theme, President Obama Announces No Child Left Behind Flexibility

Stressing that America's students can't wait any longer for Congress to take action, the President announced that ten states have agreed to implement bold education reforms in exchange for waivers of the most burdensome mandates of the federal education law known as No Child Left Behind. These waivers will provide states with the flexibility needed to raise student achievement standards, improve school accountability, and increase teacher effectiveness.

The ten states that have been approved for flexibility are: Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oklahoma and Tennessee. The President delivered remarks making this announcement, in which he said:

"So when it comes to fixing what's wrong with No Child Left Behind, we've offered every state the same deal. We've said, if you're willing to set higher, more honest standards than the ones that were set by No Child Left Behind, then we're going to give you the flexibility to meet those standards. We want high standards, and we'll give you flexibility in return. We combine greater



freedom with greater accountability. Because what might work in Minnesota may not work in Kentucky -- but every student should have the same opportunity to reach their potential.

"So over the last five months, 39 states have told us that they were interested. Some have already applied. And today, I am pleased to announce that we are giving 10 states, the first 10 states the green light to continue making the reforms that are best for them.

"Each of these states has set higher benchmarks for student achievement. They've come up with ways to evaluate and support teachers fairly, based on more than just a set of test scores. And along with promoting best practices for all of our children, they're also going to be focusing on low-income students, and English language learners, and students with disabilities -- not just to make sure that those children don't fall through the cracks, but to make sure they have every opportunity to go as far as their talents will take them."

You can watch President Obama's remarks [here](#).

[President Obama Announces New Policy Improving Access to Contraception While Accommodating Religious Freedom Concerns](#)

On Friday, the President announced a new health care policy that requires a woman's insurance company to offer contraceptive care free of charge if the woman's religious employer objects to providing contraceptive services as part of its health plan coverage. Under the President's new policy, all women will have access to free preventive care including contraception no matter where they work. During his remarks making this announcement, President Obama said:

"Today, we've reached a decision on how to move forward. Under the rule, women will still have access to free preventive care that includes contraceptive services -- no matter where they work. So that core principle remains. But if a woman's employer is a charity or a hospital that has a religious objection to providing contraceptive services as part of their health plan, the insurance company -- not the hospital, not the charity -- will be required to reach out and offer the woman contraceptive care free of charge, without co-pays and without hassles."

You can watch the President's speech [here](#).

Holding Republicans Accountable

With the race for the Republican presidential nomination continuing in Colorado, Missouri and Minnesota this week, Democratic National Committee Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz joined Colorado State Rep. Rhonda Fields and an Arapahoe County resident in holding a press conference call on Monday on Mitt Romney's failed economic record.

On Tuesday, Denver Mayor Michael Hancock and Colorado Democratic Party Chairman Rick Palacio held a press conference discussing why Mitt Romney is out of touch with Coloradans – from his failed economic policies for working and middle-class families to his extreme anti-immigrant positions. With Newt Gingrich making a campaign stop in Ohio, the Ohio Democratic Party released a statement blasting both Gingrich and Romney for their extreme and out-of-touch positions. DNC Chair Wasserman Schultz and Minnesota DFL Chair Ken Martin held a press conference call on Mitt Romney's failed economic record – and Chair Wasserman Schultz also released a statement on the results of Tuesday's caucuses and primary. In her statement, she said:

"Tonight was a bad night for Mitt Romney, plain and simple. What should have been a night where he began to consolidate Republican support instead has shown that Republicans are reluctant to get behind him. Republicans are giving the field of candidates another look, demonstrating that the more people get to know Mitt Romney, the less they like him. They know he'll say anything to get elected, and they don't want a candidate they can't trust.

"Also alarming for Republicans is the lack of enthusiasm and low turnout we're seeing in these contests. In state after state, turnout among Republican voters is lower than it was in 2008, and they are increasingly dissatisfied with their choice of candidates.

