

# Name That Tax Increase

✘ The weather channel made a unilateral decision this season to start naming winter storms. The large snowstorms called Nemo and Plato are recent examples of this. Their argument is that this is a better way to communicate about an upcoming storm and track the destruction, such as has been used for hurricanes for decades. Some may think that this is silly and unnecessary. If this helps communicate the impending doom and devastation of a Hurricane or Winter Storm then what is the harm?

We can take a lesson from this rather than scoff at it. If naming dangerous devastating events is helpful from a communication standpoint, why can't it be used to warn about the upcoming damage of a proposed tax increase? Or track its devastation after the fact as we sort through the wreckage that raising taxes causes. The estimated cost of Hurricane Sandy was over \$50 billion. The cost for Katrina was over \$100 billion. Meanwhile the devastating cost of the January Obama tax increase is \$650 billion over the next ten years. The cost to the economy is so harmful that it's like a hurricane every year forever! Since he is so proud of it, a good name for this demoralizing tax increase should be "Tax Storm Barack".

The news media should track the destruction from "Tax Storm Barack", much like they would a hurricane. The tax increase primarily was directed at the wealthy, such as business owners. These wealthy are similar to the people who live closest to the coast in a hurricane, in that, they are only the first hit by the storm. Coverage of the effects could be interviews with unemployed people who remained unemployed, since businesses never hired them after the tax increase. Maybe they could visit yacht manufacturers and talk about the reduction in orders, or turn cameras on a Mercedes showroom where a salesman is asked about his prospects of making his

quota this month. Maybe there is a pro golfer who has laid-off a secretary who can be interviewed. There should be a large on-screen banner that is labeled "Tax Storm Barack Devastation!". They would also have to do follow-ups every month, because the damage keeps hitting as long as the tax increase is in place.

The President wants to increase taxes to avoid the March 1<sup>st</sup> sequester, so the media needs to start warning about the upcoming storm. This naming idea needs to have a mechanism to warn about the impending doom. Along the lines of naming a Tropical Depression, perhaps Tax Depression could be used. This could also act as a warning that an actual Depression could ensue if the warnings are not heeded. Since we need to use a different name for each Tax Storm, why not use Harry (for the Senate majority leader) for this one. Stories could start to be written now about "Tax Depression Harry", so the citizens could be mobilized to ward off the storm. If the Republicans fail to hold the line, it will naturally turn into "Tax Storm Harry". Names should be simple enough to line up based on seniority in the Democratic leadership, so Nancy could be next. Maybe there could be some honorary titles like Al or Bill, so older Democrats don't miss out on the dishonor. Democrats never run out of tax increase ideas, so there will be plenty of naming of Depressions and Storms opportunities to go around.

Don't react to the naming of winter storms by thinking it is unnecessary or silly. Learn from what it tells us about how to communicate to the American people. This technique can be used to educate the public about the devastating ideas the Democratic Party has for our country. If this technique can help explain that tax increases are bad, it will be a start.

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# State of the Union, Why Don't They Ask?

✘ The President laid out his agenda in the State of the Union Address, and it was filled with initiatives and statements similar to what he has said before. It gives the media the opportunity to ask questions that they have neglected in the past. Statements that were presented as facts also need clarification. Up until now, the President and the White House press secretary have escaped answering important questions. We should continue to wonder why the following clarifications and challenging questions are not asked.

Mr. President: In your speech you spoke about universal preschool. Almost every study concludes that there can be temporary effects, but by the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade there is no lasting impact of preschool. In these challenging budgetary times, why are you pushing for increasing a program that has shown such a universally agreed lack of results?

Mr. President: With your interest in raising the minimum wage, can you show any time this policy has led to more employment? Didn't unemployment increase when you and a Democratic Congress raised the minimum wage in 2009?

Mr. President: You said that you have cut two and half trillion dollars of the \$4 trillion that economists say is needed to show a sustainable path. If it is assumed that part of your \$2.5 trillion claim is the \$1.2 trillion sequester, then why are you advocating delaying and reducing these cuts, before they're even implemented, while counting them toward this goal? The figure of \$4 trillion was put out more than three years ago. With your delay in dealing with this problem, many groups have changed it to \$6 trillion to make up for the time squandered. Are you aware of this? Is there going to ever be a year in our government's future where we

will spend less than the year before?

Mr. President: You have said that you are waiting for Congress to act on climate change, and if they don't, you will. If climate change is truly as devastating to our future as you have expressed, and you have this power that you stated in the speech, then why won't you act now?

