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GENERAL INTEREST

Mary Amiti and Tyler Bodine-Smith

The Effect of the Strong Dollar on U.S. Growth

Federal Reserve Bank of New York - Liberty Street Economics - July 17, 2015

http://libertystreeteconomics.newyorkfed.org/2015/07/the-effect-of-the-strong-dollar-on-us-growth.html#.Vb-3a_IIOUm

“The recent strengthening of the U.S. dollar has raised concerns about its impact on U.S. GDP growth. The U.S. dollar has appreciated around 12 percent since mid-2014, rising against almost all of our trading partners, with the largest gains against Japan, Mexico, Canada, and the euro area. There was far less movement against newly industrial Asian economies and hardly any change against China. In this blog, we ask how the strength of the dollar affects U.S. GDP growth. Although the dollar can impact the U.S. growth through a number of different channels, we focus on the direct impact through the U.S. trade balance. Our analysis shows that a 10 percent appreciation in one quarter shaves 0.5 percentage point off GDP growth over one year and an additional 0.2 percentage point in the following year if the strength of the dollar persists.”

William A. Galston and Elaine Kamarck

More Builders and Fewer Traders: A Growth Strategy for the American Economy

Brookings – Paper – June 30, 2015 – 23 pages

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2015/06/30-american-economy-growth-strategy-galston-kamarck/cepmlastonkamarck4.pdf>

“William Galston and Elaine Kamarck argue that the laws and rules that shape corporate and investor behavior today must be changed. They argue that Wall Street today is trapped in an incentive system that results in delivering quarterly profits and earnings at the expense of long-term investment.”

Alan Cole and Scott Drenkard

The Real Value of \$100 in Each State

Tax Foundation - July 8, 2015

<http://taxfoundation.org/blog/real-value-100-each-state-0>

This week’s map shows the real value of \$100 in each state. Prices for the same goods are often much cheaper in states like Missouri or Ohio than they are in states like New York or California. As a result, the same amount of cash can buy you comparatively more in a low-price state than in a high-price state.”

Karl Rhodes and Nicholas Trachter

Buyers' Ability and Willingness to Shop Around: An Explanation for Price Dispersion

Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond – Brief - July 2015 – 4 pages

https://www.richmondfed.org/-/media/richmondfedorg/publications/research/economic_brief/2015/pdf/eb_15-07.pdf

“For many years, economists have observed substantial and pervasive price dispersion—wide variations in price for the same product. Some economists have attributed price dispersion to “ignorance in the market,” a lack of information among buyers and sellers. More recently, economists at the Richmond Fed and the University of Pennsylvania have developed a model that combines price dispersion theory with intertemporal price discrimination theory to suggest that buyers’ differing ability and willingness to shop around might explain price dispersion.”

Pablo A. Mitnik and David B. Grusky,

Economic Mobility in the United States

The Pew Charitable Trusts and Russell Sage Foundation – Report – July 2015 - 13 pages

http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/Assets/2015/07/FSM-IRS-Report_ARTFINAL.pdf?la=en

“For American families economic opportunity typically means that, with hard work, all children can do better than their parents. This concept has held an important place in U.S. history, but does it still hold true today? This report examines the transmission of economic advantage across generations using the first comprehensive set of intergenerational elasticity (IGE) estimates—which measure the persistence of advantage—based on tax and other administrative data. The analysis finds that children born into lower-income families can expect very different futures compared with those from higher-income families, indicating the importance of policy efforts to meet the country’s commitment to equality of opportunity for all families.”

Rob Pitingolo

Rent Burden High in Low- and High-Cost Metros Alike

Urban Institute – July 2015

<http://datatools.urban.org/features/ncdb/rent-burden-high-in-us-cities/>

“Housing, a cost that nearly every American family has to bear, has become prohibitively expensive for much of the population. In 1990 and 2000, about 33 percent of American renters were cost burdened—defined here as paying more than 35 percent of their income on rent.¹ By 2010, that share jumped to 44 percent nationwide and was even higher in some places. New analysis of data from the Neighborhood Change Database (NCDB) shows how widespread rent-cost burdens have become, increasing in poorer neighborhoods and high-cost metros alike.”

FISCAL AND TAX POLICIES

Cristina Arellano, Andrew Atkeson, and Mark Wright

External and Public Debt Crises

FRB Minneapolis – July 2015 – 52 pages

<https://www.minneapolisfed.org/research/sr/sr515.pdf>

“The recent debt crises in Europe and the U.S. states feature similar sharp increases in spreads on government debt but also show important differences. In Europe, the crisis occurred at high government indebtedness levels and had spillovers to the private sector. In the United States, state government indebtedness was low, and the crisis had no spillovers to the private sector. We show theoretically and empirically that these different debt experiences result from the interplay between differences in the ability of governments to interfere in private external debt contracts and differences in the flexibility of state fiscal institutions.”

Dynamic Scoring: How Will It Affect Fiscal Policymaking?

US Congress – Joint Economic Committee – Hearing – July 28, 2015

<http://www.jec.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings-calendar?ID=016D6E80-1DED-46B2-A6B6-BB24467F1C8A>

Today, the committee turns its attention to dynamic scoring, a method of analyzing and quantifying the budgetary impact of tax cuts that will make them appear less expensive. Witnesses:
 Phil Gramm, Former Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
 Kevin A. Hassett, Director of Economic Policy Studies, American Enterprise Institute
 John W. Diamond, Baker Institute of Public Policy, Rice University, Houston, Texas
 John L. Buckley, Former Chief of Staff to the Joint Committee on Taxation

Molly F. Sherlock and Mark P. Keightley

Tax Reform in the 114th Congress: An Overview of Proposals

Congressional Research Service – Report - July 9, 2015 – 20 pages

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43060.pdf>

Many agree that the U.S. tax system is in need of reform. Congress continues to explore ways to make the U.S. tax system simpler, fairer, and more efficient. Identifying and enacting policies that will result in a simpler, fairer, and more efficient tax system remains a challenge.

