



# WEEKLY UPDATE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE DNC COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

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## President Obama's straight talk on middle-class economics



Watch a short clip of the discussion [here](#).

This week at the City Club of Cleveland, President Obama not only discussed how middle-class economics has strengthened our economy, but he also explained how the Republican alternative of trickle-down economics has failed.

President Obama:

*"One Republican in Congress warned our policies would 'diminish employment and diminish stock prices.'*

*"Another predicted my reelection would spike gas prices to \$6.60 a gallon.*

*"My opponent in that last election pledged that he could bring down the unemployment rate to six percent by 2016.*

*"Right here in Cleveland, the leader of the House Republicans, a good friend of mine, he captured his party's economic theories by critiquing mine with a very simple question: 'Where are the jobs?'*

*"Well, after twelve million new jobs, stock market that's more than doubled, deficits that have been cut by two-thirds, health care inflation at the lowest rate in nearly fifty years, manufacturing coming back, auto industry coming back, clean energy doubled – I've come not only to answer that question, but I want to return to the debate that is central to this country and the alternative economic theory that's presented by the other side."*

So while 2016 GOP hopefuls join the chorus of Republicans attacking the president's record on the economy's swift recovery, the current economic indicators speak for themselves. And the reality is that the Democrats' middle-class economics works, and the Republicans' trickle-down economics does not.

## **You thought Mitt Romney's business record was bad...**

...have you heard about Jeb Bush's?

As Jeb Bush ramps up a possible presidential campaign, his corporate record is just beginning to face scrutiny.

Here are the headlines from this week alone:

**AP: Before Jeb Bush resigned its board, a Florida firm faced 6 lawsuits from investors, nonprofit**

**Washington Post: Jeb Bush's tie to fugitive goes against business-savvy image he promotes**

The anecdotes are eye-popping:

- 1) Lobbying his father's administration on behalf of a man who he had business dealings with and who would later become a fugitive for allegedly bilking Medicare for hundreds of millions of dollars.
- 2) Allegations that a plant in Georgia rampantly polluted a river then made false statements.
- 3) Allegations of a company overstating income to investors.
- 4) Allegations of company executives manipulating stock for their own benefit.
- 5) Federal charges for a Bush business associate who pled guilty to defrauding investors in a company that received federal funds to support Haitian earthquake victims.

***Below is a statement on these revelations from DNC National Press Secretary Holly Shulman:***

"With a record like this, it's no wonder Jeb Bush is cutting ties with his corporate connections faster than you can say 'scandal.' But the reality is that this is just the tip of the iceberg of Jeb's questionable business dealings and his long history of corporate entanglements. What we already know is that Jeb Bush – in business and in government – put the interests of himself, his wealthy allies and big corporations ahead of what was right for the middle class."

## [We Watched All Of #RandSXSXW So You Didn't Have To](#)

This week, you more than likely missed Rand Paul's interview with Evan Smith, the editor-in-chief of the Texas Tribune, at South By Southwest. If so, that's a shame, because you missed Rand Paul at peak Rand Paul – spouting blatant inaccuracies, taking every position on the same issue, and advocating out of touch stances from net neutrality to voting rights.

Here's what you missed:

While explaining why net neutrality is bad, he claimed that there is no money to be made in banking.

*Paul: If you want to go into an industry where you can make no money, go into banking or go into healthcare—they're so overly regulated.*

Oh, really? ["The Wall Street bonus pool for last year is roughly double the total earnings of all Americans who work full time at the federal minimum wage."](#)

Doubling Down on his "Voting Rights Act is unnecessary" argument (Last time, he said we don't need it because [we have an African American President.](#))

*Paul: "Part of it was struck down by the Supreme Court, not by Congress, but by the Supreme Court. The main reasoning is, we're doing a good job. People are voting, and in many states, African American voting is actually higher than whites. When there is a state that decides to trump a natural liberty or a natural right or a right such as the right vote, there is a role for the federal government. The fortunate thing is, this was rampant in the south at one point in time, and has largely been overcome except for the main impediment to voting and that's felony voting rights.*

"Largely been overcome," is interesting, given the fact that Texas, where he gave these remarks, crafted a voter suppression law that was so strict that a court found that it "creates an unconstitutional burden on the right to vote, has an impermissible discriminatory effect against Hispanics and African-Americans, and was imposed with an unconstitutional discriminatory purpose. The Court further holds that SB 14 constitutes an unconstitutional poll tax." With up to 600,000 mostly poor, minority, and young voters disenfranchised in Texas, the notion that its "largely been overcome" is as absurd as it is disingenuous. This law was only allowed to pass because the part of the bill that Rand opposes was gutted.

To sum it up: Rand Paul's SXSXW answers were a mix of factual inaccuracies and double-downs on claims he's made (and been roundly criticized for before) that are completely out of touch.

For more on #RandSXSXW, check out our [Spotify playlist](#), and our [memo](#) on why Rand's youth appeal is a sham.

## **DNC Chair Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz on the House GOP Budget**

In response to the newly released budget by Congressional Republicans, please see the below quote from the Chair of the Democratic National Committee, Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz:

"Today's House GOP budget may have a new cover page, but it still includes all of the same worn-out, top-down economic policies that have failed America's middle class families time after time. With each 'new' budget, Republicans in Congress remind us they only want to pad the wallets of millionaires and billionaires, repeal the Affordable Care Act taking us back to a broken health care system, and end Medicare as we know it, hurting our seniors. So as Congressional Republicans continue to push their backwards economic plan, Democrats will continue to fight to create more opportunity for America's working families and to build an economy that supports our growing middle class, not the wealthy few.