"No candidate embodies that dissatisfaction more than Mitt Romney, who hasn't managed to lock this nomination up. The presumed front runner of the GOP field lost two of tonight's contests so far – that math speaks for itself. He is losing support from independent voters nationally, and tonight we saw he's not gaining the favor of Republican primary voters either. They clearly don't appreciate being ignored as Mitt Romney did to Minnesota and they know his failed record as Governor of Massachusetts on the key issue of jobs, his background as a corporate raider, and his economic proposals would leave the middle class behind."

On Wednesday, following Mitt Romney's abysmal performance in Tuesday night's GOP contests, the Michigan Democratic Party released a statement on Romney now "limping into Michigan" for its primary in just a few weeks, having been shut out in the Midwest on Tuesday. And on Thursday, Massachusetts healthcare experts held a press conference call to set the record straight on Mitt Romney's latest flip flop, where he claimed to be against mandatory contraception coverage despite continuing a similar policy as governor of Massachusetts.

With Mitt Romney holding a high-dollar fundraiser in Washington, D.C. on Thursday – where he continued to sell access to lobbyists and special interest groups – the DNC released a new web video titled, "Mitt Romney: The Web of Influence." You can watch it [here](#).

While Romney collected \$10,000 checks inside the event, DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz and concerned citizens stood outside and condemned Romney's proposals written by and for industry insiders – including his plans to repeal Wall Street Reform, repeal the Affordable Care Act, and ignore climate change. Chair Wasserman Schultz also held a press conference call on Romney's failed economic record with Maine Democratic Party Vice Chair Janet Mills. Additionally, the Virginia Democratic Party released a statement on Romney's campaign stop in Virginia, which pointed out his support for so-called "personhood" amendments that would ban the right for women to make decisions about their reproductive health and could even ban some forms of contraception.

On Friday, in advance of Romney's speech to the Conservative Political Action Conference, the DNC released a new web video titled, "Mitt Romney: What will he say today?" You can watch it [here](#).

Key Issues in the News and Background

Romney Won't Let Voters Ask Him About the Truth Behind His Failed Jobs Record

Key Point: Mitt Romney is hiding from questions about the failed jobs record he's campaigning on, proving that he can't be trusted.

- Mitt Romney [isn't taking questions from voters anymore](#), attempting to hide the truth about the failed jobs record he's campaigning on. Romney's actual jobs record shows he can't be trusted.
- Romney isn't letting voters ask him why as governor of Massachusetts he was [47th out of 50 in job creation](#). He's hiding how wages and income in the state fell while manufacturing jobs declined by twice the national average.
- Romney also won't level with voters about how his private sector experience was lining his pockets as a corporate raider. Romney made millions by buying companies and forcing them into bankruptcy. He slashed pensions and benefits, fired workers and shipped their jobs overseas.
- We were losing nearly 800,000 jobs a month when President Obama took office. He immediately took decisive action, stopping the bleeding and reversing the trend. We've since seen [23 straight months of private-sector jobs growth totaling 3.7 million jobs](#).
- When the auto industry was on the brink, Romney said we should "let Detroit go bankrupt." That would have decimated the auto industry, and President Obama wasn't going to let that happen.
- The President rescued the auto industry, saving more than 1.4 million American jobs up and down the supply chain. Now America's carmakers are back, and the auto industry added 170,000 jobs in the last two and a half years.

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Steady Jobs Growth Shows the President Stopped the Free-fall and Reversed the Trend

Key Point: President Obama not only helped the private sector stop the free-fall, but reverse the trend.