James P. Angelini, David G. Tuerck,

The U.S. Corporate Income Tax: A Primer for U.S. Policymakers

The Beacon Hill Institute at Suffolk University – July 2015 – 64 pages

<http://www.ncpa.org/pdfs/The%20U.S.%20Corporate%20Income%20Tax.pdf>

“In this paper we describe how corporations and other business entities are taxed in the United States. We report statutory tax rates for the United States and other countries and discuss common U.S. corporate and business income tax avoidance schemes. We calculate an average effective tax rate for the United States and show how marginal effective tax rates affect investment decisions through their effects on the cost of capital. We report marginal effective tax rates for the United States and other countries and show how changes in statutory tax rates can affect investment, given different assumptions about the sensitivity of investment to changes in the cost of capital. We consider how the distributional effects of corporate taxes vary with the sensitivity of savers to inter-country differences in the return to saving. Finally, we consider some alternative tax reform proposals.”

Jason J. Fichtner and Adam N. Michel

Can a Research and Development Tax Credit be Properly Designed for Economic Efficiency?

Mercatus Center – Research paper - July 2015 – 29 pages

<http://mercatus.org/sites/default/files/Fichtner-R-D-Tax-Credit.pdf>

“Economic growth is driven by new ideas, innovation, and technology. Since 1981, the research and development (R&D) tax credit has attempted to lower the cost of these activities through subsidies in the tax code. Theory often predicts benefits from subsidies for R&D, but policymakers are not able to properly design and implement such a tax credit. Losses owing to rent-seeking and policy uncertainty undermine the predicted benefits of a well-structured incentive program. Policymakers’ inability to correctly target incentives means that programs attempting to do so harm the economy by distorting the market process. The tax code should be simplified by removing the R&D tax credit and lowering the corporate tax rate with the resulting savings. A second best alternative would make the credit permanent, eliminate credit claims on amended returns, expand the definition of qualified R&D, and use a simpler version of the credit calculation.”

Leonard E. Burman, William G. Gale, Sarah Gault, Bryan Kim, Jim Nunns and Steve Rosenthal

Financial Transaction Taxes in Theory and Practice

Brookings and Urban Institute – Tax Policy Center - Paper - June 30, 2015 – 43 pages

<http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2015/07/financial-tax-transactions/financial-transaction-taxes.pdf>

“In response to the financial market crisis and Great Recession, there has been a resurgence of interest in financial transaction taxes (FTTs) around the world. We estimate that a well-designed FTT could raise about \$50 billion per year in the United States and would be quite progressive. We discuss the effects of an FTT on various dimensions of financial sector behavior and its ambiguous effects on economic efficiency.”

Alan Cole

Corporate and Individual Tax Expenditures

Tax Foundation – Fiscal Facts - August 03, 2015

<http://taxfoundation.org/article/corporate-and-individual-tax-expenditures>

“A tax expenditure is a departure from the “normal” tax code that lowers a taxpayer’s burden – for example, an exemption, a deduction, or a credit. They are called tax “expenditures” because, in practice, they resemble

government spending. The most obvious kind of tax expenditure is a provision that directly lowers the tax burden for a subset of taxpayers engaged in a specific activity... The total cost of tax expenditures in 2015 is \$1.339 trillion, with \$131 billion in corporate expenditures and \$1.208 trillion in individual expenditures.”

Eileen Norcross

Ranking States by Fiscal Condition

Mercatus Center - July 7, 2015 – 63 pages

<http://mercatus.org/sites/default/files/Norcross-StateFiscal-Condition.pdf>

“Eileen Norcross ranks each US state’s financial health based on short- and long-term debt and other key fiscal obligations, including unfunded pensions and health care benefits. The study, which builds on previous Mercatus research about state fiscal conditions, provides information from the states’ audited financial reports in an easily accessible format, presenting an accurate snapshot of each state’s fiscal health. With new spending commitments for Medicaid and growing long-term obligations for pensions and health care benefits, states must be ever vigilant to consider both the short- and long-term consequences of policy decisions. Understanding how each state is performing in regard to a variety of fiscal indicators can help state policymakers as they make these decisions.”

MONETARY POLICY

Examining Federal Reserve Reform Proposals

House Committee on Financial Services – Hearing - July 22, 2015

<http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399372>

Witness List

Dr. John Taylor, Professor of Economics, Stanford University

Dr. John Cochrane, Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution

Dr. Donald Kohn, Senior Fellow, Economic Studies, Brookings Institution

Dr. Paul Kupiec, Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute

Stephen Williamson

Monetary Policy Normalization in the United States

FRB Saint-Louis – Economic Review – Second Quarter 2015 - pp. 87-108

<https://research.stlouisfed.org/publications/review/2015/q2/Williamson.pdf>

Because of the Federal Reserve’s unconventional approaches to monetary policy during the Great Recession and recovery, the Fed now finds itself in an unconventional situation. Short-term nominal interest rates have been close to zero for more than six years, and the Fed’s balance sheet is currently more than four times as large as in 2007. This article explains how and why the Fed got into this situation and the challenges this creates in returning Fed policy to “normal”—a state in which the Fed’s nominal interest rate target is above zero and its balance sheet is reduced in size.”

The Semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress

Report : <http://financialservices.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hrg-114-ba00-wstate-jyellen-20150715-sd001.pdf>

House Committee on Financial Services – Hearing – July 15, 2015

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs - Hearing – July 16, 2015

<http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399319>

http://www.banking.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=c959a0ee-f3fb-4b70-8ddf-59d96e1610f2

The witness will be: The Honorable Janet L. Yellen, Chair, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

Kevin J. Lansing

Assessing the Recent Behavior of Inflation

FRB San Francisco - Economic Letter - July 20, 2015 – 5 pages

<http://www.frbsf.org/economic-research/publications/economic-letter/2015/july/assessing-recent-inflation-behavior-phillips-curve/el2015-24.pdf>

“Inflation has remained below the FOMC’s long-run target of 2% for more than three years. But this sustained undershooting does not yet signal a statistically significant departure from the target once the volatility of monthly inflation rates is taken into account. Furthermore, the empirical Phillips curve relationship that links inflation to the size of production or employment gaps has been roughly stable since the early 1990s. Hence, continued improvements in production and employment relative to their long-run trends would be expected to put upward pressure on inflation.”