"Republicans' presidential hopefuls have already made clear that they are right in step with the backwards priorities of this House GOP budget – supporting tax cuts for the wealthy at everyone else's expense, and I call on them to say exactly where they stand on the GOP budget that will hurt seniors and working families, and move us backwards to the failed policies of the past."

## **Jeb Bush on Minimum Wage: "Leave it to the private sector"**

It was Jeb Bush who once said the GOP nominee should be willing to "lose the primary to win the general," but Jeb Bush has staked out a position on the minimum wage that is even further to the right than "severe" conservative [Mitt Romney](#).

This week, Jeb Bush not only told an audience in South Carolina that he opposed raising the minimum wage, but even suggested that there should be no federal minimum wage and that we "need to leave it to the private sector." He called this commonsense policy a "great soundbite," but for American families trying to make ends meet, the minimum wage is much more than a soundbite.

Here's what people are saying about Jeb Bush's extreme and out of touch position on this issue:

**Think Progress:** "...if the minimums were simply left to companies themselves, there's no way to know if they would raise them or let wages fall...Bush pointed out that Walmart [voluntarily raised its wages](#), but that may at least be in part due to the fact that state minimum wage hikes forced it to increase starting pay in [a third of its stores](#)."

## **Salon: On the minimum wage, Jeb Bush makes Mitt Romney look like a bleeding-heart liberal**

## **The Hill: Jeb Bush signals opposition to minimum wage increase**

**Salon:** "Bush — who has decried income inequality as he publicly weighs a 2016 presidential bid — suggested that support for an increased minimum reflected superficial thinking on the part of the American public."

## **AP: Jeb Bush Rejects Idea of Raising Federal Minimum Wage**

**MSNBC:** "Taken at face value, Jeb's comments weren't just expressing opposition to a minimum-wage increase, such as the one supported by President Obama, congressional Democrats, and most Americans. Rather, Bush seemed to be making an explicit case for eliminating the federal minimum wage *altogether*."

## In the States

- On Monday, news broke that Marco Rubio was facing financial difficulties surrounding a Florida home he bought with David Rivera, a former congressman enthralled in ethics and campaign-finance investigations. In response to news that the house had gone up for sale, the Florida Democratic Party shared a faux sale advertisement, telling citizens that they could "Own a piece of Florida history!" In the advertisement, the Florida Democratic Party questioned the motives behind selling the house and highlighted the troubled history associated with the home's owners: "DON'T WAIT – this house is bound to go quickly! Owners are selling at a \$10,000 loss to pay legal bills and campaign expenditures. IDEAL BUYER will not have a history of negligent payments, foreclosures, running up their employer's credit card bills, or federal investigations into their finances." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Tuesday, the Colorado Democratic Party responded to the proposed budget from House Republicans, criticizing its harmful cuts aimed at assisting the wealthiest Americans and hurting the middle class. Colorado Democratic Party Chairman Rick Palacio released the following statement: "Each new budget that Republicans introduce reinforces their same old top-down economic policies that continue to fail Colorado's middle class and working families. This budget includes cuts to programs that help Colorado's families and fuel our economy. As the GOP pushes backward economic policies that favor the wealthy few, Democrats continue to fight for an economy that works for everyone and rewards those who work hard and play by the rules." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Wednesday, the Massachusetts Democratic Party issued a #PromiseWatch on Governor Charlie Baker as he directly opposed his own goal to combat unemployment by eliminating funding for manufacturing and hospitality job training. Massachusetts Democratic Party Spokesman Pat Beaudry released the following statement: "As we all know a budget is a declaration of priorities and it should be clear where addressing chronic unemployment falls on Republican Gov. Charlie Baker's to-do list with his elimination of job training funding allocated last session. By cutting \$12 million in advanced manufacturing technology and hospitality training from the current budget, Republican Gov. Baker is letting down those populations persistently plagued by chronic unemployment. They now know exactly where they stand with his administration." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Thursday, as GOP Presidential hopeful Jeb Bush went fundraising in Atlanta, the Democratic Party of Georgia called attention to the former Florida Governor's statement just a few days earlier that minimum wage should be left "to the private sector" and that this crucial issue for working families is no more than "a great soundbite." Democratic Party of Georgia Spokesperson Michael Smith released the following statement: "Jeb Bush is certainly making his mark this week. After belittling the hardships that working families across the South face by dismissing the idea of increasing the minimum wage as a 'nice soundbite,' he's spending the day rubbing shoulders and raising money with well-heeled Republican legislators and donors. If Bush really wants to connect with Georgia voters, maybe he should spend less time hobnobbing at fundraisers and spend some time talking to the hardworking Georgians who make the federal minimum wage." Read the full press release [here](#).
- On Thursday, while Scott Walker was off campaigning in the early primary state of South Carolina, the Democratic Party of Wisconsin helped the Governor out by reminding him of what was happening back at home. Unfortunately, the update was that as a result of Scott Walker's leadership, Wisconsin now sits at 38th in the nation for private sector job growth. Creating private sector jobs at a rate of just 1.16 percent, trailing behind the national rate, further shows how Scott Walker's lack of interest in effectively governing is hurting the people of Wisconsin and threatening the state's economic well-being. Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Mike Tate released the following statement: "As Scott Walker courts conservative support for his presidential campaign in South Carolina and Florida the next few days, everyone must remember that he ran for reelection in Wisconsin on the idea that he led a 'Wisconsin Comeback.' But between his budget mess and the news that the state has dropped to 38th in the nation in job creation – growing jobs at just half the national average – what we got is more like a 'Wisconsin Setback.'" Read the full press release [here](#).