- Mitt Romney is attacking the President's job creation record and January's unemployment rate – which is at its lowest level in three years – but he isn't telling voters the truth behind the numbers. The January jobs report showed an unemployment rate that went down because we created jobs, not because people stopped looking.
- [January's jobs numbers](#) show President Obama is leading a steady, consistent recovery for the middle class. America's businesses have now added jobs for 23 straight months, with the private sector adding 3.7 million jobs. All unemployment rates are falling, including the broader measures Romney cites.
- This [chart illustrates](#) the massive job loss threatening the economy as President Obama took office, showing that under his leadership, the private sector reversed its free-fall and begun creating jobs.
 - After more than a decade of job losses, American manufacturing has been creating jobs since December 2009.
 - The American auto industry is coming back. GM is again No. 1 in the world and the auto industry is expected to create more than 100,000 new jobs by 2014.
 - American oil production is at its highest in eight years.
- President Obama stopped the bleeding and invested in America, taking swift action to address the immediate jobs crisis.
 - He rescued the auto industry, saving more than 1.4 million jobs up and down the supply chain.

- He cut taxes for every working family and for small businesses, which create the vast majority of new jobs in this country.
 - He held Wall Street accountable so this crisis doesn't happen again.
 - He's reining in abuses in the mortgage and credit card industries and protecting consumers like never before.
- We have much more work to do, but we're moving in the right direction. While this momentum is encouraging, we're at a make-or-break moment for the middle class. We need an economy built to last – one where:
 - Hard work once again pays off and responsibility, not recklessness, is rewarded.
 - We out-build, out-educate and out-innovate the rest of the world.
 - Everyone from Main Street to Wall Street gets a fair shot, does their fair share and plays by the same rules.
 - That's why the President outlined a vision for an America built to last. It's a blueprint based on American manufacturing, American energy, skills for American workers and a renewal of the American values that made the middle class the envy of the world – values like fairness and opportunity.
 - Romney and the Republicans in Washington don't share this vision.
 - They don't want to invest in our workers, our students or American industries like carmakers and clean energy.
 - They would let Wall Street write its own rules again, going back to the same failed policies that led to the economic crisis in the first place.
 - They aren't optimistic about this recovery continuing. They won't even admit that it's happening.

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Romney Claims Are False; Unemployment Rates Are Falling Because We're Creating Jobs

Key Point: Mitt Romney isn't telling the truth about January's jobs numbers: all unemployment rates are falling because we're creating jobs.

- Mitt Romney is [attacking](#) January's unemployment rate, saying it counts unemployed workers who can't find work and stopped looking.
 - The January jobs report showed an unemployment rate that went down because the private sector created 477,000 jobs over the past two months, not because fewer people are looking for work.
 - No matter how you define unemployment, the rate is continuing to come down – and the broader measures Romney cites have come down the most.
- The economy is slowing healing from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.
 - America's businesses have now added jobs for 23 straight months, with the private sector adding 3.7 million jobs.
 - In January, the unemployment rate fell to 8.3%, its lowest level in three years.

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Turnout, GOP Depressed in CO, MO, MN; Americans Don't Trust, Widely Reject Romney

Key Point: Depressed Republican turnout and Romney's three losses in Colorado, Missouri and Minnesota prove that Americans across the political spectrum don't trust Mitt Romney.

- Mitt Romney lost all of yesterday's primaries in Colorado, Missouri and Minnesota, with turnout down from 2008 across the board. Voters aren't excited about the Republican field, and Americans across the political spectrum are realizing Romney can't be trusted.
- Republican turnout is down in almost every primary so far, with voters consistently not excited about their candidates. From Iowa to Florida to Nevada – and in all three primaries yesterday – Republican turnout was lower than 2008:
 - Down 57 percent in Missouri.
 - Down 23 percent in Minnesota.
 - Down 6 percent in Colorado.
- Yesterday's [PPP poll](#) shows Democrats are more excited to vote this fall than Republicans, with 85 percent of Democrats being "very" or "somewhat" excited about voting versus 78 percent of Republicans. This is a reversal from six months ago when Republicans were more excited than Democrats.
- Republicans are [increasingly dissatisfied with their choice of candidates](#) because their front runner, Mitt Romney isn't trusted by Americans across the political spectrum. Compared to 2008, Romney's raw vote fell by:
 - 63 percent in Missouri.
 - 69 percent in Minnesota
 - 46 percent in Colorado.
- Voters don't trust Romney because he'll say or stand for anything to get elected. He's flip-flopped on health care, climate change, Afghanistan, choice, personhood, Don't Ask Don't Tell, China trade enforcement, and just about everything else. The more voters learn about Romney, [the less they trust him](#) to run the country.