Jonathan L. Willis and Guangye Cao

Has the U.S. Economy Become Less Interest Rate Sensitive

FRB Kansas City – Macrobuletin – July 8, 2015 – 2 pages

<https://www.kansascityfed.org/~media/files/publicat/research/macrobuletins/mb15cao-willis0708.pdf>

“Employment seems to have become less sensitive to changes in interest rates over the past 50 years. In the Economic Review, Jonathan L. Willis and Guangye Cao investigate potential sources of shifts in the economy's interest sensitivity and find structural changes within industries and financial markets are largely responsible.”

FINANCE

Dennis McCuiston

A Chronology of the Financial Crisis

National Center for Policy Analysis – July 2015 – 19 pages

http://www.ncpa.org/pdfs/sp_A%20Chronology%20of%20the%20Financial%20Crisis.pdf

“Most Americans did not recognize that the United States had a financial problem until 2007. When people recognized the problem, it was seen as a subprime mortgage issue. In fact, on January 4, 2008, the American Dialect Society voted "subprime" as the word of the year for 2007. Evidence of the impending crisis, however, emerged years earlier.”

The Dodd-Frank Act Five Years Later: Are We More Stable?

House Committee on Financial Services – Hearing - July 9, 2015

<http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399304>

Witness List

Paul S. Atkins, Chief Executive Officer, Patomak Global Partners LLC and former Commissioner, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission

Dr. Mark Calabria, Director of Financial Regulation Studies, Cato Institute

Mr. Damon A. Silvers, American Federation of Labor – Congress of Industrial Organizations

Professor Todd J. Zywicki, George Mason University School of Law

The Dodd-Frank Act Five Years Later: Are We More Prosperous?

House Committee on Financial Services – Hearing - July 28,

<http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399397>

Witness List

The Honorable Phil Gramm, Senior Adviser, U.S. Policy Metrics and former United States Senator
 The Honorable R. Bradley Miller, Of Counsel, Grais & Ellsworth LLP and former member of Congress
 Mr. Peter J. Wallison, Arthur F. Burns Fellow in Financial Policy Studies, American Enterprise Institute

Douglas J. Elliott

Market Liquidity: A Primer

Brookings - Paper - June 25, 2015

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2015/06/market-liquidity/elliott--market-liquidity--a-primer_06222015.pdf

“US financial markets are critical to the functioning of our entire economy, providing more credit, for example, than banks do. Our unusually large financial markets have been an American competitive advantage for years, providing a cost-effective means of matching investors with worthy companies and projects. Therefore, the current debate about whether market liquidity is drying up is an important one, since the ability to buy and sell securities is central to market functioning.”

The Role of the Financial Stability Board in the U.S. Regulatory Framework

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs - Hearing – July 8, 2015

http://www.banking.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=a094ab96-17e2-47ef-b654-2cda052bf765

The witnesses will be: The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne, President and CEO, American Council of Life Insurers (ACLI); Mr. Eugene Scalia, Partner, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher; Mr. Paul Schott Stevens, President and CEO, Investment Company Institute (ICI); The Honorable Peter J. Wallison, Arthur F. Burns Fellow in Policy Studies, American Enterprise Institute (AEI); and Dr. Adam S. Posen, President, Peterson Institute for International Economics.

Ending ‘Too Big to Fail’: What is the Proper Role of Capital and Liquidity?

House Committee on Financial Services – Hearing - July 23, 2015

<http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399374>

Dr. Charles W. Calomiris, Professor, Columbia University Graduate School of Business
 Dr. Sujit “Bob” Chakravorti, Managing Director and Chief Economist, The Clearing House
 Dr. John E. Parsons, Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 Dr. Norbert J. Michel, Thomas A. Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies, The Heritage Foundation

Examining the Designation and Regulation of Bank Holding Company SIFIs

House Committee on Financial Services – Hearing - July 8, 2015

<http://financialservices.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=399302>

Witness List

Mr. Harris Simmons, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Zions Bancorporation
 Dr. James Barth, Professor of Finance, Auburn University
 Dr. Paul Kupiec, Resident Fellow, American Enterprise Institute
 Mr. Satish Kini, Partner, Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
 Dr. Simon Johnson, Ronald A. Kurtz Professor of Entrepreneurship, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Measuring the Systemic Importance of U.S. Bank Holding Companies

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs - Hearing – July 23, 2015

http://www.banking.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=7372638e-839c-47ea-b814-219905b57ff2

The witnesses will be: Professor Robert DeYoung, Capitol Federal Distinguished Professor of Finance, University of Kansas School of Business; Professor Deborah Lucas, Sloan Distinguished Professor of Finance and Director MIT Center for Finance and Policy, Sloan School of Management; Professor Jonathan R. Macey, Sam Harris Professor of Corporate Law, Corporate Finance, and Securities Law, Yale Law School; and The Honorable Michael S. Barr, Roy F. and Jean Humphrey Proffitt Professor of Law, University of Michigan Law School.

The Role of Bankruptcy Reform in Addressing Too-Big-To Fail

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs - Hearing – July 29, 2015

http://www.banking.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=383d37ed-252d-4167-9b29-d2a669c41440

The witnesses will be: Mr. Randall D. Guynn, Partner, Davis Polk & Wardell, LLP; Professor John B. Taylor, Hoover Institution Senior Fellow in Economics, Stanford University; Professor Thomas H. Jackson, President Emeritus, University of Rochester; and Professor Simon Johnson, Ronald A. Kurtz Professor of Entrepreneurship, MIT Sloan School of Management.

Paul H. Kupiec

Will TLAC Regulations Fix the G-SIB Too-big-to-fail Problem?

AEI Economic Policy - Working Paper Series - July 16, 2015 – 36 pages

<http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Paul-Kupiec-TLAC.pdf>

“The efficacy of the Financial Stability Board’s proposed requirement for minimum “total loss absorbing capacity” (TLAC) at global systemically important banks (G-SIBs) is assessed using a stylized model of a bank holding company and an equilibrium asset pricing model to value financial claims. I identify a number of G-SIB strategies that satisfy minimum TLAC requirements but fail to reduce implicit safety net subsidies that accrue to G-SIB shareholders or increase the resources available to recapitalize a failing G-SIB subsidiary. To meet the FSB’s stated goals, TLAC requirements must impose minimum TLAC at all subsidiaries and restrict how TLAC funds can be invested. An equivalent, but much simpler solution is to significantly increase regulatory capital requirements on systemically important bank subsidiaries.”