Mr. President: You said that none of your proposals will add one dime to the deficit. Certainly, most of these proposals cost money. Can you tell us what you are proposing to cut or what taxes are you proposing to increase in order to pay for each of these new initiatives?

Mr. President: You continue to reference the Cayman Islands and people having bank accounts offshore as a loophole in the tax code. Can you tell us the loophole in the tax code that you're referring to, and your proposal to eliminate it? Could you be misstating the fact that other countries have lower taxes, and it is wise for a company to locate their headquarters outside the United States for that reason?

Mr. President: You had a very emotional appeal on gun control in your speech. Gun control has not proven to be effective in reducing gun violence anywhere that it has been tried. What is your reason for supporting the proposed gun-control legislation?

Mr. President: You implied in your speech, and have stated in the past, that the Washington "dysfunction" and arguing over policy are causing the economy to underperform. A time period that you often refer to in terms of economic success is the 1990's. During that time, Newt Gingrich was Speaker of the House, and the Republicans controlled the Senate as well. Their disagreements with President Clinton led to two government shutdowns. This shows how the "dysfunction" in Washington was much worse at that time than it is now. Shouldn't we look at your policies and actions to explain the

lack of economic performance rather than the fact that there are continuing arguments in Washington?

Perhaps some adventurous reporter will now have the opportunity to ask for clarification on these issues...but probably not.

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## An Inconvenient Polar Bear

✘ The story this week that hasn't received much play in the mainstream media is about a new book by environmentalist Zac Unger titled "Never Look a Polar Bear in the Eye". His goal was to document the decline of the Polar Bear population. He undertook this task by moving his wife and 3 children to remote northern Manitoba, Canada. Normally, books from these types of authors get tremendous coverage since they are usually peddling the latest hysterical fear of what humans are doing to destroy the planet. The problem in this case is that he found the exact opposite of what he expected. The problem this presents is that it counters an assumed domino effect in the theory of Climate Change: Global Warming causes the polar ice caps to melt, the lack of ice decimates the Polar Bear habitat, their population goes toward extinction, oceans rise, all humans die. This book challenges an almost religious orthodoxy on the liberal left. It does not fit the media template and has been almost ignored. If this story got the attention that it deserved, there would be the natural question...What else is not true about Climate Change?

It turns out that this story is not that unique. A recent Canadian Government study claimed that the population of Polar Bears has been increasing since the 1970's. The local Inuit people go even further to say that the population is

increasing even in areas where the study had population flat or down. Why isn't the environmental movement celebrating this fact? Why can you only find stories about this new book on Fox News? Why are environmentalists still lobbying the US Fish and Wild Life Service to change the classification of Polar Bear's from "threatened" to "endangered"? The ongoing myth about Polar Bears fits the political agenda of Climate Change, and the truth would really get in the way.

Bison in North America were once headed toward extinction. It has been reported that their numbers were as low as 2,000 near the end of the 1800's. The Bison population has recovered to over 500,000, and it is a wonderful success story about restoring a species. The wild Bison have come back, and farm raised Bison are popular due to their very lean meat. Bison burgers are moving from posh eateries to everyday restaurants. The media has reported this story, and they usually like a feel good story like this. Yet we have not seen similar attention to the good news about Polar Bears.

Even before Al Gore's movie about *Global Warming* (which he has morphed into *Climate Change* and now calls *Climate Crisis*), the NY Times, Washington Post, and the major networks bought into the theory, hook line & sinker. They are now committed to promoting this belief, regardless of the facts that may surface. The current President also is a true believer, and is determined to do what he can to, "Heal the planet". Eventually, McDonalds or some other restaurant will solve the Polar Bears overpopulation problem with a new menu item. This does not deal with the shamelessness of the media taking an advocacy position on a issue that will have wrenching policy ramifications. Lack of reporting on these new facts shows this complicity, and it won't be solved with a special sauce.

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# Outgoing Taxes

✘ Bobby Jindal, the Governor of Louisiana, has proposed eliminating the state's income and corporate tax. His plan is to join the other 9 states that fund their government primarily through a sales tax. He is attracted to this method by the fact that these states have done better economically. There are 5 other states considering lowering or eliminating their income and corporate taxes to attract business to their states. It is no coincidence that these states are run by Republican Governors, while Democrat led states are raising taxes. There is a more important reason to change the state's main source of revenue to a broad sales tax. This step will help the public hold government accountable. The voting electorate has been removed from feeling the effects of inefficient government over time, and this change will reverse that trend.