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Lobbyist-Influenced Romney Hypocritically Claims He's a Washington Outsider

Key Point: Mitt Romney claims to be a Washington outsider free of influence peddlers, but his campaign promises are exactly what his special-interest donors want.

- Mitt Romney is holding a so-called policy conference today in Washington, raising money from lobbyists from almost every industry that would benefit from Romney's election. Romney claims he's a Washington outsider, but he's deeply connected to the [influence peddlers he often derides](#).
- Romney's campaign promises [pander to the interests of some of his and his allies' biggest donors](#):
 - Since pharmaceutical and health products special interests gave \$3 million, he'll repeal health reforms that give seniors a 50 percent discount on brand-name drugs.
 - Since Wall Street special interests gave more than \$24 million, he'll let Wall Street write its own rules again and keep their tax loopholes intact.
 - Since oil, gas, and mining special interests gave more than \$1.5 million, he'll cut taxes for big oil corporations and roll back major EPA regulations that keep our air and water clean.
 - Since defense, education and insurance special interests gave more than \$1.1 million combined, he supports recklessly increasing defense spending, for-profit colleges that have low graduation rates, and reinstating wasteful Medicare subsidies.

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President Obama is Delivering on the Change He Promised Five Years Ago Today

Key Point: President Obama has delivered on the change he promised when he announced his candidacy for President five years ago today.

- Five years ago today, then-Senator Obama announced his candidacy for President from the steps of the Old Statehouse in Springfield, Ill. He reminded us that people who love this country can change it, no matter how long the odds or how long it may take.
 - Please watch [this new video](#) titled "*The Story of Us: Five Years Ago Today.*"
- The President promised in Springfield to "make college more affordable" – and he has delivered.
 - He doubled our investment in Pell Grants and expanded them to 3 million more students.
 - He gave college students and families a tax break to help them afford tuition.
 - He took on the banks, taking out the middlemen so more resources go to student loans while making loans easier to repay.
- The President promised in Springfield to start freeing America "from the tyranny of oil," "harness homegrown, alternative fuels" and "spur the production of more fuel-efficient cars" – and he has delivered.
 - He supported more than a quarter of a million jobs by investing in clean-energy technology.
 - He reached an agreement with automakers to nearly double fuel-efficiency standards on cars and trucks so we're importing less oil, breathing cleaner air and saving money at the pump.
 - Our dependence on foreign oil is at a 16-year low.
- The President promised in Springfield to "bring an end to this war in Iraq" – and he has delivered
 - He brought the Iraq war to a responsible end, and is putting veterans back to work while making sure they get the care they deserved.
- The President promised in Springfield never to forget September 11th and to "confront the terrorists with everything we've got" – and he has delivered.
 - He refocused our military on the war in Afghanistan, taking the fight to al Qaeda.
 - We've taken more than two-thirds of al Qaeda's top leadership off the field, including Osama bin Laden.
- The President promised in Springfield to "finally [tackle] our health care crisis" – and he has delivered.
 - After almost a century of failed attempts and over the intense opposition of insurance companies and Washington Republicans, he succeeded in reforming the system so all Americans will soon have access to affordable, quality health coverage.
 - Insurers will no longer be able to refuse coverage because of a preexisting condition, millions of seniors are paying less for prescription drugs, many preventive care services like mammograms, colonoscopies and contraception are covered with no out-of-pocket costs, and young adults can now stay on their parents' plans as they enter the workforce.
- President Obama isn't done delivering the change we need. We need to reclaim the security the middle class has lost by restoring the basic values that made our country great.
- That's why he's fighting for a job-creating economy that's built to last – one where hard work pays, responsibility is rewarded, and everyone does their fair share and plays by the same rules.