Maria J. Nieto and Larry D. Wall

Breaking Down Geographic Barriers on Banks: U.S. and EU Recent Experiences

FRB Atlanta - Notes from the Vault - July 2015

<https://www.frbatlanta.org/cenfis/publications/notesfromthevault/1507>

“This Notes from the Vault reviews the history of geographic constraints on banks and the process that resulted in federalization in the United States and a nascent banking union in Europe. It then discusses how the differences in bank and safety net structures impacted the way the two areas responded to the crisis.”

MANUFACTURING - INNOVATION

Convening Manufacturing Leaders to Strengthen the Innovative Capabilities of the U.S. Supply Chain, including Small Manufacturers

The White House. Office of the Press Secretary - Fact Sheet - July 9, 2015.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/07/09/fact-sheet-convening-manufacturing-leaders-strengthen-innovative>

Investing in the strength of small manufacturing firms and ensuring they have access to the latest cutting-edge technologies are key pillars of the President’s strategy to accelerate progress in U.S. manufacturing and improve the competitiveness of our domestic supply chain in the 21st century.

Walter D. Valdivia and Benjamin Y. Clark

The Politics of Federal R&D: A Punctuated Equilibrium Analysis

Brookings - Paper - June 17, 2015 – 18 pages

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2015/06/17-politics-federal-research-development-valdivia-clark/r_dpoltics.pdf

“The fiscal budget has become a casualty of political polarization and even functions that had enjoyed bipartisan support, like research and development (R&D), are becoming divisive issues on Capitol Hill. As a result, federal R&D is likely to grow pegged to inflation or worse, decline.”

Jason Bram and Matthew Ploenzke

Will Silicon Alley Be the Next Silicon Valley?

FRB New York - Liberty Street Economics

<http://libertystreeteconomics.newyorkfed.org/2015/07/will-silicon-alley-be-the-next-silicon-valley.html>

While its relative importance in the local economy pales in comparison with the other tech hubs, New York City has been creating tech jobs at a brisk pace and apparently benefitting from the broad trend toward urbanization, suggesting that it is quickly catching up as a leading tech hub.

BUSINESS

Karla Walter, David Madland, Danielle Corley

Capitalism for Everyone - Encouraging Companies to Adopt Employee Ownership Programs and Broad-Based Profit Sharing

Center for American Progress – Report – July 2015 – 21 pages

<https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/CapitalismForEveryone-report.pdf>

“When a company does well, so should its workers. American workers have helped the economy grow by becoming more productive. Yet, even as productivity has increased, many middle- and working-class households have experienced stagnant wages and declining household incomes over the past few decades. This means workers currently receive only a small share of the wealth they help create. Broad-based sharing programs—such as granting workers an ownership stake or a share of profits based on workers’ collective performance—can help ensure that workers are rewarded for the wealth they generate.”

Emily Fetsch, Chris Jackson, and Jason Wiens

Women Entrepreneurs are Key to Accelerating Growth

Marion Kauffman Foundation – Entrepreneurship Policy Digest – July 7, 2015 – 2 pages

http://www.kauffman.org/~media/kauffman_org/resources/2015/entrepreneurship%20policy%20digest/july%202015/women_entrepreneurs_are_key_to_accelerating_growth.pdf

“Today, women remain underrepresented among the ranks of entrepreneurs. In fact, they are half as likely as men to start a business. This discrepancy is not just a gender or a fairness issue—it is an issue of economic growth. By addressing the gender gap in entrepreneurship, policymakers can unleash a wealth of ingenuity and creativity that can spark a new era of entrepreneur-led growth in America.”

Brian T. Yeh and Emily M. Lanza

Patent Litigation Reform Legislation in the 114th Congress

Congressional Research Service – Report - July 29, 2015

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43979.pdf>

This report describes how current patent litigation reform legislation would change existing patent law to address the perceived problems caused by entities that engage in patent litigation tactics that have been

criticized as abusive or deceptive. The bills introduced in the 114th Congress include the Innovation Act (H.R. 9), Protecting American Talent and Entrepreneurship Act (PATENT) Act (S. 1137), Demand Letter Transparency Act of 2015 (H.R. 1896), Targeting Rogue and Opaque Letters (TROL) Act (H.R. 2045), and the Support Technology and Research for Our Nation's Growth (STRONG) Patents Act of 2015 (S. 632).

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Angele A. Gilroy

Access to Broadband Networks: The Net Neutrality Debate

Congressional Research Service – Report - July 1, 2015 – 25 pages

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40616.pdf>

“As congressional policymakers continue to debate telecommunications reform, a major discussion point revolves around what approach should be taken to ensure unfettered access to the Internet. The move to place restrictions on the owners of the networks that compose and provide access to the Internet, to ensure equal access and non-discriminatory treatment, is referred to as “net neutrality...” A major focus in the debate is concern over whether the current framework is sufficient for policymakers to enable them to take the necessary steps to ensure access to the Internet for content, services, and applications providers, as well as consumers.”

Wireless Broadband and the Future of Spectrum Policy

Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee - Hearing - July 29, 2015

http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Hearings&ContentRecord_id=57a2f3e1-d86f-4f1a-bb33-36502d4002ce&ContentType_id=14f995b9-dfa5-407a-9d35-56cc7152a7ed&Group_id=b06c39af-e033-4cba-9221-de668ca1978a

Numerous wireless broadband technologies deliver high-speed wireless Internet access over radio waves to consumers' devices, including 4G Long Term Evolution (LTE), fixed wireless services, Wi-Fi, and satellite services. While radio spectrum is abundant, usable spectrum is limited by the constraints of modern technology, physics, and how spectrum is allocated for various uses. Advancements in technology have made useable frequencies once thought to be unusable spectrum and allowed spectrum users to co-exist closer together while avoiding interference. Current U.S. spectrum policy involves managing channels of radio frequencies to avoid interference and making decisions about how radio frequencies will be allocated and who will have access to them.