When any government wastes money, the only way they can be held accountable is by the voters in the next election. If the majority of the electorate are not affected by this inefficiency, due to the fact that they do not pay taxes, there is little accountability. Another way that these voters could track the effectiveness of government would be an aggressive investigative media. With the press bias towards bigger government, this critical eye is missing. It has been reported that roughly 50% of the cost of the NYC government is funded by 1% of taxpayers. This, and a lack of media scrutiny, has been a recipe for out of control government.

Most people have such busy lives that it is difficult to track the performance of their various levels of government. Politicians and governments are notorious for adding all different taxes and fees in order to find new ways to fund their spending. This shell game has made it difficult for even the most interested voter to understand the efficiency of their leaders. How easy would it be to keep track of your

state government by simply looking at the sales tax? Maintaining the sales tax will allow spending growth to be matched to the state's growth in commerce. The Governor can simply run for reelection by saying I did not raise *the* tax.

Under the sales tax scenario, imagine if there were a teachers strike. The way that the press usually reports this event is to typically side with the striking teachers. Invariably, there are sympathetic reports resorting to pull on the public heartstrings about "the children" and how we cannot risk the future. Now, a Governor who wants to hold the line on spending can have a simple message by saying that if he/she gives in, the sales tax will go up 1%. Just think of the difference in the way people will look at this issue.

These moves by Mr. Jindal and other Republican Governors are great differentiators from the Democratic Governor tax raisers. They are also a good way to bring attention to the economics of the state. This change ensures a larger majority to be affected by the cost of government, and the consequences of each decision. Republicans are always trying to make the case that people don't want bigger government. Making sales tax the main way that the government is funded not only makes it affect all the people, but gives citizens an easy way to measure their government.

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## **Sick, not Stupid**

☒ In the aftermath of the Sandy Hook shootings there has been talk of trying to do something about mental illness. The idea people are grappling with is trying to determine before the fact; who may be likely to commit the kind of horrific mass shootings as what happened in Connecticut. Along these

lines the President, in his media event of a week ago, wants to have the CDC do a study on the subject. It should go without saying that there is certainly a mental problem involved when someone decides to commit mass murder. The goal should be to find the best way to prevent these events from occurring. Is this the best way to achieve that goal?

John Lott ("More Guns, Less Crime" author) in a recent Wall Street Journal Op Ed pointed out that there has been only one shooting where more than 3 people have been killed, in the last 60+ years where the victims were allowed to be armed. All other shootings took place where guns were prohibited. In a country where 39 of our states allow concealed carry, this fact cannot be a coincidence. Two recent examples of mass shootings drive this point home. These examples took place in states that allowed concealed weapons, but the location of the shooting did not.

Colorado allows the concealed carry of guns for those who have a permit. In the Aurora Colorado shooting at the premier of Batman where 12 were killed and 58 wounded last summer, the theater strictly prohibited guns. There were 9 theaters within a 20 minute drive of the home of the shooter that were showing this premier that night. This was not the largest, it was not the closest, but it was the only one of the 9 theaters that did not allow guns. This meant that he could kill with impunity without the risk of being shot himself. The act surely shows the behavior of a sick individual, but the location was thought out.

In the Ft. Hood shooting in 2009 where 13 soldiers were killed and 30 more were injured, guns were not allowed. It may seem strange that an army base does not allow weapons. In fact, it was civilian police who stopped the shooter. The largest Army base in the world called 9-1-1. This federal property located inside the state of Texas is under federal law, not the concealed carry law that Texas has adopted. If this sick perpetrator had tried this act anywhere outside the army base

he would have likely been shot dead by a citizen or army personnel who are only allowed to be armed outside the base. It seems surreal that these trained professional soldiers can carry their weapons outside the base but not inside. The state of Texas trusts them more than the federal government who trained them. Again, if you analyze the decision of where the shooter decided to commit this heinous act, there is logic to it.

It is revealing that all of these sick, mentally ill, deranged people made the rational, thought out, logical decision to shoot people where they could do the most damage. They were almost guaranteed that their victims could not shoot back. Perhaps there are times when it can be determined who will commit such acts, but there is one sure way to allow people to protect themselves. A federal law allowing concealed carry would permit people to greatly reduce the impact of these shooters. The fact that these shooters and others made a cold calculated decision to only commit these killings where the victims were unarmed is instructive. Concealed carry could have prevented the attempt completely.