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Republican Voters Don't Trust Romney, Aren't Buying His Run to the Tea Party Right

Key Point: Republican voters aren't buying Mitt Romney's run to the Tea Party right because he's flip-flopped on almost every position he's taken.

- Mitt Romney has been campaigning for the Republican nomination by running to the right of the Tea Party, but voters aren't falling for it because he's changed his position on almost every issue. Romney may pander more to the extreme right today in his speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference, but voters don't trust him for one simple reason: he'll say or stand for anything to get elected.
 - Please watch [this new video](#) titled "Mitt Romney: What Will He Say Today?"
- Romney has flip-flopped on issue after issue to try to win over Republican voters:
 - Once he said that "abortion should be safe and legal in this country," but now he says he's pro-life.
 - Once he said that undocumented immigrants "should be able to sign up for permanent residency or citizenship" but now he says he would veto the DREAM Act, denying young immigrants here through no fault of their own and who know no other home a chance to earn a path to citizenship by going to college or serving our country.
 - He's also flip-flopped on contraception, health care, climate change, Afghanistan, Don't Ask Don't Tell, China trade enforcement, and just about everything else.
- Romney's telling voters what he thinks they want to hear, but they aren't buying it. He's already lost more than half of the Republican contests so far, including all of Tuesday's primaries in Colorado, Missouri and Minnesota. This week's [Washington Post/ABC News poll](#) found that as voters learn more about Romney, the less they like him.
- No matter what Romney says in Washington today, voters still won't trust him.

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Talking Points: Contraception Ruling Adjusted to Accommodate Religious Concerns

Key Point: President Obama's announcement on the contraception ruling addresses concerns raised by religious leaders while still ensuring women can access free preventive care regardless of where they work. This decision changes nothing for women.

- President Obama announced today an adjustment to the Department of Health and Human Services' contraception ruling that accommodates concerns while protecting women's health.
- This decision changes nothing for women. Under the President's new policy, all women will have access to free preventive care including contraception no matter where they work.
 - If a woman works for a religiously affiliated university or hospital that objects to providing contraception coverage, her insurance company – not her employer – will offer her free contraception.
 - As always, no religious institution will have to provide contraception directly, while female employees will have access to free contraception if they so want it.
- Today's announcement reflects the President's strong commitment to both preserving religious liberty and protecting women's health. He listened to the concerns of religious organizations and understood them, having begun his career working with local churches that sometimes helped communities more than any government ever could.
- The President's health reform ensured contraception would be covered with no out-of-pocket cost to women, and today's announcement maintains that policy.

- Doctors prescribe contraception for medical and health reasons, including helping to reduce the risk of some cancers, serious infections and cysts.
 - Despite the important health benefits confirmed by medical research, many women skip contraceptive care because of its cost.
 - Nearly 99 percent of women have relied on contraception in their lives, but more than half of women between 18 and 34 years old have struggled to afford it.
 - This is a commonsense idea. Twenty-eight states already require employers to cover contraception, covering more than half the U.S. population.
- People of good will on both sides of the debate have fought to find a solution that works for everyone. The policy announced today achieves that goal, protecting our Constitutional right of religious liberty while maintaining women's access to free preventive care. Many organizations, including faith-based ones, have already come out in support of it:
 - [Catholic Health Services](#).
 - [Catholics United](#).
 - [Planned Parenthood](#).
 - [NARAL](#).
 - While the President's reasoned and just decision respects religious liberty and protects a woman's right to make decisions about her health, Republicans would remove that right. Mitt Romney, Rick Santorum, Speaker John Boehner, Senator Marco Rubio and other Congressional Republicans want to take this right away from women and put it in the hands of their employers.

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