INFRASTRUCTURE - TRANSPORTATION

Technologies Transforming Transportation: Is the Government Keeping Up?

Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation – Hearing - July 07, 2015

http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Hearings&ContentRecord_id=d6835d2c-590d-4b27-8e76-3fcfb155eca5&ContentType_id=14f995b9-dfa5-407a-9d35-56cc7152a7ed&Group_id=b06c39af-e033-4cba-9221-de668ca1978a

This hearing will focus on innovative technologies that improve the safety and efficiency of our nation's transportation network, particularly the movement of goods through the supply chain. Witnesses will provide an overview of the development and implementation of new technologies within their businesses, discuss opportunities and challenges for continued innovation, and examine ways in which the federal government can facilitate innovation, including through the removal of unnecessary statutory or regulatory impediments.

AGRICULTURE

Tadlock Cowan

Agricultural Biotechnology: Background, Regulation, and Policy Issues

Congressional Research Service – Report - July 20, 2015 – 39 pages

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32809.pdf>

“Ongoing policy issues include the impacts of GE crops on the environment (e.g., pest and weed resistance), whether GE foods should be labeled, their potential contamination of conventionally raised and organic plants, and issues of liability. Underlying these issues are concerns about the adequacy of federal regulation and oversight of GE organisms, particularly as newer applications (e.g., biopharmaceuticals, multiple GE traits in single organisms, GE trees, GE insects) emerge that did not exist when the current regulatory regime was established in 1986. The FDA is currently considering approval of the first GE animal for human consumption, a salmon engineered to grow to market size in half the normal time. Global trade issues involving GE organisms are a long-standing issue and are particularly salient in current U.S.-EU trade discussions on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.”

Henry I. Miller

To Market, To Market

Hoover Institute - Digest – Summer 2015 – pp 78-82

http://www.ncpa.org/sub/dpd/index.php?Article_ID=25904&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=DPD#sthash.JId2iqgg.dpuf

“In March the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) certified that several new varieties of genetically engineered potatoes and apples are safe to eat, closely following the Department of Agriculture's approval of them for unlimited cultivation and sale... By withholding or delaying approvals of new products that offer improvements in safety, agronomic traits, and appeal to consumers, federal regulators for years have done their best to prevent U.S. researchers and companies from realizing transformative changes in American agriculture using the most modern techniques of genetic engineering.”

EMPLOYMENT – WAGES

What Lower Labor Force Participation Rates Tell Us about Work Opportunities and Incentives

US Congress – Joint Economic Committee – Hearing – July 15, 2015

<http://www.jec.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/hearings-calendar?ID=479F3EB8-BE84-4670-9789-7511D37F3928>

Witnesses:

Dr. Scott Winship, Walter B. Wriston Fellow, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research

Dr. Aparna Mathur, Resident Scholar and Jacobs Associate, American Enterprise Institute

Dr. Elisabeth Jacobs, Senior Director for Policy and Academic Programs, Washington Center for Equitable Growth

Maximiliano A. Dvorkin and Hannah Shell

A Cross-Country Comparison of Labor Force Participation

FRB Saint-Louis - Economic Synopses - No. 17/2015

<https://research.stlouisfed.org/publications/es/article/10400>

“Despite the similar long-run trends across countries in the labor force participation rates for the young, prime-working-age, and pre-retirement-age populations, the United States is the only country in the sample experiencing a decline in the aggregate rate in recent years. This finding is explained mostly by a larger-than-average drop in the labor force participation rate for prime-working-age men, a decrease in the rate for prime-

working-age women, and a lower-than-average increase in the rate for those near retirement age. In addition, we also find that the share of people in the U.S. prime-working-age population has fallen somewhat, which also contributes to the drop in the overall labor force participation rate.”

Marc Levinson

Job Creation in the Manufacturing Revival

Congressional Research Service – Report - July 2, 2015 – 17 pages

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41898.pdf>

U.S. manufacturing output has risen significantly over the past five years as the economy has recovered from recession. This upswing in manufacturing activity, however, has resulted in negligible employment growth. Although a variety of forces seem likely to support further growth in domestic manufacturing output over the next few years, including higher labor costs in the emerging economies of Asia, higher international freight transportation costs, and increased concern about disruptions to transoceanic supply chains, evidence suggests that such a resurgence would lead to relatively small job gains within the manufacturing sector. Manufacturing wages are below those in many other industries and are declining in relative terms, suggesting that the modest resurgence in manufacturing activity has not improved the bargaining power of workers in the manufacturing sector.

Robert E. Scott

Manufacturing Job Loss Trade, Not Productivity, Is the Culprit

Economic Policy Institute - Issue Brief - August 11, 2015 – 9 pages

<http://s2.epi.org/files/2015/ib402-manufacturing-job-loss.pdf>

“The United States lost 5 million manufacturing jobs between January 2000 and December 2014. There is a widespread misperception that rapid productivity growth is the primary cause of continuing manufacturing job losses over the past 15 years. Instead, as this report shows, job losses can be traced to growing trade deficits in manufacturing products prior to the Great Recession and then the massive output collapse during the Great Recession.”

Martha Ross, Carolyn Gatz, John Ng, Richard Kazis and Nicole Prchal Svajlenka

Unemployment among Young Adults: Exploring employer-led solutions

Brookings - Report - July 21, 2015 – 37 pages

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2015/07/20-young-adults-jobs/bmpp_srvy_unemploymentyouth_july20.pdf

“Younger workers consistently experience higher unemployment and less job stability than older workers. Yet the dramatic deterioration in employment outcomes among younger workers during and since the Great Recession creates new urgency about developing more effective bridges into full-time employment for young people, especially those with less than a bachelor’s degree.”

Jaison R. Abel and Richard Deitz

When Women Out-Earn Men

FRB New York – Liberty Street Economics - August 05, 2015

<http://libertystreeteconomics.newyorkfed.org/2015/08/when-women-out-earn-men.html>

“We often hear that women earn “77 cents on the dollar” compared with men. However, the gender pay gap among recent college graduates is actually much smaller than this figure suggests. We estimate that among recent college graduates, women earn roughly 97 cents on the dollar compared with men who have the same college major and perform the same jobs. Moreover, what may be surprising is that at the start of their careers, women actually out-earn men by a substantial margin for a number of college majors. However, our analysis shows that as workers approach mid-career, the wage premium that young women enjoy in these majors completely disappears, and males earn a more substantial premium in nearly every major. We discuss some of the possible reasons why the gender wage gap widens as workers progress through their careers.”

David Cooper

Raising the Minimum Wage to \$12 by 2020 Would Lift Wages for 35 Million American Workers

Economic Policy Institute - Briefing Paper - July 14, 2015 – 42 pages

<http://s4.epi.org/files/2015/raising-the-minimum-wage-to-12-dollars-by-2020-would-lift-wages-for-35-million-american-workers.pdf>

“This report begins by providing historical context for the current value of the federal minimum wage and the proposed increase to \$12 by 2020. It then describes the population of workers likely to receive higher pay under an increase to \$12 by 2020, with detailed demographic data that refute a number of common misconceptions about low-wage workers. The report concludes with a discussion of the provisions of the Raise the Wage Act that would index the minimum wage to median wages, and gradually eliminate the subminimum wage for tipped workers.”

Douglas Holtz-Eakin

The Employment and Income Effects of Raising America's Minimum Wage to \$12 and to \$15 per Hour

Manhattan Institute for Policy Research – Issue Brief - July 2015 – 16 pages

http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/ib_36.pdf

“Specifically, using time-tested modeling techniques, such as those that Holtz-Eakin used while at the CBO, the authors found that a \$15-per-hour minimum wage could mean the loss of 6.6 million jobs. What’s more, despite the fact that there would be some Americans whose wages would be lifted by a higher minimum wage, the effect on the poor would be minimal—of the increase in income for low-wage workers, only 6.7 percent would go to families in poverty. In other words, this is reverse-Robin Hoodism: taking jobs and income from the poorest to give to those who are better-off. The wealthy, whom demagogues now attack, would be untouched.”

James Sherk

Salaried Overtime Requirements: Employers Will Offset Them with Lower Pay

Heritage Foundation – Backgrounder - July 2, 2015 – 8 pages

http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2015/pdf/BG3031.pdf

“The Obama Administration has announced plans to require overtime pay for salaried employees who earn less than \$50,440 a year—despite the fact that economic research shows that employers will offset new overtime costs by lowering base salaries. These regulations will have little effect on total weekly earnings or hours worked; they will require employers to rigidly monitor salaried employees’ hours. This would proscribe the flexible working arrangements that many salaried employees value. These regulations will limit workplace flexibility without improving pay. Expanding overtime regulations to more salaried employees will hurt the workers the White House intends to help.”

AGING – PENSIONS

The State Pensions Funding Gap: Challenges Persist

Pew – Issue Brief - July 14, 2015 – 10 pages

http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/Assets/2015/07/PewStates_StatePensionDebtBrief_Final.pdf

“America's state-run retirement systems had a \$968 billion gap in 2013 between pension benefits promised to government workers and the funding available to meet those commitments—a \$54 billion increase from 2012. But preliminary data from 2014 does point to a reduction in liabilities for the majority of states. Our new brief reports on what's working—and what's changing—on this urgent issue.”

80 Years of Social Security

US Congress Joint Economic Committee – Report – August 2015 – 11 pages

http://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/03a062a9-c77c-47ee-aa22-da516dd0ef47/jec-social-security-report-8-14.pdf

Related Image Social Security has for decades been a crucial line of defense against poverty for millions of Americans. The program has succeeded because Congress actively amended Social Security as needed to continue ensuring its viability. Despite critics' doomsday claims, Social Security has been a towering success. President Franklin Roosevelt and Labor Secretary Frances Perkins envisioned the program as an opportunity to help Americans earn their own economic stability, and it has done so for 80 years.

Romina Boccia

Social Security: \$39 Billion Deficit in 2014, Insolvent by 2035

Heritage Foundation – Backgrounder - July 29, 2015 – 6 pages

http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2015/pdf/BG3043.pdf

“Social Security ran a \$39 billion deficit in 2014, closing out five years of consecutive cash-flow deficits as the program’s revenues from the payroll tax and the taxation of benefits are falling short of benefit payments. Absent reform, Social Security benefits will be cut across the board by 23 percent in 2035. Action should be taken today to protect Social Security’s most vulnerable beneficiaries from such drastic cuts without burdening younger generations with massive tax increases or unsustainable debt. Lawmakers should immediately replace the current cost-of-living adjustment with the more accurate chained consumer price index; raise the early and full retirement ages gradually and predictably; phase in a universal, flat benefit; focus Social Security benefits on those who need them most; and enable more Americans to save their money in private retirement accounts.”

John J. Topoleski

Multiemployer Defined Benefit (DB) Pension Plans: A Primer and Analysis of Policy Options

Congressional Research Service – Report - July 24, 2015 – 25 pages

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43305.pdf>

“Multiemployer defined benefit (DB) pension plans are pensions sponsored by more than one employer and maintained as part of a collective bargaining agreement. About 3.2% of all DB pension plans, covering 25% of all DB pension plan participants, are multiemployer plans. Nearly all of the remaining DB pension plans are maintained by a single employer... Although most multiemployer DB pension plans have sufficient resources from which to pay their promised benefits, a few large plans are expected to become insolvent in the next 20 years.”

Josh McGee

Defined Contribution Pensions Are Cost-Effective

Manhattan Institute - Report - August 2015 – 29 pages

http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/cr_100.pdf

“In recent decades, U.S. private-sector employers have increasingly offered retirement benefits through defined-contribution retirement (DC) plans. The share of workers who are offered a retirement plan through their employer and who participate only in a DC plan has increased—from 16 percent in 1979 to 69 percent in 2011. Yet the vast majority of American public-sector workers (75 percent) still earn retirement benefits under a defined-benefit retirement (DB) plan... Critics of DC plans argue that DB plans are more cost-effective because the latter deliver higher investment returns and convert retirement savings into annuities. This paper investigates whether such assertions hold up to empirical scrutiny.”

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

James K. Jackson

Financing the U.S. Trade Deficit

Congressional Research Service – Report - July 17, 2015 – 17 pages

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL33274.pdf>

“Some Members of Congress and other observers have grown concerned over the magnitude of the U.S. merchandise trade deficit and the associated increase in U.S. dollar-denominated assets owned by foreigners. International trade recovered from the global financial crisis of 2008-2009 and the subsequent slowdown in global economic activity that reduced global trade flows and, consequently, reduced the size of the U.S. trade deficit. Now, however, U.S. exporters face new challenges with an increase in the international exchange value of the dollar relative to other key currencies and the slow rate of economic growth in important export markets in Europe and Asia. This report provides an overview of the U.S. balance of payments, an explanation of the broader role of capital flows in the U.S. economy, an explanation of how the country finances its trade deficit or a trade surplus, and the implications for Congress and the country of the large inflows of capital from abroad.”

Ian F. Fergusson and Richard S. Beth

Trade Promotion Authority (TPA): Frequently Asked Questions

Congressional Research Service – Report - July 2, 2015 – 31 pages

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43491.pdf>

“Legislation to reauthorize Trade Promotion Authority (TPA)—sometimes called “fast track,”— the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (TPA-2015), was signed into law by President Obama on June 29, 2015 (P.L. 114-26)...TPA requires that if the President negotiates an international trade agreement that would reduce tariff or non-tariff barriers to trade in ways that require changes in U.S. law, the United States can implement the agreement only through the enactment of legislation. If the trade agreement and the process of negotiating it meet certain requirements, TPA allows Congress to consider the required implementing bill under expedited (“fast track”) procedures, pursuant to which the bill may come to the floor without action by the leadership, and can receive a guaranteed up-or-down vote with no amendments.”

The Role of the Export-Import Bank

US Congress Joint Economic Committee – Report – July 2015 – 15 pages

www.jec.senate.gov/public/cache/files/8a4826a0-8bdb-4166-8e80-f49aad40f82f/jec-export-import-bank-report.pdf

“Congress is currently embroiled in a debate over whether to extend the charter of the Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im Bank or Ex-Im), which lapsed at the end of June. As the official export credit agency (ECA) of the United States, Ex-Im offers loans, loan guarantees and insurance policies that increase export opportunities for U.S. businesses and support U.S. jobs.”

International Trade: The United States and European Union Are the Two Largest Markets Covered by Key Procurement-Related Agreements

GAO – Report - July 29, 2015 – 26 pages

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/671749.pdf>

“From 2008 through 2012, annual procurement of countries covered under the GPA was about \$2.5 trillion, excluding the United States. In comparison, countries with which the United States has FTAs, including some that are also covered by the GPA, have a total annual procurement of about \$500 billion to \$660 billion. For TPP and T-TIP countries, potential trade opportunities for U.S. firms could arise from the United States negotiating for commitments to increase the scope of covered procurements in the 56 countries covered by existing agreements. Increased opportunities could also come from adding new countries, however, only four of the TPP and T-TIP countries are not already covered by an FTA or the GPA; these four countries have an overall average annual government procurement market of no more than \$60 billion.”

Amadou Sy and Andrew Westbury

An Unfinished Agenda: The Progress of U.S.-Backed Economic Development Goals in Africa

Brookings – Africa in Focus - July 20, 2015

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/africa-in-focus/posts/2015/07/20-us-backed-economic-development-goals-africa-sy-westbury>

“After what some have called a “slow start” (associated in part with the 2008 financial crisis), the Obama administration has initiated a formidable list of new U.S. government programs in sub-Saharan Africa, with a high point reached last summer when the president convened the first-ever U.S. Africa Leaders Summit. A defining feature of all the Obama administration’s activities in Africa has been the great emphasis the president has placed on improving the U.S.-African commercial relationship and supporting broader inclusive economic growth throughout the region. Each of his signature programs have consistently included a prominent role for the business community, with Power Africa reportedly leveraging an astounding \$20 billion in commitments from the private sector to support badly needed electricity generation and access in the region.”

African Growth and Opportunity Act: Insights from Other Countries' Preference Programs and Participation in Trade Negotiations

GAO – Report - August 5, 2015 – 61 pages

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/671862.pdf>

“AGOA was signed into law in 2000 to offer SSA countries trade preferences that stimulate export led economic growth and facilitate their integration into the global economy. This legislation was recently reauthorized, and the accompanying Senate report stated that the United States should seek all opportunities to deepen and expand its ties with SSA countries through accession by SSA countries to the WTO and negotiation of bilateral trade agreements. GAO was asked to identify lessons learned from other countries’ trade preference programs and SSA countries’ recent trade negotiation experiences. This report (1) compares AGOA with selected countries’ trade preference programs in terms of key characteristics and performance, and (2) examines AGOA countries’ participation in trade negotiations.”

ENVIRONMENT

Overview of the Clean Power Plan: Cutting Carbon Pollution from Power Plants

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - August 3, 2015 – 9 pages

<http://www.epa.gov/airquality/cpp/fs-cpp-overview.pdf>

Shaped by years of unprecedented outreach and public engagement, the final Clean Power Plan is fair, flexible and designed to strengthen the fast-growing trend toward cleaner and lower-polluting American energy. With strong but achievable standards for power plants, and customized goals for states to cut the carbon pollution that is driving climate change, the Clean Power Plan provides national consistency, accountability and a level playing field while reflecting each state’s energy mix. It also shows the world that the United States is committed to leading global efforts to address climate change.

Nicolas Loris

The Many Problems of the EPA’s Clean Power Plan and Climate Regulations: A Primer

Heritage Foundation – Backgrounder - July 7, 2015 – 10 pages

http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2015/pdf/BG3025.pdf

“No matter one’s personal opinions on the climate effects of man-made greenhouse emissions, the Obama Administration’s proposed climate-change regulations will exact a high price on Americans and have a negligible impact—if any—on global temperatures. The EPA has already put into place several greenhouse-gas regulations; however, the most far-reaching regulations are set to be finalized this summer. Known as the Clean Power Plan, these regulations have garnered bipartisan concern at all levels of government due to the threats the Clean Power Plan poses to the economy, quality of life, reliability of the national power grid, and constitutional

separation of powers. Congress and the states should intervene and reject these regulations entirely before the U.S. energy system is put on a costlier and less reliable path.”

ENERGY

Nicolas Loris

Seven Objectives for Effective and Productive Energy Legislation in 2015

Heritage Foundation - Issue Brief - May 21, 2015

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2015/05/seven-objectives-for-effective-and-productive-energy-legislation-in-2015>

“Members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives are calling for a comprehensive energy bill in 2015. If past is prologue, however, such wide-ranging energy bills do much more economic harm than good. For instance, the last two major energy bills signed into law by President George W. Bush, while including some seemingly pro-market titles, contained policies that restrict consumer choice, mandate production of ethanol, and pick winners and losers by subsidizing politically preferred energy technologies. Congress should operate from the basic principle that free markets work efficiently and that any new legislation should get government out of the way of the market and innovation.”

Melanie Hart

Mapping Chinese Direct Investment in the U.S. Energy Economy - Current Patterns and Future Opportunities

Center for American Progress – Report - July 2015 – 27 pages

<https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/30051604/ChinaEnergyFDI-Final.pdf>

Chinese companies are building solar farms, wind farms, electric vehicle manufacturing plants, and other greenfield energy projects across the United States. They are also investing in existing U.S. energy companies and, in some cases, saving those companies from bankruptcy. State governors and city mayors across the nation have gone to great lengths to bring in these investment deals so that local residents can benefit from new employment opportunities and new energy infrastructure. The Center for American Progress mapped Chinese direct investment activity across the U.S. energy economy to analyze where these investments are happening and what makes some regions more attractive than others.”

Challenges and Opportunities for Small Businesses Engaged in Energy Development and Energy Intensive Manufacturing

Senate Committee on Small Business – Hearing – July 14, 2015

http://www.sbc.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Hearings&ContentRecord_id=8e563fbd-4194-4c3d-9027-77ca47c4ea43&ContentType_id=14f995b9-dfa5-407a-9d35-56cc7152a7ed&Group_id=43eb5e02-e987-4077-b9a7-1e5a9cf28964

“This hearing is particularly timely as we recognize our nation’s domestic energy renaissance that has been the consistent bright spot in our economy over the last few years. As is the case with so many other sectors, the energy industry relies on a large number of small businesses to help power our economy, and right now our nation’s economic development is on the rise. It is estimated that nearly 1 million Americans work directly in the oil & gas industry, 90% of which work for small operators employing fewer than 20 workers. There is an estimated additional 10 million jobs that are associated with this industry. However, there are unique obstacles these smaller businesses face in order to achieve success.”

David Livingston, Eugene Tan

Shale’s True Contribution to the Oil Market

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace - Article - July 9, 2015

<http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/07/09/shale-s-true-contribution-to-oil-market/id6g>

“U.S. shale producers don’t have the power that Saudi Arabia has wielded over the world oil market, but they have brought a new era of competition. A consensus has developed that Saudi Arabia has surrendered its role as de facto manager of the world oil market to U.S. shale oil producers. The so-called swing supplier position that the Saudis long held brought with it great geostrategic influence. But it is misleading to suggest that the United States will now wield such power. U.S. shale production is nimble when compared to other sources of oil, and it will inevitably oscillate up and down to address imbalances in supply and demand. However, the U.S. shale industry is made up of individual producers who are each price takers, not price makers. As such, they cannot serve as true swing suppliers, which balance monopolistic and oligopolistic markets.”

Lifting the Crude Oil Export Ban

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs - Hearing – July 28, 2015

http://www.banking.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_ID=e06c7a88-2042-4eb1-ba5c-e57c7c25a7ce

The witness on Panel I will be: The Honorable Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), United States Senator; and The Honorable John Hoeven, (R-ND), United States Senator. The witnesses on Panel II will be: The Honorable Michèle Flournoy, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Center for a New American Security; Mr. Richard E. Muncrief, President and Chief Executive Officer, WPX Energy; Dr. Benjamin Zycher, John G. Searle Scholar, American Enterprise Institute; and Mr. Leo W. Gerard, International President, United Steelworkers, and Chair, AFL-CIO Policy and Legislative Committee.

Oren Cass

Step on the Gas! How to Extend America's Energy Advantage

Manhattan Institute for Policy Research – Issue Brief - July 2015 – 18 pages

http://www.manhattan-institute.org/pdf/ib_35.pdf

“Now may seem an odd time to emphasize the importance of increasing U.S. oil and gas production. Domestic output has reached an all-time high, prices have plummeted, and drilling activity is slowing in response. Job cuts in the industry are approaching 100,000... Yet failing to press America’s current energy advantage would be an enormous mistake. Demand forecasts indicate that any oil and gas glut is temporary. Further, U.S. energy policy, still based on an assumption of resource scarcity, is ill equipped to manage the new abundance. Indeed, America’s private sector has driven an oil and gas revolution in the face of, at best, ambivalent federal policy. This paper suggests 11 reforms to help craft a smarter U.S. energy policy, one that will amplify the current boom and extend it far into the future.”

New Initiative to Increase Solar Access for All Americans

The White House - Office of the Press Secretary - Fact Sheet - July 7, 2015.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/07/07/fact-sheet-administration-announces-new-initiative-increase-solar-access>

The Obama Administration is committed to addressing climate change, promoting clean energy, and creating good paying jobs. That is why the Administration is announcing a new initiative to increase access to solar energy for all Americans, in particular low- and moderate- income communities, while expanding opportunities to join the solar workforce.

Hydropower: Federal and Nonfederal Investment

Congressional Research Service – Report - July 7, 2015 – 28 pages

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42579.pdf>

Conventional hydropower accounted for approximately 6% of total U.S. net electricity generation in 2014. Hydropower has advantages and disadvantages as an energy source... Hydropower project ownership can be categorized as federal or nonfederal. The bulk of federal projects are owned and managed by the Bureau of

Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These projects are typically authorized and funded by Congress. Nonfederal projects are licensed and overseen by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).